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Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

By GUY BOOTHBY,

Author of *Billy Binks—Hero*; *The Fascination of the King*; &c.

CHAPTER I.

IF John Grantham Browne had a fault—which, mind you, I do not at all admit—it lay in the fact that he was the possessor of a cynical wit which he was apt at times to use upon his friends with somewhat peculiar effect. Circumstances alter cases, and many people would have argued that he was perfectly entitled to do so. Surely when a man is worth a hundred and twenty thousand pounds a year—which, worked out, means ten thousand pounds a month, twenty-nine pounds thirteen and fourpence a day, and four-and-sixpence three-farthings, and a fraction over, per minute—he may be excused if he becomes a little sceptical of other people's motives, and is apt to be distrustful of the world in general. Old Brown, his father, without the 'e,' as you have doubtless observed, started life as a bare-legged street arab in one of the big manufacturing centres—Manchester or Birmingham, I am not quite certain which. His head, however, must have been screwed on the right way, for he made few mistakes, and everything he touched turned to gold. At thirty his bank balance stood at fifteen thousand pounds; at forty it had turned the corner of a hundred thousand; and when he departed this transitory life, at the early age of seventy, he left his widow, young John's mother—his second wife, I may remark in passing, and the third daughter of the late Lord Rushbrooke—upwards of three and a half million pounds sterling in trust for the boy.

As somebody very wittily remarked at the time, young John, at his father's death and during his minority, was a sort of monetary Mohammed—he hovered between two worlds, the Rushbrookes, on one side, who had not two sixpences to rub against each other, and the Brownes, on the other, who reckoned their wealth in millions and talked of thousands as we humbler mortals do of half-

crowns. Taken altogether, however, old Brown was not a bad sort of a fellow. Unlike so many parvenus, he had the good sense, the 'e' always excepted, not to set himself up to be what he certainly was not. He was a working-man, he would tell you with a twinkle in his eye, and he had made his own way in the world. He had never in his life owed a halfpenny, nor, to the best of his knowledge, had he ever defrauded anybody; and, if he *had* made his fortune out of soap, well—and here his eyes would glisten—soap was at least a very useful article, and would wash his millions cleaner than a good many other commodities he might mention. In his tastes and habits he was simplicity itself. Indeed, it was no unusual sight to see the old fellow, preparatory to setting off for the City, coming down the steps of his magnificent town house, dressed in a suit of rough tweed, with the famous bird's-eye neck-cloth loosely twisted round his throat, and the soft felt hat upon his head—two articles of attire which no remonstrance on the part of his wife and no amount of ridicule from the comic journals could ever induce him to discard. His stables were full of carriages, and there was a cab-rank within a hundred yards of his front door, yet no one had ever known him set foot in either. The soles of his boots were thick, and he had been accustomed to walk all his life; he would say, and he had no intention of being carried till he was past caring what became of him. With regard to his son, the apple of his eye and the pride of his old age, his views were entirely different. Nothing was good enough for the boy. From the moment he opened his eyes upon the light, all the luxuries and advantages wealth could give were showered upon him. Before he was short-coated, upwards of a million had been placed to his credit at the bank, not to be touched until he came of age. After he had passed from

a dame-school to Eton, he returned after every holiday with sufficient money loose in his pocket to have treated the whole school. When, in the proper order of things, he went on to Christ Church, his rooms were the envy and the admiration of the university. As a matter of fact, he never knew what it was to have to deny himself anything; and it says something for the lad's nature, and the father's too, I think, that he should have come out of it the honest, simple Englishman he was. Then old John died; his wife followed suit six months later; and on his twenty-fifth birthday the young man found himself alone in the world with his money. Little though he thought it at the time, there were troubles in store for him.

He had town houses, country seats, moors and salmon-fishings, yachts (steam and sailing), race-horses, hunters, coach-horses, polo-ponies, and an army of servants that a man might well shudder to think of. But he lacked one thing: he had no wife. Society, however, was prepared to remedy this defect. Indeed, it soon showed that it was abnormally anxious to do so. Before he was twenty-two it had been rumoured that he had become engaged to something like a score of girls, each one lovelier, sweeter, and bluer-blooded than the last. A wiser and an older head might very well have been forgiven had it succumbed to the attacks made upon it; but in his veins, mingled with the aristocratic Rushbrooke blood, young John had an equal portion of that of the old soap-boiler; and where the one led him to accept invitations to country houses at Christmas, or to be persuaded into driving his fair friends, by moonlight, to supper at the 'Star and Garter,' the other enabled him to take very good care of himself while he was in such dangerous situations. In consequence he had attained the advanced age of twenty-eight when this story opens, a bachelor, and with every prospect of remaining so. But the Blind Bow-Boy, as every one knows, discharges his bolts from the most unexpected quarters; and perhaps you may find yourself mortally wounded in the very place, of all others, where you have hitherto deemed yourself most invulnerable.

It was the end of the second week in August; parliament was up; and Browne's steam-yacht, the *Lotus Blossom*, twelve hundred tons, lay in the harbour of Merok, on the Gieranger Fjord, perhaps the most beautiful of all others on the Norwegian coast. The guests on board had been admirably chosen, an art which in most instances is not cultivated as carefully as it might be. An ill-assorted house-party is bad enough; to bring the wrong men together on the moors is sufficient to spoil an otherwise enjoyable holiday; but to ask Jones (who doesn't smoke, who is wrapped up in politics, reads his leader in the *Standard* every morning, and who has played whist with the same three men at his club for the last ten years every afternoon) and De Vere Robinson (who never reads anything save the *Referee* and the *Sportsman*, who

detests whist, and who smokes the strongest Trichinopolis by day and night) to spend three weeks cooped up on a yacht together would be like putting a kitten and a cat-killing fox-terrier into a corn-bin and expecting them both to have a happy time of it.

Browne, however, knew his business, and his party, in this particular instance, consisted of the Duchess of Matlock, wife of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and her two pretty daughters, the Ladies Iseult and Imogen Lismaine; Miss Verney, the acknowledged beauty of the season; the Honourable Silas Dobson, the American Ambassador; his wife and daughter; George Barrington-Marsh, of the 1st Life Guards; and little Jimmy Foote, a man of no permanent address, but of considerable shrewdness, who managed to make a good income out of his friends by the exercise of that peculiar talent for pleasing which rendered him indispensable whenever and wherever his fellow-creatures were gathered together. In addition to those I have mentioned there was a man whose interest in this story is so great that it is necessary he should be described at somewhat greater length.

Should you deem it worth your while to inquire at any of the Chancelleries whether they happen to be acquainted with a certain Monsieur Felix Maas, you would probably be surprised to learn that he is as well known to them as—well—shall we say the Sultan of Turkey himself? though it would be difficult to mention in what capacity. One thing is quite certain; it would be no easy task to find a man possessed of such peculiar characteristics as this retiring individual. At first glance his name would appear to settle his nationality once and for all. He would tell you, however, that he has no right to be considered a Dutchman. At the same time he would omit to tell you to which kingdom or empire he ascribes the honour of his birth. His friends would inform you that he speaks the language of every country west of the Ural Mountains with equal fluency; and though he would appear to be the possessor of considerable wealth, he never makes the least parade of it. In fact, his one and only idea in life would seem to be always irreproachably dressed and groomed, never to speak unless spoken to, and at all times to act as if he took no sort of interest whatever in any person or thing save that upon which he happens to be engaged at the moment. When necessity demands it he can be exceedingly amusing; he never allows himself to be seen with a man or woman who would be likely to cause him the least loss of prestige; he gives charming little dinners *à la fourchette* to a few intimates at his rooms in town twice or three times during the season, and is rumoured to be the author, under a *nom de plume*, of one of the best works on Continental politics that has seen the light since Talleyrand's day. So much for Felix Maas.

At one time or another there have been a number of exquisite yachts built to satisfy the

extravagance of millionaires, but never one so perfect in every detail and so replete with every luxury as Browne's *Lotus Blossom*. The state-rooms were large and airy; beds occupied the places of the usual uncomfortable bunks; the dining-saloon was situated amidships, where the vibration of the screw was least felt; the drawing-room was arranged aft; and a dainty boudoir for the ladies extended across the whole width of the counter. The smoking-room was in a convenient position under the bridge, and the bathrooms, four in number, were luxury and completeness itself. Add to the other advantages the presence of *Félicien*, that prince of *chefs*, and little Georges, once so intimately connected with the English Embassy in Paris, and no more need be said.

Browne himself made an excellent host; and by the time the Norwegian coast had been sighted the party had settled down comfortably on board. They visited Christiania, the Bukn, Hardanger, and Sogne, and eventually found themselves at anchor in the harbour of Merok, on the Gieranger Fjord. It is in this lovely bay, overshadowed by its precipitous mountains, that my story may be properly said to commence.

It is sometimes asserted by a class of people who talk of the Eiffel Tower as if it were a bit of natural scenery, and of the Matterhorn as though it were placed where it is simply for the entertainment of Cook's tourists, that when you have seen one Norwegian fjord you have seen them all. But this statement is, as are the majority of such assertions, open to contradiction. The Ryfylke bears no sort of resemblance, save that they are both incomparably grand, to the Hardanger, or the Fjaerland to the Gieranger. There is, of course, the same solemnity and the same overwhelming sense of man's insignificance about them all. But in every other essential they differ as completely as Windermere does from the Bitter Lakes of Suez—shall we say?—or the Marble Arch from the Bridge of Sighs.

'Knowing what we know, and seeing what we see,' Maas remarked confidentially to the Duchess of Matlock as they sat in their chairs on deck, gazing up at the snow-capped mountains at the head of the fjord, 'one is tempted to believe that Providence, in designing Europe, laid it out with the express intention of pleasing the British tourist.'

'I detest tourists,' replied her Grace as she disentangled the straps of her field-glasses. 'They are terrible people, who cheapen everything, and who think nothing of discussing their private affairs in the Temple of the Sphinx, or of comparing and grumbling at their *dhobie's* accounts under the façade of the Taj Mahal.'

'The inevitable result of a hothouse education, my dear Duchess,' said Jimmy Foote, who was leaning against the bulwarks. 'Believe a poor man who knows, it is just those three annas overcharge in a *dhobie's* bill that spoil a holiday excursion; as far as I am personally concerned, such an imposition would spoil even the Moti Masjid itself.'

'People who quarrel over a few annas have no right to travel,' remarked Mrs Dobson, with the authority of a woman who rejoices in the possession of a larger income.

'In that case, one trembles to think what would become of the greater portion of mankind,' continued Miss Verney, who was drawing on her gloves preparatory to going ashore.

'If that were the law I am afraid I should never get beyond the white walls of Old England,' said Jimmy Foote, shaking his head; 'it is only by keeping a sharp eye on the three annas of which we have been speaking that I manage to exist at all. If I might make a suggestion to the powers that be, it would be to the effect that a university should be founded in some convenient centre—Vienna, for instance. It would be properly endowed, and students might be sent to it from all parts of the world. It should possess competent professors, who would teach the pupils how to comport themselves in railway trains and on board steamboats; who would tell them how to dress themselves to suit different countries, in order that they might not spoil choice bits of scenery by inartistic colouring. Above all, I would have them instructed in the proper manner of placing their boots outside their bedroom doors when they retire to rest in foreign hotels. I remember a ruffian in Paris some years ago (truth compels me to put it on record that he was a countryman of yours, Mr Dobson) who for three weeks used to disturb my beauty-sleep by throwing his boots outside his door in the fashion to which I am alluding. It's my belief he used to stand in the centre of his room and pitch them into the corridor outside, taking particular care that they should land exactly above my head.'

'It occurs to me I have met that man,' observed Maas quietly, lighting another cigarette as he spoke. 'He travels a great deal.'

'Surely it could not be the same man?' remarked Mrs Dobson, with an incredulous air. 'The coincidence would really be too extraordinary.' A smile went round the group; humour was not the lady's strong point.

'To continue my proposal,' said Foote, with quiet enjoyment. 'In addition to imparting instruction on the subjects I have mentioned, I would have my pupils thoroughly grounded in the languages of the various countries they intended visiting, so that they should not inquire the French for eau de Cologne, or ask the meaning of *pâté de foie gras* when they encountered it upon their menus. A proper appreciation of the beautiful in art might follow, in order to permit of their distinguishing between a Sandro Botticelli—shall we say?—and a "Seaport at Sunrise" by Claude Lorraine.'

'A professor who could give instruction upon the intricacies of a Continental wine list might be added with advantage to the world in general,' put in Barrington-Marsh.

'And the inevitable result,' said Browne, who had joined the party while Marsh was speaking, 'would be that you might as well not travel at all. Build an enormous restaurant in London, and devote a portion of it to every country into which modern man travels. Hang the walls with tricky, theatrical canvases after the fashion of a cyclorama; engage waiters in appropriate costumes, let them speak the language of the country in which you are supposed to be dining, let the tables be placed in the centre of the hall, have a band to discourse national airs, and you would be able to bore yourself to death in comfort, for the simple reason that every one would talk, eat, drink, and behave just as respectably as his neighbour. Half the fun of moving about the world, as I understand it, lies in the studies of character one has presented by one's fellow-creatures. But, see, the boat is alongside; let us make our way ashore while it is fine.'

Beautiful as Merok undoubtedly is, it must be admitted that its amusements are, to say the least of it, limited. You can lunch at the hotel, explore the curious little octagonal church, and, if you are a walker, climb the road that crosses the mountains to Grotlid. The views are sublime, for the mountains rise on every hand, giving the little bay the appearance of an amphitheatre.

'What is the programme?' inquired Miss Verney, who, as was known to her companions, preferred an easy-chair and a flirtation on the deck of the yacht to any sort of athletic exercise ashore.

Browne thereupon explained that the Duchess, who was dressed in appropriate walking costume, had made out an itinerary. They were to visit the church, do the regulation sights, and, finally, make their way up the hillside to the Storfos Waterfall, which is the principal, and almost the only, attraction the village has to offer. The usual order of march was observed. The Duchess and the Ambassador, being the seniors of the party, led the way; that lady's two daughters, escorted by Barrington-Marsh and Jimmy Foote—who was too obvious a detrimental to be worth guarding against—came next; Maas, Mrs and Miss Dobson followed close in their wake; while Miss Verney and Browne brought up the rear.

On this occasion everything went merrily as a marriage-bell. After those who had brought their cameras had snap-shotted the church, and made the usual mistake with regard to the angles, the party climbed the hill in the direction of the waterfall. It was only when they reached it that those in front noticed that Miss Verney had joined the trio next before her, and that Browne had disappeared. He had gone back to the boat, the lady explained, in order to give some instructions that had been forgotten. From her silence, however, and from the expression of annoyance upon her beautiful face, the others immediately jumped to the conclusion that something more serious must have happened than her words

would seem to imply. In this case, however, popular opinion was altogether at fault. As a matter of fact, Browne's reason for leaving his guests to pursue their walk alone was an eminently simple one. He strolled down to the boat which had brought them ashore, and, having despatched it with a message to the yacht, resumed his walk, hoping to catch his party up before they reached the waterfall. A thick mist meanwhile was descending upon the mountain, shutting out the landscape as completely as if a curtain had been drawn before it. At first he was inclined to treat the matter as of small moment; and, leaving the road, he continued his walk in the belief that it would soon pass off. Stepping warily—for mountain paths in Norway are not to be treated with disrespect—he pushed on for upwards of a quarter of an hour, feeling sure he must be near his destination, and wondering why he did not hear the voices of his friends or the thunder of the fall. At last he stopped. The fog was thicker than ever, and a fine but penetrating rain was falling. Browne was still wondering what Miss Verney's feelings would be, supposing she were condemned to pass the night on the hillside, when he heard a little cry proceed out, as he supposed, of the fog ahead of him. The voice was a woman's, and the ejaculation was one of pain. Hearing it, Browne moved forward again in the hope of discovering whence it proceeded and what had occasioned it. Search how he would, however, he could see nothing of the person who had given utterance to it. At last, in despair, he stood still and called, and in reply a voice said in English, 'Help me; help me, please.'

'Where are you?' Browne inquired in the same language; 'and what is the matter?'

'I am down here,' the voice replied; 'and I am afraid I have sprained my ankle. I have fallen and cannot get up.'

Browne has since confessed it was the voice that did it. Though no fault could be found with what was said, the accent was scarcely that of an Englishwoman.

'Are you on a path or on the hillside?' he inquired, after he had vainly endeavoured to locate her.

'I am on the hillside,' she replied. 'The fog was so thick that I could not see my way, and I slipped on the bank and rolled down, twisting my foot under me.'

'Well, if you will try and guide me, I will do all in my power to help you,' said Browne; and as he said it he moved carefully towards the spot whence he imagined the voice proceeded. From the feel of the ground under his feet he could tell that he had left the path and was descending the slope.

'Am I near you now?' he asked.

'I think you must be,' was the reply. And then the voice added, with a little laugh, 'How ridiculous it all is, and how sorry I am for troubling you!'

Had she known to what this extraordinary introduction was destined to lead it is very doubtful

whether she would have considered it so full either of humour or regret as her words seemed to imply.

Inch by inch Browne continued to advance, until he could just distinguish, seated on the ground below him, and clinging with both her arms to a stunted birch-tree, the figure of the girl for whom he was searching. At most she was not more than five feet from him. Then, with that suddenness which appears to be the peculiar property of Norwegian mists, the vapour which had up to that moment so thickly enveloped them rolled away, and the whole landscape was revealed to their gaze. As he took in the position Browne uttered a cry of horror. The girl had wandered off the path, slipped down the bank, and was now holding on to a tree only a foot or two removed from the brink of one of the most stupendous precipices along the Norwegian coast.

So overwhelmed was he with horror that for a moment Browne found himself quite unable to say or do anything. Then, summoning to his assistance all the presence of mind of which he was master, he addressed the girl, who, seeing the danger to which she was exposed, was clinging tighter than ever to the tree, her face as white as the paper upon which I am now writing. For a moment the young man scarcely knew how to act for the best. To leave her while he went for assistance was out of the question; while it was very doubtful, active as he was, whether he would be able unaided to get her up in her injured condition to the path above. Ridiculous as the situation may have appeared in the fog, it had resolved itself into one of absolute danger, and Browne felt the perspiration start out upon his forehead as he thought of what would have happened had she missed the tree and rolled a few feet farther. One thing was quite certain—something must be done; so, taking off his coat, he lowered it by the sleeve to her, inquiring at the same time whether she thought she could hold on to it sufficiently tight for him to pull her up to the path above. She replied that she would endeavour to do so, and thereupon the struggle commenced. A struggle it certainly was, and an extremely painful one, for the girl was handicapped by her injured foot. Browne from his boyhood, however, had been noted for his strength, but never before had it been exerted in such a way. What if the girl's nerve should desert her and she should let go, or the sleeve of the coat part company with the body? In either case there could be but one result—an instant and terrible death for her.

Taken altogether, it was an experience neither of them would ever be likely to forget. At last, inch by inch, foot by foot, he drew her up; and with every advance she made, the stones she dislodged went tinkling down the bank and, rolling over the edge, disappeared into the abyss below. When at last she was sufficiently close for him to place his arm round her and to lift her into

safety beside him the reaction was almost more than either of them could bear. For some minutes the girl sat with her face buried in her hands, too much overcome with horror at the narrowness of her escape even to thank her preserver. When she *did* lift her face to him, Browne became aware for the first time how attractive she was. Beautiful as Miss Verney was beautiful she certainly could not claim to be; there was, however, something about her face that was more pleasing than mere personal loveliness could possibly have been.

'How did you come to be up here alone?' he inquired, after she had tried to express her gratitude to him for the service he had rendered her.

'It was foolish of me, I admit,' she answered. 'I had been painting on the mountain, and was making my way back to the hotel when the fog caught me. Suddenly I felt myself falling. To save myself I clutched at that tree, and was still clinging to it when you called to me. Oh! how can I thank you? But for you I might now be'—

She paused, and Browne, to fill in the somewhat painful gap, immediately stated that he had no desire to be thanked at all. He insisted that he had only done what was fit and proper. It was plain, however, from the look of admiration he cast upon her, that he was very well satisfied with the part he had been permitted to play in the affair.

While, however, they were progressing thus favourably in one direction, it was evident that they were not yet at an end of their difficulties in another, for the young lady, pretend as she might to ignore the fact, was undoubtedly lame; under the circumstances for her to walk was out of the question, and Merok was distant fully a mile, and a very steep mile, from where they were now seated.

'How shall I get home?' the girl inquired. 'I am afraid it will be impossible for me to walk so far, and no pony could come along this narrow path to fetch me.'

Browne puckered his forehead with thought. A millionaire is apt to imagine that nothing in this world is impossible, provided he has his cheque-book in his pocket and a stylographic pen wherewith to write an order on his banker. In this case, however, he was compelled to confess himself beaten. There was one way out of it, of course, and both knew it. But the young man felt his face grow hot at the very thought of it.

'If you would only let me carry you as far as the main road, I could easily find a conveyance to take you the rest of the distance,' he faltered.

'Do you think you *could* carry me?' she answered, with a seriousness that was more than half-assumed to cover her confusion. 'I am very heavy.'

It might be mentioned here, and with advantage to the story I have to tell, that in his unregenerate days Browne had won many weight-lifting competitions; his modesty, however, prevented his mentioning this fact to her.

'If you will trust me I think I can manage,' he said; and then, without waiting for her to

protest, he picked the girl up, and, holding her carefully in his arms, carried her along the path in the direction of the village. It was scarcely a time for conversation, so that the greater part of the journey was conducted in silence. When at last they reached the mountain road—that wonderful road which is one of the glories of Merok—Browne placed the girl upon the bank, and, calling a boy whom he could see in the distance, despatched him to the hotel for assistance. The youth having disappeared, Browne turned to the girl again. The pain she had suffered during that short journey had made her face very white, but she did her best to make light of it.

'I cannot thank you enough for all you have done for me,' she said, and a little shudder swept over her as the remembrance of how near she had been to death returned to her.

'I am very thankful I happened to be there at the time,' the other replied, with corresponding seriousness. 'If you will be warned by me, you will be careful for the future how you venture on the mountains without a guide at this time of year. Fogs, such as we have had to-day, descend so quickly, and the paths are dangerous at the best of times.'

'You may be sure I will be more careful,' she replied humbly. 'But do not let me keep you now; I have detained you too long already. I shall be quite safe here.'

'You are not detaining me at all,' he answered. 'I have nothing to do. Besides, I could not think of leaving you until I have seen you safely on your way back to your hotel. Have you been in Merok very long?'

'Scarcely a week,' the girl replied. 'We came from Hellesylt.'

Browne wondered of whom the *we* might consist. Was the girl married? He tried to discover whether or not she wore a wedding-ring, but her hand was hidden in the folds of her dress.

Five minutes later a cabriolet made its appearance, drawn by a shaggy pony and led by a villager. Behind it, and considerably out of breath, toiled a stout and elderly lady, who, as soon as she saw the girl seated on the bank by the roadside, burst into a torrent of speech.

'Russian,' said Browne to himself; 'her accent puzzled me, but that accounts for it.'

Then turning to the young man, who was experiencing some slight embarrassment at being present at what his instinct told him was a wiggling, administered by a lady who knew very well how to do it scientifically, the girl said in English:

'Permit me to introduce you to my guardian, Madame Bernstein.'

The couple bowed ceremoniously to each other, and then Browne and the villager between them lifted the girl into the vehicle, the man took his place at the pony's head, and the strange cortège proceeded on its way down the hill towards the hotel. Once there, Browne prepared to take leave of them. He held out his hand to the girl, who took it.

'Good-bye,' he said. 'I hope it will not be long before you are able to get about again.'

'Good-bye,' she answered; and then, with great seriousness, 'I hope you will believe that I shall always be grateful to you for the service you have rendered me this afternoon.'

There was a little pause. Then, with a nervousness that was by no means usual to him, he added:

'I hope you will not think me rude, but perhaps you would not mind telling me whom I have had the pleasure of helping?'

'My name is Katherine Petrovitch,' she answered, with a smile, and then as frankly returned his question. 'And yours?'

'My name is Browne,' he replied; and also smiling as he said it, he added: 'I am Browne's Mimosa Soap, Fragrant and Antiseptic.'

CIVIL SERVICE SHOPKEEPING.

By R. W. JOHNSTON.



SOMETHING less than forty years ago a handful of Post Office clerks, of whom the writer was one, clubbed together for a chest of tea, and parcelled it, out amongst them. That simple transaction has grown into a business which last year amounted to nearly one and three-quarter millions sterling! The Post Office clerk of forty years ago was not a very wealthy individual, and he was sadly perplexed at the 'high price of coals.' But coals were dirty, and difficult of distribution, so he turned his attention to tea as the object of his maiden attempts at co-operation. By-and-by two or three chests were bought and distributed, the money being planked down in advance, so as to secure the best terms

from the wholesale dealer. But soon the local grocer found out that his Post Office customers were not buying tea, and refused to supply them with sugar, on which there is little or no profit. Then came the necessity for co-operating in sugar as well as tea, followed up by difficulties of storage; for up to this point the business had been carried on in a large cupboard in one of the departments at St Martin's-le-Grand. By-and-by the 'Post Office Stores' was formed, with one of the officials of the secretary's office as manager, who announced over the entrance to two modest rooms in Bath Street, Newgate Street, that he was 'licensed to sell tea, coffee, tobacco, and snuff.' Modest as were the rooms thus occupied, the fittings were more modest still, consisting of empty egg-boxes, out of

which a counter and shelves were constructed. Nor was the business on a grand scale, certain articles being supplied on certain days of the week only—thus: tea, sugar, and coffee on Mondays; rice, pickles, &c., on Tuesdays; and so on. But even under these restrictions business prospered amazingly, and it soon became necessary to remove to larger premises, which were found in Bridge-water Square, Aldersgate Street. From there a further removal was soon made to Wood Street, and thence to Monkwell Street, where the stores became consolidated in a measure, and where a very considerable business was done. But caution was still the order of the day; and it is related how, on one occasion, the manager was severely taken to task for his extravagance in ordering at one time a whole hundredweight of moist sugar! The secretary came to his rescue with the remark: 'Don't blame the manager, for you will live to see the time when you will have to buy sugar by the ton.' Both men are probably dead now, but what would they have said of the purchases of sugar to-day, which probably amount to hundreds of tons at a time?

Up to this point Civil Service co-operation was wholly confined to Post Office men. But in or about the year 1866 the other branches of the service sought admission to the benefits of the system, and soon the Customs and Inland Revenue were in full membership. The 'Revenue Departments,' as the three great branches of the service are styled, were soon the envy of the 'West End Offices,' whose members would have been slow to start a 'shop' of their own; and by-and-by all departments were admitted, and the 'Post Office Stores' became the 'Civil Service Supply Association,' with a manager at £120 a year, and a capital in £1 shares, of which 10s. was paid up. Business increased apace, and before very long a move was made to the premises in Queen Victoria Street, which, after repeated extensions, have assumed the proportions of an immense emporium. As a natural corollary of the admission of the West End departments, there was soon a demand for West End accommodation, and before long the Bedford Street Stores were established, which have since overflowed into Chandos Street and Agar Street. Including furniture and fixtures, the premises owned and occupied by the association are valued at close upon *two hundred thousand pounds*, in addition to which a sum not far short of ten thousand a year is paid for 'rent and taxes.' This is an enormous stride from the Bath Street days, when it is improbable that more than £20 or £30 a year was paid for the premises of the original 'Post Office Stores.'

The customers of the association are numbered by tens of thousands, exceeding, as they do, a total of 44,000, of whom 15,000 odd are members of the Civil Service, and 28,000 odd are 'friends of shareholders.' The shareholders number 5286, and the number of shares on the register is 354,480, which, being translated into pounds sterling, represents the capital of the association. Origin-

ally the association was strictly confined to members of the Civil Service, and its co-operative character was then beyond question. But for many years it has admitted the outside public, and has become practically a trading concern, where profits are divided amongst a comparatively small number of its members. There is this to be said, however, that the original founders of the association waited for many years before they received any return, and that, in fact, they built up the business by their energy and enterprise in many directions. The wisdom of admitting the outside public was doubted at the time by many members of the association, and its evil results were very soon apparent in the fierce opposition of the shopkeepers of London, who, while admitting the perfect right of civil servants to co-operate amongst themselves, objected strongly to their trading with the general public. Their ire was further excited by the fact that the association did not then pay income-tax, nor even attach receipt-stamps to their bills. The matter was hotly debated in the press and at public meetings, and members of parliament asked questions about it in the House which were not always either easy or pleasant to answer. It could not exactly be said that civil servants had not a perfect right to use their leisure time as they pleased, and yet this precise use of it could not exactly be defended under then existing regulations. At length it was laid down that officials in high positions should not act as managers of the stores, and that the attendance of those who did act should not be after a certain hour in the morning nor before a certain hour in the evening. In other words, and in plain English, it was laid down that the stores were to be given a wide berth during 'official hours.' Income-tax, now amounting to over two thousand a year, began to be paid, and receipt-stamps were brought into use. This either appeased the shopkeepers or convinced them of the uselessness of further opposition; and such of them as did not set to work to reduce their prices commenced to plough with the enemy's heifer, by converting their businesses into 'stores,' and otherwise imitating the methods of their opponents. Prior to this truce the meetings of the association were a trifle lively, not to say uproarious, and shareholders with the gift of oratory were wont to let themselves go on occasion, and to make it hot for the committee, who sat in a row at the head of the table. But the meetings are now as dull as decorous, and the chairman as a rule has a very easy time. For years past the report has opened with a stereotyped paragraph congratulating the members on 'the continued prosperity of the association,' and the chairman's address has been more devoted to pleasantries than to apologies. The association has, in fact, entered upon that phase of its existence when, as in the case of nations, happiness consists in having no history.

A glance at the figures in the trading accounts for the year 1897-98 reveals a set of transactions

of enormous magnitude. Thus, goods were bought to the amount of over £1,400,000, and sold to the amount of nearly £1,700,000. In the latter amount groceries, wines, provisions, and tobacco figure for upwards of £800,000; fancy goods and ironmongery for £420,000 odd; hosiery, furniture, &c. (a strange combination), for nearly £320,000; clothing, boots, &c., for upwards of £107,000; and china and glass for upwards of £33,000. The net profit on these enormous transactions was a trifle under £47,000, an almost infinitesimal amount compared with the grand total of the sales, although enough, probably, for an institution which claims to be still somewhat of a co-operative society, and to supply its customers at the 'lowest possible prices.' Some of the items in the profit and loss account are interesting. Thus, salaries and allowances figure for considerably more than £100,000; paper, string, and straw for over £10,000; postage and receipt stamps for over £4000; stationery and printing for a nearly similar amount; gas and electric light for more than £4600; and miscellaneous trade expenses for about a similar amount. The carriage of goods considerably exceeds £30,000; nor can we wonder at this when it is estimated that more than a million packages are despatched during the year, and that the packing department alone employs more than five hundred hands. One item merits special attention—namely, £7315 for price lists and circulars, including cost of delivery, but less advertisements.

The price list is a huge volume of over twelve hundred closely printed pages, and is a perfect marvel of detail and exhaustiveness. It contains a guide to nearly fifty separate departments, so various as to include art, clothes, drugs, dyeing, fish, funerals, hair-dressing, music, pianos, saddlery, and travel. An index of more than sixty pages contains a list of over eight thousand separate articles dealt in, including such out-of-the-way things as ants' eggs, bayonets, bibs, cat food, chaff, dolls, dust-bins, family Bibles, files, fowls, gin, herrings, ice, 'incivility,' loam, manna, nails, oats, peat, petticoats, pigs' feet, prawns, prayer-books, rat-traps, slugs, straw, tape (red!), tares, tow, urns, vices, washing, wash-ups, yacht wine-glasses, yak lace, and zithers. The association has agents abroad, through whom it carries on a large export business. It makes arrangements for laundry-work and window-cleaning; has a tourist, excursion, railway, and steam-packet agency; conducts auction sales, valuations for probate, life insurance, fire, burglary, and accident insurance, and custom-house and shipping business; and arranges for the supply of governesses and teachers at reduced rates. It provides doctors, dentists, and masseurs at reduced fees, and has made arrangements with the St John's Ambulance Association Invalid Transport Corps for the supply of horse ambulance carriages, litters, stretchers, and carrying-chairs, with qualified attendants. In short, it will bring

you into the world, feed and clothe you, see to your health as well as your teeth, carry you about when on pleasure bent or too lame to walk, bury you when dead, and provide for your widow by a handsome life insurance. It does not yet undertake to marry its members, a clergyman being one of the few 'commodities' not dealt in at the stores. But it will supply you with a wedding-breakfast if you are old-fashioned enough to affect that hospitable form of entertainment, and it will provide the carriages to convey you and your guests to and from church, and yourself and wife to the railway station, 'with coachmen in livery if desired.' In short, there is nothing worth buying which the association does not sell, down to a wooden leg or a club-foot, and up to hats, helmets, and other headgear, not even excepting wigs and wide-awakes. But it sells many things which civil servants, happily, do not require to buy, and many more which they cannot afford—diamonds, for instance. But, having admitted the outside public—the rich, the luxurious, the leisurely—to the privilege of trading with it, the association has, perforce, to keep everything, or practically everything, which may be asked for. It is, in fact, a 'Universal Provider,' with the single exception, perhaps, that it does not provide young men as partners at smart dances, although it provides conjurers and other descriptions of entertainers for evening parties, and the like.

'Going to the stores' has become one of the recognised female dissipations of the day, and the crowded state of the refreshment and toilet departments towards one o'clock is not wholly due to the famished young clerks who flock there in their hundreds to snatch a hasty meal, and otherwise refresh themselves 'at the lowest possible price.'

The association is managed by a committee of fifteen, including a chairman, and representing all the branches, or groups of branches, of the Civil Service. Each member of committee receives £200 a year, so that the total cost of management reaches the respectable sum of £3000 a year. The principal officers are the secretary, with £600 a year; the accountant, with £400 a year; the chief cashier, with a similar amount; and the treasurer, with £200 a year, which amount is also paid to each of the two auditors. The total number of employés exceeds fourteen hundred, and is made up of superintendents, clerks, storekeepers, assistant-storekeepers, dispensers, assistants, mechanics, servants, porters, timekeepers, and so forth. One storekeeper receives as much as £420 a year, one clerk as much as £310 a year, and one mechanic as much as £275 a year; while two dispensers share between them the respectable amount of £520 a year. Assistants are paid wages ranging from £4, 10s. to 7s. a week, the graduation being, no doubt, in accordance with age, experience, and length of service. In fact, Civil Service practice is pretty closely adhered to, and a pension fund provides for the

old age of the employés, while a provident fund provides for their sickness, death, or other misfortune. To both of these funds the association is a liberal contributor, £2000 a year being usually granted to the pension fund, and £500 a year to the provident. These funds would appear to be in a flourishing condition, the former having as much as £22,800 to its credit, and the latter not far short of £14,000. The association is, in every respect, a model employer, and lends its countenance to various agencies for the benefit of its employés, including cricket clubs and other recreative facilities, and the inevitable 'smoking concert.' On the whole, the consideration is well deserved, and the chronic grumbler against incivility has almost ceased from troubling at the half-yearly meetings, just as his colleague in the Petty Bag Office has ceased to complain of the quality of the butter, the bacon, and the 'baccy.'

The association has had several imitators during the past thirty years, but its method of doing business has hardly been bettered, nor its success eclipsed in any way. There was a 'hive-off' comparatively early when the 'New Civil Service Co-operation' set up close by in Queen Victoria Street, and appealed to much the same class of customers. Apparently there was room enough for both; at all events, the Supply Association has not suffered in any way from what is practically a next-door opposition. Later, the 'Civil Service Co-operative Society,' generally known as the 'Haymarket Stores,' was started, and has attained to considerable proportions. But the most formidable competitor of the association is the 'Army and Navy Co-operative Society,' generally known as the 'Army and Navy Stores,' in Victoria Street, Westminster. In this case the business is on a scale approaching, if it does not exceed, that of the Supply Association, and there may be said to be a very active competition between the two. Probably the Army and Navy and Haymarket Stores have the larger number of 'carriage people' amongst their customers, and there is no more familiar sight than the block of vehicles in Victoria Street on fine afternoons. This, indeed, constituted one of the bitterest complaints of the shopkeepers in the early days, it being pointed out that people would take home

brooms and brushes, for which they had paid cash, in their carriages, and ask the small trader to send home trifling articles for which they took long credit. But the liberality of all the stores in the matter of carriage arrangements has changed all this, and very small orders are now delivered free at any address in London and at many addresses in the country. Other Civil Service trading concerns are the Civil Service Musical Instrument Association, the Civil Service Mutual Furnishing Association, the Civil Service Co-operative Coal Company, and the Army and Navy Auxiliary Co-operative Supply. There is even a Civil Service Bank and a Civil Service Cycle Agency, and, in fact, the title has been made so free with in recent years that it has lost a good deal of its charm as well as its potency.

The pioneers of the stores movement undoubtedly performed a great public service, the rapacity of the shopkeepers thirty years ago being almost beyond endurance. Most articles of everyday use were dear beyond all present day conception, and drugs were prohibitively expensive. As for luxuries, they were not to be thought of in middle-class households, and certainly not in the households of civil servants. Unquestionably the standard of comfort in living has been raised by the extension of the co-operative principle, even in the modified form in which it is displayed in these Civil Service societies. But there has been an outcome of the movement which may have far-reaching results, and a stage has been reached when thoughtful men must feel inclined to pause and reflect. 'Industrialism' may be pushed too far, like most other good things in this world; and the present craze for converting private businesses into joint-stock undertakings is a feature of our civilisation which has its evil side. Admitting the gain which has arisen from the establishment of these great emporia, where everything is sold, there is the very distinct loss of personal skill and supervision, and above all of specialisation; and it may be doubted whether connoisseurs—of tea and wine, for instance—do not cling to the old method of doing business. There are a few establishments, which might be named, which have not suffered much from co-operation, so called, nor are likely to suffer.

FIDDLER TREEN.

By JAMES PATEY.



HE talk was of wrestling, particularly of the prowess of Dan Gerry of Porthillian. The men sat over their cider, in the clear light of the summer evening; and overhead in weather-stained blue and gold swung the sign of 'The Three Pilchards'—the little thatched inn being affectionately known as 'The Dree.'

It was old Roskrige who pronounced the crowning eulogium on Gerry. 'Take 'en altogether, for good Cornish wrastling, for grip an' for trip, there isn't a man in the county that's the equal o' Dan.'

But Hockaday, the farrier, qualified the panegyric. 'Onless 'tis Jan Tregooze; but he's hardly to be reckoned, for his wrastling days be awver. He's a changed sawl now, an' hath j'ined the Partic'lars.'

'For the matter o' that,' answered Roskruge gravely, 'I don't hold with 'en. 'Tis a good script'ral sort o' sport, for 'tis written that the angel wrestled wi' forefather Jacob; an' if 'tis fitty for an angel o' heaven, 'tis fitty for Jan Tregooze.'

Hockaday differed as he filled his pipe. 'Jan's about right; he says 'tis better to bring a sinner to his knees than to putt 'en on his back.'

Up the street there was a scamper of gathering children, and on the wind came the keen notes of a fiddle.

'I've seed some brave wrastling in my days,' observed Roskruge, growing reminiscential over his second pint. 'There was Carwidden, that travelled about to fairs, a famous chap, sure 'nough! I've seed 'en take a mazed bullock by the horns an' drive 'en tail fore.'

Hockaday, looking up the street, cried suddenly, 'Bless my sawl! here comes old Fiddler Treen!'

It was a queer figure that came limping towards the little group at the inn—a shrunken old fellow, with a ruddy, puckered face and straggling wisps of white hair. At his back he carried a leathern bag, from which protruded the neck of a fiddle. His loose coat reached his heels, and the original colour of it would have been a matter for antiquarian research. Lifting his battered wide-awake, he saluted the company with a courtesy that was two generations out of date.

'Waarm weather, fiddler,' observed Roskruge civilly.

'Waarm 'tis,' said the old man, mopping his bald head. 'I sim the miles be getting longer, an' the hills be getting steeper.' Whereupon Hockaday pushed the cider across the table; and when the fiddler's face was buried in the hospitable jug the men glanced at each other, and Roskruge tapped his forehead significantly.

'Where be bound?' asked Hockaday.

'Porthalla Revel o' Friday,' answered the fiddler. 'But, law! 'tis a revel no more. There's a club-walking now, an' a school trate, an' a *tay*'—this last word was spoken with intense scorn; 'tis terrible tame. Bless 'ee! I can mind, backalong, when Porthalla Revel was a sight to behold—caravans, an' booths, an' roundygoes, an' standings by the dizzen, two or dree score couples dancing to wance, iss, an' oceans o' drink, an' a hatful o' money for the fiddler. 'Tis getting a poor sort o' world!'

'Iss, iss, times be altered,' said Roskruge sympathetically.

'Altered, sure 'nough!' replied the old man. 'The old ways be dying out, an' the old folks, an' the old toons. What be I but a sort o' ancient bygone?'

'When you comed along, fiddler,' said Jordan, one of the younger men, giving a trend to the conversation, 'us was talking 'bout wrastling.'

'An' very purty talk, too,' observed the fiddler.

'Us reckoned that Dan Gerry wil be the champion o' these parts.'

'Iss, iss! he's a spyry feller, an' there's strength

in 'en,' replied Fiddler Treen; 'but I've seed a man Bodmin-way that's more to my fancy.'

The men, with sudden interest, leaned forward as Hockaday asked, 'What's the name o' 'en?'

'Simon Widgery—he's a thatcher by trade; a spare-built man, wiry, with limbs like iron, an' as supple as a conger. Gerry'd find his mate in that chap, if he didn't find his maister.'

Roskruge, thumping the table, cried excitedly, 'If us could bring they two together 'twid be a brave match!'

Hockaday, with some emotion, answered "'Twid!'

After the fiddler had rested a bit he resumed his journey, and when he had limped away Roskruge said sadly, 'Poor old sawl, trapesing about from place to place! 'Tis time he settled down to Christian ways.'

'Iss, a queer old man,' replied Hockaday; 'an' always a bit touched. Us found 'en starving wance on Gerran Moor, an' there was some talk o' putting 'en under restraint for a mazed wanderer; but 'twid be like caging a saybird.'

'I've heard tell,' said Jordan in a low voice, 'that Fiddler Treen hath the power o' evil.'

'Iss, 'tis true,' answered Roskruge solemnly. 'Do 'ee mind Squire Nick Vivian? He was a wild fellow; an' wance as he was driving home from Porthalla market, mad wi' drink, the fiddler stood in the hedge to let 'en pass, an' he lashed at the old man with his whip, for no mortal raison but out o' pure devilment. 'Twas a nasty cut, an' some of us wid have the fiddler take the law o' the squire, an' us'd pay the charges. But the old fellow wid hear no talk o' law; he wiped the blid from his face, an' he looked deadly patient. Then he took his fiddle, an' he played a little sawft toon. "There, my dears," says he; "that's for Squire Nick's burying." An', sure enough, before the year was out squire was in the churchyard.'

'Tis said, too,' added the dismal Jordan in a mysterious whisper, 'that he knaws the evil toon the nine maidens danced to—the very toon that was played by Old Iniquity hisself.'

'Rubbish!' cried Hockaday, with an impatient laugh. 'I warn't hearken to such fulishness.'

But Roskruge shook his head in rebuke. 'Tis no fulishness, Joe Hockaday, for there they stand to this day, the nine o' 'em, changed to granite stone for their wickedness.'

In the course of the next few days the rumour inevitably reached Dan Gerry of this Bodmin man who was more than a match for him, and the soul of Gerry burned within him. He loudly proclaimed his willingness to meet the thatcher at any place or time; and the challenge was noised about the country-side. But Bodmin was far, and the whereabouts of Widgery were only vaguely known, so it is probable that the invitation would never have reached him if Roskruge had not hit upon the expedient of entrusting its delivery to Fiddler Treen.

It was some monthis later, at a sheep-shearing

at Tregarra, that Treen encountered the thatcher. There was much company at the farm, and the services of the fiddler had been retained for a crown and a night's lodging.

At the great supper Treen found himself seated opposite Widgery, and fulfilled his embassy with considerable tact. Catching the man's eye, he raised his glass in salutation, and said politely, 'Here's joy to 'ee! You'm a brave wrastler, Simon Widgery, an' folks have heard of 'ee beyond the moors. I tell 'ee, thatcher, that the fame of 'ee hath gone forth!'

The thatcher was a good-natured, modest man, and impervious to the old fellow's flattery.

'Did 'ee ivver hear tell o' Dan Gerry o' Porthillian?' asked the fiddler.

'Caan't say I have,' said Widgery.

'He's reckoned the champion wrastler o' Cornwall,' continued the fiddler.

But Widgery went on with his supper unconcernedly.

'He wid dearly like to meet thee in a match,' proceeded the old man; 'and there's some say he'd maister 'ee.'

The thatcher's interest was centred on his plate, and he made no reply.

Then, raising his voice, the fiddler said, with an important air, 'Simon Widgery, 'tis a challenge—take it or I've it. I bring 'ee word from Dan Gerry that he'd be proud to wrastle with 'ee.'

'I bide in my awn parts, an' I mind my awn business,' answered Widgery.

'Then there's wisdom in 'ee,' said Treen significantly, 'for Gerry'd surely maister 'ee. Iss, there's rare wisdom in 'ee.'

The taunt rankled in Widgery. There were many men present, to say nothing of the farm-maidens, and he resented this imputation of sagacity. During the remainder of the meal he plied the fiddler with questions as to the geography of Porthillian, and the means of getting there; and when the huge junket bowl was brought in, crowned with cream and nutmeg, Fiddler Treen cried triumphantly, 'Then 'tis a match!'

Widgery quietly answered, 'Tis.'

One wild night the wagon of the Porthillian carrier made its adventurous way across the moor. There was a gale from the south-west—a Cornish gale, half-wind, half-water. There were brimming pools in the hollows of the tarpaulin, and at every lurch the wagon was fringed with a cataract.

There was a certain hilarity about the driver that was inconsistent with his saturated condition. He whistled occasionally, and wasted gusts of song upon the hurricane; and in lulls of the tempest he would turn and fling jocularities into the recesses of the vehicle, from which came bursts of responsive laughter.

The wagon pulled up at the 'Three Pilchards,' and Tregarra, the landlord, came eagerly forth with a stable lantern. 'I've brought 'en!' shouted the carrier, shaking himself like a wet dog; and

a tall figure, shrouded in a mackintosh, leapt from the wagon and ran into the lighted inn.

'You'm welcome, Simon Widgery,' cried Tregarra, bringing the stranger forward to the fire; and Roskruge, Hockaday, and the others, who had been keenly waiting his arrival, rose and greeted the man heartily.

'Here's Dan Gerry!' cried Roskruge as the Porthillian champion came forward; and the rivals shook hands civilly. Widgery was the slighter, and looked almost slim in his long mackintosh.

'Who's to be maister?' asked Hockaday of Peter Roskruge when the Bodmin man was stripped of his waterproof.

The old man looked critically from one to another, and said slowly, 'Iss, that's the question—who's to prevail? They'm a purty pair—'tis betwixt an' between. 'Tis p'raps with wan, an' perryventure with t'other. Wan thing's certain; 'twill be a brave match.'

The contest could not immediately take place, for Gerry had gone a-fishing and been bitten in the hand by a conger. The hurt was trifling, and was fast healing; for in his wisdom he had consulted Bathsheba Munday of Treleven, who had touched the wound and repeated her infallible formula, 'Conger, conger, harm the man no longer.' Opinions differed as to the nature of Mrs Munday's benison; some held that the virtue lay in the words, others in the woman. It is recorded that a St Budoc body had vainly used the words of the charm and the wound had festered.

The week's delay gave the promoters time to complete their arrangements for the matches, for there were to be other contests at the meeting, the Gerry-Widgery match being the crowning event. Money was gathered from all quarters, for the scheme provided a generous prize for the victor and a substantial solace for the vanquished. There was some talk of a tent from Plymouth; but this was abandoned on the score of expense, and they fell back on the old expedient of a 'fuzzy ring'—a rude arena of hurdles and fagots of dried furze piled high enough to intercept the gaze of all outside the enclosure.

The day came, and there was a great gathering. The ring of furze had been pitched in a level upland meadow, wind-swept and open; northward the country rose to the blue moors, and to the south it dipped in undulations to the sea. Hundreds of men paid tribute at the narrow entrance, and crowded into the arena—miners mostly, with a sprinkling of fishermen and mechanics, and here and there a farmer or a veterinary surgeon. It was rumoured that old Parson Edwards would dearly have liked to be present, but decorum forbade; so he aided the fund with a surreptitious guinea.

Roskruge was umpire, and sat solemnly at a table, with the list of competitors before him. Stuck high upon a pole behind him was the champion's trophy, the symbol of supremacy, a

hat rosetted and beribboned—its supplement being seven sovereigns in a leathern purse. On the opposite side of the arena Tregoweth dispensed cakes and drink; and near him, playing interminable jigs and country-dances, was Fiddler Treen, seated regally upon a barrel. It was the best of weather; the sky was blue and cloudless, and gloriously blue was the distant stretch of Cornish sea.

The sports began with their minor interests and humours. Sam Hocken, the butcher, threw his opponents so easily that there was some talk of his challenging the champion after the great match. David Jury and young Pascoe, notoriously rivals in a love-matter, betrayed such animosity in their wrestling that the judicious Roskruge parted them.

A diversion was caused by the sudden entry into the ring of Mrs Polgethy. Scorning the money-taker, she made her way to the centre, wet-aproned and bare-armed, evidently fresh from the wash-tub, and in a shrill, angry voice that verged upon a scream, she cried, 'Where's my man? Where's 'Binadab?'

A big fellow came sheepishly forward from the crowd of men. He was about to wrestle with a gigantic miner; but he quailed before the eye of the little woman. The wrath of Mrs Polgethy found vent in the terrible question, 'Hast thee digged they tetties?'

Alas! the silence of Abinadab too plainly indicated that the potatoes were undug.

'Shame upon 'ee, 'Binadab Polgethy! Here be I working an' slaving from morn till night, while you'm iddling like a good-for-nort, making sport for this tribe o' gaping fules!'

And the scorn of Mrs Polgethy, which had been focussed on her spouse, now took a wider range, and she swept the arena with her contemptuous gaze. There was a titter, but no conspicuous sign of resentment, for Mrs Polgethy had a reputation for repartee; she could hit off a man's defect of character or appearance in a facile epigram, and her nicknames stuck like burs. It was not until Abinadab had departed, and the white apron of his wife fluttered behind him through the exit, that the company dared break into their shout of derisive laughter.

Then came the great contest, and a thrill of expectation ran through the crowd when the umpire called the names. Widgery and Gerry entered the ring and formally saluted each other. Roskruge, who had hitherto presided with magisterial calm, could not conceal his eagerness as he gave the signal.

The men instantly closed, and Gerry had the initial advantage of grip—an advantage which he never lost. In a few moments it became evident that Widgery was struggling with a stronger man. Yet he made a wonderful defence, full of surprising recoveries. The dense crowd swayed with excitement as they watched the writhing forms, and a proud shout rose from Porthillian throats when the stranger went under.

But the second bout went otherwise. Widgery played warily; Gerry's points were grapple and sheer strength, and the Bodmin man dodged till he could close with benefit. There was a sinuosity about the fellow that was almost serpentine; his method was dexterous, but, devoid of attack, it seemed mere defensive wriggling. Suddenly, however, there was a stiffening of the elusive limbs, a heaving of the crouching back, and Gerry was flung off and fell with a thud. It was an astonishing throw; it evoked an enthusiasm that overwhelmed all local jealousy, and a loud cheer went up from the ranks of Tuscany.

Conjecture was keen as to the ultimate victor, and to conjecture he must be left; for, while the men rested, Hockaday rekindled his pipe, that had gone out in the breathless interest of the contest, and carelessly flung the match into the furze. There was instantly a blaze, and in a few seconds the fagots were alight. An attempt was made to beat out the flames, but the wind blew the fire along the screen of furze, and the dry fuel caught with amazing speed. There was a general rush for the narrow outlet; shouting, laughing, coughing, the crowd of men surged out into the open meadow.

'Bless my sawl an' body!' cried Roskruge, looking ruefully at the fire. Half the arena was now ablaze; myriads of sparks flew up in the sunshine from the semicircle of flame, and a widening cloud of gray smoke overspread the landscape.

The men for the most part took a humorous view of the conflagration, and watched it with something akin to amusement; when suddenly, above the roar of the fire and the multitudinous crackling, there rose the piercing music of a fiddle!

'Where's the fiddler? Where's Fiddler Treen?' cried a dozen voices. Then, with a gasp of horror, the men realised that the old fellow was inside the blazing ring.

'Treen! Fiddler Treen! come forth!' they shouted. But the music continued. The tune was 'Judy Jinks,' and the rollicking ditty sounded horribly grotesque in the circumstances.

'The fiddler's mazed!' cried Hockaday; and Dan Gerry said, 'Iss, us must stop that toon!' and, running towards the entrance to the arena, he disappeared in the smoke.

There was an agony of waiting, but Gerry did not return; and the fiddling continued, with a wild quickening of the time. Several men attempted to tear a gap where the fagots had not yet caught, but they were driven back, half-suffocated.

There were frantic cries of 'Gerry! Gerry!' and by this time many women, attracted by the fire, had come upon the scene. A girl with wild eyes and a piteous face clutched Widgery by the arm, and asked, 'Where's my Dan?' and the Bodmin man, without a word, plunged blindly to the rescue, and was lost in the dense gray cloud.

But neither Gerry nor Widgery came back, and the dreadful fiddling was fast and furious—'Judy Jinks' had reached delirium.

Hockaday would have followed, but the men held him back. The frenzied music became incoherent, and ominously ceased; and nothing was heard but the roar and crackle of the fire.

Then God, in His pity, changed the wind; the tongues of flame veered, and there was a sudden clearing in the smoke. The scene was laid bare, with its charred hurdles and heaps of smoking ashes, and the farther hedge of fagots still ablaze.

With a cry the men rushed forward. They found Widgery lying face downward, unconscious, but alive; and Gerry near him, far gone in suffocation. Both men were badly burned, but happily not beyond the doctor's skill. After weeks of tender nursing Widgery returned to his native Bodmin with a new skin, but minus his eyebrows; and the face of Gerry was indelibly seared.


As for Fiddler Treen, they led him forth elated and unscathed, with the smell of the burning upon him and a touch of the fire in his singed white hair. His face was grotesquely blackened, and there was a strange light in his little beady eyes. One hand clutched his fiddle, the strings

of which had snapped, and he flourished his bow in salutation to the crowd.

'I baint so spry as the rest of 'ee,' cried the old fellow, 'an' my scampering days be awver. When the lot of 'ee cleared out, 'twas a poor job for the fiddler. 'Twas flame an' smoke everywhere. I rinned here, an' I rinned there, but there was no way out. 'Twas fire an' blazes round about, an' the old fiddler in the middle of it. I said to meself, "Fiddler, 'tis surely the end of 'ee, for the chariot's come." Then I drew the bow across my fiddle for the last time, for the sake o' bygones; an' when I heard the voice of 'en I said, "If 'tis to be, please th' Ordainer, I'll go home fiddling!" An' I tell 'ee, they danced to the toon, the flames o' fire danced fitty to the toon, an' thousands o' sparks! But 'twas cruel hot, too hot for mortal catgut, an' wan by wan the strings went—all but the G; he's all right—he plucked the metal string affectionately. 'Iss, I reckon the G's like his maister—there's a few toons left in 'en yet.'

Thus ended untimely the great match between Widgery of Bodmin and Dan Gerry of Porthillan. The prize-money was equally divided between the two men. As for that coveted trophy of championship, the bedizened hat, its finery of ribbons was consumed in the fire, and the charred ruin was an object for no man's aspiration.

THE OFFICERS' MESS.

URELY it is high time,' writes a brilliant young staff-officer, 'that a prophet should arise and dispel the old time-honoured tradition that officers of Her Majesty's regular army habitually drink more than is good for them, play for more than they can afford to lose, and nightly turn their mess-rooms into bear-gardens.' And who is responsible for this widely prevalent belief as far as the ordinary middle-class civilian is concerned? The novelist, we fear; and not only the lady novelist of the present day, but those popular masters of a generation or more back—Lever and Whyte-Melville, for instance, who painted things as they then found them, and whose works are still regarded by many as standard authorities on the social side of the military career. However, the mess-dinner, usually selected as the background for a scene of general 'bedevilment,' has long since ceased to be a gorge accompanied with intemperance. It has been curtailed into a gentlemen's dinner-party, at the conclusion of which the wine is passed round once or twice, and then five out of six of the diners betake themselves to smoking. Neither is the evening capped with the rowdyism of practical joking; in short, 11.30

P.M. will on most nights see the anteroom empty and most people in bed. An excellent story is told by an American humorist of his disillusionment in this respect. The writer first acknowledges to having been so fascinated by the tales of 'glorious disorder' contained in novels dealing with military life that he pays a visit to a friend in Canada for the express purpose of obtaining an invitation to dine at the mess of some British regiment. The eventful night arrives, and the American guest describes how he at once recognises the different characters seated at the table. There is the loud-voiced major with a digestion ruined by long sojourn in Eastern climes; that pale-faced, dark-haired captain must be the villain of the piece, the seducer of young subalterns from the paths of temperance and honour, who will wind up with a disreputable crash and disappearance from the army list. Surely that fat, light-haired subaltern can be none other than the good-humoured butt of the regiment; close to him is sitting the rollicking Irish doctor, whose wonderful stories will soon convulse all with laughter. As the evening wears on, however, our friend discovers no signs of reckless joviality. The dark-haired captain does not utter a word on the subject of cards or horses; the Irish doctor is mildly

amusing, but nothing more; while the adjutant evinces no disposition to bring in his charger to jump the mess-table for a wager. By the time the coffee-stage is reached the American has to own himself 'done brown;' he is merely dining with a company of quiet, well-bred gentlemen such as he might meet at his own club; accordingly he returns home to burn his novels.

The foregoing, of course, is nothing more than a fancy sketch; but we should be afraid to say how many persons there still are, some of them with sons in the service even, who at heart believe that the young bloods at least think it due to their cloth to live up to the shockingly fast and extravagant mess-life depicted by the most approved military novelists. A glance at the 'Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Army,' however, will show how paternal the authorities have grown in their determination to check any recrudescence of the old-time abuses. The commanding officer is now held severely responsible that the officers' mess is conducted without unnecessary expense or extravagance, and by his own frequent presence at the mess-table, his personal example, and every other means in his power, he is expected to encourage economical habits and careful management of all details.

Let us now explain briefly the constitution of the ordinary regimental mess. They are divided, like clubs, into two classes—namely, those in which the members contract with a caterer or mess-man to supply articles, to cook for and generally run the mess; and those in which the officers do their own catering by the employment of non-commissioned officers as caterers, when, of course, all pecuniary transactions with tradesmen are under the immediate supervision of the mess-committee, acting on behalf of the officers. In the latter case a sergeant is allowed to act as the officers' mess-man or superintendent of the mess-establishment; but no non-commissioned officer may be employed in any menial capacity about the mess.

Let us now take the case of some young officer joining his regiment for the first time. On his arrival he will find a card awaiting him from the mess-president, on which Colonel Blank and his brother-officers present him with their compliments, and request the pleasure of his company at dinner on this his first night of a new life. This invitation he must be careful to answer. He will be welcomed with comrade-like friendliness; but there will be no approach to an orgy, as in the old days when the bewildered lad 'might reckon on having made a favourable impression if he then proved his ability to swallow an immoderate amount of liquor without becoming more than moderately drunk.' At the present day, on the contrary, his companions will be taking keen stock of their new comrade. If quiet and unassuming, a favourable first impression will have been created; if bump-tious, the young officer will soon be snubbed and

wheeled into line, though it is every day becoming less the fashion to attain this end by thrusting his uniform up the chimney, smashing up his furniture, or turning him out on the parade-ground in his pyjamas.

Next let us investigate our young friend's contributions to the Regimental Mess Fund. On first appointment he is required to give thirty days' pay, which, at five shillings and threepence per day, pans out to £7, 17s. 6d. However, this contribution is not required all at once; it is charged in monthly instalments of three days' pay. The ordinary yearly subscription after this is eight days' pay, which is charged in advance in quarterly payments from date of appointment; while he may be further called upon for an extra subscription, covering all incidental mess expenses, not exceeding fifteen shillings a month.

The next question is, What is the average cost of messing per day, or the price of breakfast, lunch, and dinner, without allowance for wine or beer? The average cost in any well-ordered regiment is four shillings a day; it has been known to be done cheaper, and of course in some cavalry regiments and 'crack' corps the amount is considerably higher. However, four shillings a day may be taken as a very fair average, and we cannot say that we think this sum to be at all out of the way. The house-dinner in the cheapest of the recognised London clubs comes to half-a-crown, including table-money; and there are few places, we fancy, where one can get a gracefully served breakfast and luncheon, with no lack of variety, for the combined sum of eighteenpence. In fact, it is only fair to state that the ordinary charges for daily messing have been brought within such limits that those officers who may not have much private means may be enabled to live in a comfortable and suitable manner.

Of course, an officer's wine-bill is what he chooses to make it. The old practice of 'pooling' the expense of all the wine drunk at dinner has been discontinued. In fact, very little wine is now drunk before dessert. Enter the mess-rooms of what are popularly considered the most expensive regiments, and ten to one that you will find the majority of diners drinking beer or whisky and soda. Whatever is drunk, though, must be properly decanted, for it is a *sine quâ non* that no bottles may appear on a mess-table. The trial of the famous Lord Cardigan for shooting a Captain Tuckett in a duel arose originally from what was known as the 'Black Bottle Riot,' which was a dispute over this point of mess-table etiquette. When stationed at Canterbury, Cardigan ordered a certain Captain Reynolds under arrest for refusing to remove a bottle of Madeira placed before him; hence a feud arose, which culminated in a duel with one of Reynolds's brother-officers, and Cardigan's subsequent trial by his peers.

While on this subject reference must be made

to the Regent's Allowance. This is, strictly speaking, an allowance of after-dinner wine, or rather the money to buy it, whereby those officers who cannot otherwise afford it may be enabled to drink the Queen's health. It appears that the 'First Gentleman in Europe' was dining one evening with some regiment, and after dinner noticed that some of the officers did not drink the King's health. In reply to his inquiry, he was informed that no disloyalty was meant thereby, but that these officers could not afford to drink wine every night. The Regent thereupon instituted the wine-allowance which bears his name to this day. In most regiments the sum thus received is paid into the general mess-fund. In the marines, however, each dining member can either drink one glass of wine every night, or else can be credited thereof in his mess-bill. A curious anachronism arose during the Crimean war in connection with this custom. In those days the allowance, however much it might be, was divided among the dining members at the mess; and, owing to the absence on active service of the large majority of officers, of the few that remained behind each received such a large share of the allowance in cash that they were virtually being paid a fixed sum per night to dine at mess. At the headquarters of the marines, both artillery and light infantry, the officers' messes are renowned for their excellence and cheapness. This is partly owing to their stationary character, and partly to the very large number of dining members usually present.

As we have already pointed out, every officers' mess possesses a board of control in the shape of a mess-committee, with a mess-president at its head. The latter's term of office usually lasts a year; and it is no exaggeration to state that it is a most thankless undertaking. For twelve weary months this unfortunate officer is not only burdened with the casting up of accounts, but has to bear the brunt of all the complaints that even in the best-managed messes are always forthcoming. Major A. strongly disapproves of the new brand of port; Major B. declares it is the only stuff worth drinking. Captain C. complains that the mess-sergeant, a post corresponding to that of butler, has a private spite against his servant, whom he details unfairly for waiting at table. Captain D. bursts with indignation because the dinner was not quite up to the mark—at least so he says—the night a wealthy relative was his guest. Jones complains that the mess-stationery is cheap and nasty, Brown has a fault to find with the carpet, while Robinson declares that he is being charged for purely fictitious breakages. All of these complaints, and hundreds like them, have to be inquired into and answered; and to those natures which are apt to take such fault-finding in a rather personal spirit, life, for the time being, will appear to be hardly worth living. But the last straw is reached when some young subaltern, who in his parents' country rectory or quiet suburban villa

has been accustomed to make a simple dinner off the family joint, enters a long complaint about the quality of his regimental six-course meal, and suggests the introduction of an extra *entrée*. One sarcastic mess-president has a never-failing rejoinder for such as these: 'If you say any more, we shall have to send you home to rough it for a bit.'

The interior economy of an officers' mess is governed by the mess-meetings which are held once every three months, for the purpose of publicly auditing the accounts, and for discussing any propositions that may be brought forward. On these occasions the commanding officer is in the chair, the meeting is regarded in the light of a parade, and all officers have to be present in uniform. The votes of the latter are taken upon any proposition on which a difference of opinion is found to exist, provided, of course, that the 'C. O.' concurs. As is only right and proper, the regulations governing the payment of mess and wine bills are most rigidly adhered to. By the second of the month the accounts are presented to each member of the mess, and they must be paid on or before the seventh. Any officer neglecting to comply with this rule is called upon by his commanding officer for an explanation; and if the result be unsatisfactory, and the account be not settled by the fourteenth of the same month, the officer is liable to be suspended as a member of the mess, and the circumstances reported to the general officer commanding. Again, before any officer proceeds on leave for a period longer than seven days he has to certify that he has paid his mess-bill up to date.

To turn to the subject of regimental entertaining, concerning which considerable misconception appears to exist. As a matter of fact only one entertainment is recognised by the authorities, and that the lunch or dinner given to the inspecting general officer on the date of his annual inspection. Towards this all officers must subscribe, but in distributing the cost the charges are apportioned in shares of so many days' pay to each individual officer; hence the expense very properly falls more lightly upon the junior than upon the senior ranks. Balls and all other expensive regimental entertainments can only be given on the responsibility of officers commanding units, who must in every case obtain the sanction of the general officer commanding the district. Before granting such permission, however, the latter must first satisfy himself as to the wishes of the officers concerned, and take care that no undue extravagance is indulged in. Whenever it is proposed to give an entertainment of any kind, from a ball to a garden-party, the mess-president, acting for the colonel, has to circulate a paper among the officers notifying the proposal. Only those officers who sign the paper, thereby signifying their concurrence, can be called upon to pay any share of the expense incurred; and in this particular every care is taken to protect the young officer unblest with much

private means from being made the subject of undue pressure. Of course, it is hard to say 'No;' but commanding officers are expected to extend their special countenance and protection to any who, from motives of economy, may decline to share in such festivities. Officers are now absolutely forbidden to combine, whether regimentally or otherwise, for the purpose of giving luncheon parties at race-meetings or entertainments of any similar kind; while the old expensive practice of entertaining units on arrival at or departure from a station is also prohibited. Any hospitality of this kind has to be limited to making their brothers-in-arms honorary members of the mess, which means that the latter pay for what they have in the ordinary way.

On joining, every officer is provided with a soldier-servant, whose wages are fixed at ten shillings a month, and who, as he has to take his turn in waiting at dinner, must be furnished by his master with a suit of the regimental livery. The cost of this is nothing excessive; the liveries are made by the regimental master-tailor; and officers can take over liveries with a change of servants. It will be hardly necessary to point out that the larger a mess is, the more facilities there are for economical management. With this object in view, all officers, except married officers, present at regimental headquarters are obliged to be dining members of the mess; while married officers, when their wives or families are absent, have also to become dining members. Seconded officers, however, are exempt from the payment of subscriptions to their line battalions, and this same rule applies to those studying at the staff college or attending the School of Musketry, who, of course, are then subscribing to the messes at those establishments. In conclusion, the supply of equipment necessary for the proper comfort and maintenance of a mess is regarded as a charge against the reserve mess-fund, and the latter may be only applied to the purchase of articles of ordinary use and to the payment of the premiums by which the whole of the mess property is insured against fire. The whole of the mess allowance granted by the Allowance Regulations, except such reasonable portion as is required to provide hardware and other utensils, is applied to the reduction of the daily expenses of the mess, for the benefit exclusively of the officers who attend it.

The practice which has prevailed in some regiments of presents of plate being made by officers on first appointment, on promotion, or on other occasions, is now supposed to be forbidden. However, the authorities wink at the transgression of this rule in regard to officers retiring from the mess on their marriage, when it is customary for the gallant bridegroom to present the regimental mess with some piece of plate; and again in the case of senior officers, who have, perhaps, spent their life in the regi-

ment, and who are anxious not to say good-bye without leaving behind them some memento of their career in the old corps.

It would be impossible within the limits of this article to deal with the fascinating subject of historical regimental plate. Two examples of an interesting nature may, however, be quoted. Not so long ago the order went forth for a certain famous battery of horse artillery to be converted into a field one. Mournfully and solemnly, accordingly, all the magnificent battery plate was sent to be melted down and remodelled into a huge centre-piece, representing a broken pillar, which now adorns the dinner-table of the transformed unit. The 51st Regiment (Yorkshire Light Infantry) pass round after dinner a beautifully-made model silver gun-carriage on which is a silver coffin containing snuff, or, as it is termed, 'the ashes of the old 51st.' As we all know, the grand mahogany dinner-tables of our grandfathers have disappeared into the limbo of the past; they have likewise practically ceased to exist in regimental mess-rooms. There is, however, a magnificent survival at the headquarters artillery-mess at Woolwich, and a militia regiment, the Monmouthshire Submarine Miners, also possess one. But these tables require the greatest attention; they may only be polished by hand; hence defaulters are told off to subject them to an hour or so of what may be described as massage treatment, which is the proper way of obtaining the necessary shine.

To conclude, we trust that we have shown by the foregoing particulars that the authorities fully recognise that the establishment of a well-conducted, economical regimental mess is an object of the utmost importance, and one which requires the unremitting attention of the commanding officer. And it may be truthfully said that this aim has been attained, and with it the complete disappearance of the old rowdy, topping, extravagant adjuncts, which certainly had considerable foundation on fact in Crimean and Mutiny days.

TO THE ROBIN.

SING, Robin, sing; your song is always sweet,
And sweetest when the year draws near its close.
Time marches on—and not with lagging feet—
Alike through summer sun and winter snows;
But you are no fair-weather friend who goes,
On eager wing, to brighter lands than these
Because the honeysuckle and wild-rose
No longer toss pink petals to the breeze.
Nay! If for pleasure or for livelihood
You sometimes wander from the haunts of men
To visit leafy copse and flowerful wood,
With autumn's mist you come to us again.
In scarlet vest, which colours dreary days,
With loyal heart you come our gloom to cheer—
Sing, Robin, sing! and from the leafless sprays
Wish all the world a bright and glad New Year.

E. MATHESON.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



DR BARLOW'S SECRET.

By JAMES WORKMAN.

CHAPTER I.

IT was a calm, warm summer afternoon. The sun shone from a cloudless sky on wood and meadow and winding stream, and seemed to linger lovingly on the ivied walls of Myrtle Villa, the residence of Joseph Hawthorne, J.P. Birds were fluting and chirping among the trees, bees and butterflies hummed and fluttered among the flowers in the garden, and from the tennis-court came the light-hearted laughter of happy youth. In an easy-chair in his comfortable library, with a handkerchief over his head to keep away the flies, Mr Hawthorne was placidly dozing.

An observer might reasonably have concluded that no shadow rested upon this placid rural abode, and that here, if anywhere, was a little oasis of peaceful tranquillity in the midst of a noisy, bustling world. No one could have foreseen, least of all those who were about to play a leading part in it, what a curious little drama, bristling with complications and surprises, was about to be performed on this unlikely stage.

In a sitting-room, by the open window, sat Miss Nellie Hawthorne and Dr Thomas Barlow, who had contrived to slip away from the tennis-court in order to enjoy a little private talk. Dick, Nellie's young brother, whose language was generally more pithy than polite, said they 'sneaked away;' but he was indignant because the absence of Nellie, who was usually his partner, forced him to play with an energetic young lady whose skill was painfully out of proportion to her enthusiasm. Nellie reclined in a cane reading-chair. Tom brought a stool and sat at her feet with his arms clasped round his legs and his chin on his knees. It wasn't a very comfortable position, but it enabled him to see Nellie's slim figure clothed in the daintiest of white flannel costumes, and her pretty face and the sunlight in her hair. Nellie glanced at him with a pleasant smile. She thought he looked well

in his whites and blazer, with the dark curls just peeping out from beneath his cap.

In their case the course of true love had hitherto run with phenomenal smoothness and rapidity. They had known each other barely six months, and were to be married within as many weeks. Dr Barlow had bought the practice of an old-established local practitioner, and, though a total stranger to the district, had at once become immensely popular. Summoned to attend Mr Hawthorne almost immediately after his arrival, he had pulled the worthy magistrate through a dangerous illness, and made an enthusiastic friend of him during the process. An intimate acquaintance with Nellie was, of course, the inevitable result of his frequent visits to Myrtle Villa, and he showed his good taste by falling in love with her at first sight. Being of a sanguine and impulsive disposition, he had thenceforth prosecuted his suit with the most refreshing promptitude and energy. His vigour and intrepidity soon met with their due reward. Nellie, after a few coy struggles to retain her freedom, capitulated to so brisk and masterful a wooer, and, her father's consent being readily obtained, they were promptly engaged, and an early date fixed for the marriage. Some few wisecracks shook their heads, and repeated the musty adage about marrying in haste and repenting at leisure; but, speaking generally, the engagement was received with acclamation, for Nellie was a universal favourite, and Dr Barlow had already gained a host of friends and well-wishers. Though so little was known of him, his geniality, good looks, irreproachable manners, and professional ability had produced so favourable an impression that no one, not even Mr Hawthorne, thought of inquiring very closely into his antecedents or troubling themselves about his past, with one important exception. That exception was Nellie herself.

If women ever secure a preponderating influence in the making of our laws, they will no doubt

pass a measure which will compel every suitor to present his intended bride, on the day he is engaged, with a full and accurate summary of the principal events of his past life. To many girls the period which has elapsed before they became themselves the chief interest in the lives of their lovers is a source of some inquietude. Had they the power, they would no doubt make confession compulsory; but, not having it, they pursue a less direct, but it may be equally effective, method. Sweetly, insidiously, in unguarded moments, in melting moods, they gather piece by piece, here a little and there a little, the details of their lovers' sojourn in that *terra incognita* of the past. To the young man whose conscience is void of offence this tender cross-examination may be one of the most delightful experiences of his life; but deft must be the tongue and swift the brain of him who would fain keep secret the record of the years that are gone. There are few men who find the situation altogether unembarrassing; for there are few, if any, whose fancy has not fluttered among the garden of girls, like a butterfly among the flowers, until it finally came to rest upon the chosen blossom. It is just upon this peculiarly delicate topic that the feminine mind delights to dwell, as Barlow had already discovered to his cost. He therefore perceived with some uneasiness that Nellie was again approaching the one subject of conversation which he would infinitely have preferred to avoid.

'And so you never really cared for any one but me, Tom?' she asked, with a kind of happy wonder.

'N—n—no, I never did, Nellie,' he rejoined after a moment's pause. 'I've had passing fancies, like all fellows. I've liked girls because they danced well, or sang well, or looked rather nice, and all that sort of thing, but I never really loved any one till I met you.'

'And you've told me everything, quite everything, about your past life?'

Now Tom was in one of those confidential moods when a man is very apt to let himself go, and tell things he would afterwards give his ears to recall. Therefore, though there was an incident in his past life he had no wish to speak of, and indeed was quite determined to keep secret, he couldn't for the life of him help hinting that there was something he hadn't told Nellie, and didn't mean to. Of course, he couldn't have chosen a more infallible method of arousing the girl's curiosity. Probably he enjoyed doing so. Possibly he thought that a man who had passed through experiences which he was reluctant to speak about would appear a much more romantic person in the eyes of an imaginative girl.

'My dear Nellie,' he replied, with all the solemnity of a young man who imagines that his experience of life has been unusually varied and complete, 'there are generally some passages in the life of a man who, like myself, has mixed much with the world that he would prefer to pass over in silence.'

He sighed in a way that would have greatly tickled a middle-aged woman, but which suggested to Nellie a series of exquisitely romantic situations. Naturally she became more curious than ever.

'I thought there were to be no secrets between us, Tom,' she answered in a slightly aggrieved tone. 'I thought we were to tell each other everything.'

'That's the kind of arrangement that works very well in theory, Nellie, but is very apt to break down in practice. I have told you more about my past life than I ever told any one before; but I went through an experience, a very trying experience, about which I confess I would rather not speak.'

There was a perceptible pause, during which Nellie gazed with a half-quizzical, half-anxious glance at her betrothed.

'Was—was she very pretty, Tom?' she asked at length.

'I didn't say the trouble was about a girl, Nellie.'

'Perhaps not; but if it wasn't, you wouldn't object to tell me about it. Was it long ago?'

Tom shifted uneasily in his seat. He began to wish that he had dexterously evaded the subject, as he had frequently contrived to do in the past.

'My dear girl,' he said, 'don't you think we might let the subject drop? You may be sure that I would not keep anything from you if I thought it advisable you should know it.'

'Oh, very well, Tom, if you would rather I said nothing more about it, of course I won't,' rejoined Nellie meekly, and then immediately added, 'But I think you might just tell me if it *was* about a girl.'

'Well, yes, it was.'

'And was she very sweet?'

'Now, Nellie,' expostulated Tom, 'you're forgetting your promise.'

'Well, my dear Tom,' exclaimed Nellie, 'what about your own promise? Didn't you promise to tell me everything?'

'Now, really, my dear girl, don't you think you're just a little unreasonable?'

Nellie glanced at him with twinkling eyes.

'Why, Tom,' she said, 'you don't mean to say that you're getting vexed?'

'Of course I'm not,' rejoined Tom. 'What an idea! But, really, you know, my dear girl, your persistency shows a want of confidence which pains me.'

'Well, and doesn't your silence show a want of confidence in me?'

'Oh Nellie!' groaned poor Barlow, wriggling about on his stool, 'I wish you'd let the subject drop.'

But Nellie's curiosity had got the bit between its teeth, and could no longer be controlled. Her cheeks flushed and her eyes sparkled.

'I would if I could, Tom; but I can't—I simply can't!' she exclaimed. 'You don't know how a

thing like that affects a girl. I feel as though I must know all about it now, and should be miserable if I didn't. You shouldn't have mentioned it.'

'I wish to goodness I hadn't.'

'Well, you have done so now, and consequently you may just as well tell me everything. Were you very much in love with her?'

'I suppose I thought so at first,' rejoined Tom impatiently; 'but I soon discovered that I had never really loved her—that it was all fancy.'

'And did—did the horrid creature jilt you, Tom?'

'I didn't say that, Nellie.'

'Ah, I suppose it was you, you cruel thing, that got the poor girl to care for you, and then left her; wasn't it now? I'm sure it was.'

'Well, if you're sure it was, there's no need for me to say anything more. Now, do please let the subject drop. You're making a mountain out of a molehill. It was only a passing fancy.'

'No, I'm not going to let you off now. You've gone too far to draw back. You'll have to tell me everything. Was she like me? Was she fair or dark? Was she tall or—or dumpy? Have you got a photograph of her? Yes, you have, you have. I can see it in your face. Oh, do show it me!—oh, please, Tom, do show it me!'

'Really, my dear,' exclaimed Barlow, rising impatiently to his feet, 'you are carrying the joke too far. I simply decline to say anything more about it. If you can't trust me'—

He was interrupted, to his intense relief, by a knock at the door.

'Come in,' exclaimed Nellie.

A servant entered with a telegram.

'Telegram for Dr Barlow, miss.'

Barlow clutched eagerly at the telegram, like a drowning man at a straw.

'By Jove!' he exclaimed, 'it's from a patient. I shall have to run away at once.'

'Any answer, sir?' asked the servant.

'No, you needn't wait.—I'll really have to ask you to excuse me, Nellie. I must be off. Good-bye.'

'Good-bye, Tom,' answered Nellie, and then she laid her hand on his arm, and raised her pretty, innocent face to his with the most bewitching and fascinating smile, 'and next time you come, you won't forget to bring the photograph with you, will you?'

Tom laughingly extricated himself; but as he got outside and closed the door behind him he muttered angrily to himself:

'Confound the photograph! What an ass I was to give myself away like that!'

Nellie stepped to the pier-glass, and glanced with an arch smile at the charming reflection of what was justly considered, even by critics of her own sex, the prettiest face for miles round West-beach. She arranged her crisp, wavy hair with one or two dexterous little pats, and nodded

laughingly at the merry, dimpled face that smiled and nodded back to her from the mirror.

'He might just as well tell me at once,' she soliloquised. 'I'm sure to get it out of him, every bit of it, sooner or later. A girl can get anything out of a man who—who likes her, if she only knows how to go about it. And I must know everything; I must and will. I feel as if I couldn't exist now without getting to the bottom of it.'

At that moment her brother Dick, a brisk, curly-haired, bright-eyed youth, came hurriedly through the French window with a blazer over his arm.

'Hallo!' he exclaimed; 'where's Tom?'

'He's just gone,' said Nellie calmly.

She had sunk instantaneously into a chair with a book in her hand.

'Oh, confound him!' said Dick. 'Well,' he added, 'I don't suppose it'll matter much after all.'

'What do you mean?'

'Well, you know Tomkyns—short-sighted man with spectacles and a long neck, always squabbling!'

'Yes.'

'Tom's blazer and his are the same colour. Tom's put his on by mistake, and Tomkyns is as anxious about that blazer as if he thought Tom was going to pawn it. Anyhow, he'll have to wear Tom's—I've got it here—and exchange next time they're here together. Hallo! there's a letter in one of the pockets. Here, you'd better stick to it, and hand it over to Tom when you see him.'

He tossed the letter into her lap, and promptly disappeared. Nellie glanced at it at first carelessly, and then with growing interest. It bore an American stamp and the New York postmark, and was addressed in a feminine handwriting. She could tell from the date that it had arrived that day. Probably it had been handed to Barlow by the postman as he came to tennis. Having glanced through it, he would naturally thrust it into the pocket of his blazer. She turned it over and over, carefully examined the handwriting, which was neat and well formed, and then slipped it into her pocket. But the postmark still continued to puzzle her.

'From New York!' she said musingly. 'He never told me he had any correspondent in New York. Who can it be?'

She picked up the book again, but the words conveyed no meaning to her mind, and presently she found that she had read a paragraph three times over without in the least understanding what it meant. However charming she might be, she was not exempt from the little foibles of her sex, and anything in the shape of a secret had an irresistible fascination for her. The postmark and the pretty handwriting seemed to be stamped upon the page she was vainly attempting to read.

'Who can it be?' she kept thinking to herself. 'I wonder who it can be? He never told me that he knew any one in New York.'

She wished Tom would return in order that she might cross-examine him, and a dimple stole into her cheek as she thought of how she would worm the truth out of him at the first convenient opportunity. She couldn't help reflecting that it would be easy to set her mind at rest by taking a peep at the letter, but of course she would never dream of doing that. It would not be strictly honourable, and Tom might be vexed. No; she would wait until she caught him quite alone, and then he would most decidedly have to make a full confession. He should not escape next time. Her eyes twinkled with merriment as she remembered that, but for the inopportune arrival of the telegram, she would in all probability have learned the truth about that interesting passage in Tom's life that he was so reluctant to speak of.

It was an unfortunate train of thought, for she presently began to wonder whether there could possibly be any connection between the letter from New York and Tom's coy silence with regard to that mysterious incident of his past. When the idea first suggested itself she smiled and put it aside as being too absurdly fanciful to be taken seriously. But, absurd or not, it presently came back, and she struggled in vain to banish it from her mind. Then the temptation to take just one glance at the letter returned with renewed force, and she jumped from her chair and stepped hurriedly to the window with some vague intention of promptly joining the tennis party. She was far too healthy a girl, both mentally and physically, to be of a suspicious nature; but Tom's evident embarrassment and persistent efforts to evade her questions had aroused her curiosity to such a pitch that she was beginning to feel afraid of being left alone with the letter lest she should be tempted, in spite of her scruples, to read it.

Little by little the conviction was growing in her mind that the contents of the letter would reveal the secret that Tom was so anxious to preserve, and probably enable her to identify the girl who had acquired some influence over him in the past. He had never before alluded to the matter in the most distant way. Something must have recalled it to his memory, and it was the

letter; she was sure it was the letter. Her fingers literally twitched to take it out and examine it; but with an effort, superfeminine if not superhuman, she controlled the impulse.

'No,' she said in the words of the poet, 'I'll trust him all in all or not at all.'

She imagined that she had finally settled the matter, but this was far from being the case. In her excitement she began to attach an exaggerated importance to Tom's silence. She reflected, with a feeling of shame at her own disloyalty, that, after all, she knew very little about him—had never seen or heard of him until he came into the neighbourhood from Highchurch six or seven months before. Suppose that, after all, Tom should have graver reasons than she had imagined for evading her questions, for hushing up the past. Her cheeks flushed with anger at herself for entertaining such suspicions for one moment; but the poisonous thought having once entered her mind, she could no longer treat the matter lightly. The more she thought over it the more serious it appeared to become. She was naturally most loyal to those she loved, and it was a source of misery to her to distrust one in whom she had hitherto placed implicit confidence.

Then she began to tell herself that she was really making a fuss about nothing; that if Tom were present he would willingly give her leave to read the letter, and probably laugh at the scruples which had prevented her doing so. And even if he would rather she didn't, a husband should keep no secrets from his wife; and though she was not yet Tom's wife, she would be in the course of a few weeks. Yet still she hesitated.

'It wouldn't be fair, I suppose,' she murmured, 'to have just one little peep at the signature. No, I suppose it wouldn't—I—I suppose it wouldn't. Yet I don't quite see why I shouldn't. He promised to tell me everything—and I feel almost sure it's from her. I don't know why exactly, but I feel certain it is. Surely under the circumstances it wouldn't be dishonourable just to peep at the signature.'

Her hand stole into her pocket and half-unconsciously grasped the letter.

A SWISS BEE-SCHOOL.

By GEORGE GALE THOMAS.



CERTAINLY it is not a school for the training of bees. The energetic and ingenious little creatures have, by their natural instincts, more nearly realised the ideal state than any democracy on earth. It is a school for the training of those who would learn the secrets of bee-culture and become apiarists.

Three-quarters of a mile up the mountain-side

on the verdant Rosenberg it stands overlooking the quaint little town of Zug, whose ancient towers, white-painted houses, and brown roofs peep out from the trees, contrasting with the blue water of the lovely lake. Here, in this verdant spot, I found the *Bienenmuseum*; and its custodian, Herr Theiler, gave me a ready welcome as an English comrade of the craft, and showed me his treasures with the enthusiasm of a bee-lover.

There were photographs of famous bee-masters the world over; samples of honey from every canton and every crop, from the rich honey of the cherry orchards of Zug to the alabaster-like product of the white clover of Bernina; specimen hives; bees of all kinds; as well as a thousand other things of interest, from petrified bees to manufactured wax in various forms. In the latter section was a miniature portrait in wax *relief*—an accomplishment in which the Swiss of Zug excelled in bygone days before the introduction of photography. The work was of the most delicate character, and the wax had been coloured so that every feature was represented true to life.

Adjoining the museum, however, is the chalet where the actual bee-culture is carried on. Upon entering I found myself in a large room with rows of doors one above the other in the wooden walls. Opposite, a small glass tower projected from the farther side of the house, and here I found myself at once in the midst—save for the protecting glass around—of thousands of bees on the wing. More than a hundred alighting-boards at the entrances to the various hives were scattered over the face of the house on both sides of the tower. These were painted in all the colours of the rainbow, to enable the bees each to recognise its own hive—bees having a strong sense of colour—and to save the battles which always take place if bees attempt to enter hives not their own.

It is in this chalet that bee-masters are trained in the school of practice. Students may come here for the summer from all the cantons of Switzerland. Not only is the course free to all, but the cantonal governments give premiums to the pupils in order to encourage the study.

The enormous difference in the yield from the old-fashioned straw hives—known as 'skeps' in England—and that from the frame-hives, arranged on the scientific plan, has convinced the Swiss government that only the spread of a wider technical knowledge is needed to develop a most extensive and profitable industry, for which the country is admirably adapted. Hence the inducements offered for the scientific study of bee-culture.

At the present time there are twenty-five students—some of them mere lads—all being of the peasant class. To each student a hive is allotted, and a card is affixed to the back, bearing his name, with notes of the progress of the colony of which he has the care. The rest of the hives are in the charge of the bee-master, and these, with the profits of the periodical publications, entirely support the Swiss Beekeepers' Society—*Verein Schweizerischer Bienenfreunde*—which itself receives no subsidy from the State for its work.

One of the doors within the house is opened, disclosing a glass back, through which the pupil

may observe at leisure every movement of his little charges at work, while suffering none of the discomforts of those who study the inside of a small hive.

The hundred and five colonies on the Rosenberg number, on an average, from thirty to sixty thousand bees each, so that in the chalet the enormous number of some five million bees have their home. They are chiefly of the small brown variety common in Germany, and differ little, if at all, from the native English bee. The bee-master had several other kinds in stock also; but he pinned his faith to the little German bees.

'Neither Italians nor Carniolans for me,' said he; 'these little bees are out gathering when the others will not venture out for the heat.'

Unfortunately in Switzerland, as elsewhere, the greater number of bee-keepers have little or no exact knowledge of bees. They put down a 'skep' full of bees in the spring, and take out the honey after the season, often suffocating the little workers, as our own rustics do. Slowly but surely, however, the knowledge of the craft is spreading, and in the tiniest hamlets one may now come upon a modern bee-house with a dozen colonies at work reaping a harvest for some enterprising peasant.

At Kriens, on the northern side of Mount Pilatus, I came upon a bee-house with some thirty colonies, which find their pasturage on the clover-clad slopes of the mountain. At Einsiedeln—the Swiss Lourdes—whither a veritable army of pilgrims wend their way every year, the monks have taken to bee-culture, and now have a house with some sixty hives to supply the wants of the four hundred inhabitants of the monastery. Even up at the Bernina Hospice, on the summit of the Bernina Pass—at a height of more than 7000 feet above the level of the sea—there are large colonies of bees, which find pasturage on the white clover growing beside the glacier.

Yet the supply is all too small, for there is, perhaps, no country in the world where honey is used so universally as in Switzerland. Throughout the country it is an article of daily consumption. At every hotel it is served, with unfailing regularity, with the *café complet*; but the enormous demand has led to adulteration, and the purest honey is rarely found in the hotels. The *ouvrier* class consume it most largely. With his bread and butter the workman always has honey. 'It is healthy,' he says truly; 'it builds up the body—and it is cheap.'

According to the most recent returns, there are about a quarter of a million hives in the whole country, or one to every twelve inhabitants, and the yield of a frame-hive often reaches a hundred pounds of honey per season. The yield from a 'skep,' however, is much smaller; so that, at an average of fifty pounds per hive, the honey

harvest of Switzerland may be taken at twelve millions of pounds avoirdupois, or some four pounds per head of the resident population. These figures do not, of course, represent the actual ratio of consumption, as account must be taken of the amount consumed by the multitude of tourists.

When it is remembered that the honey is gained only from the beginning of May until the end of July, that gathered later being required for the bees' own use, it will be seen how unresting is the energy of the little workers. Nor is this

more than a fraction of the harvest which only awaits gathering on the verdant hillsides and rich valleys of the land of Tell.

From the little school at Zug every year go out future bee-masters, while the extensive library of works on apiculture is always in circulation through the post among the members of the society, and it will not be long before the ten thousand millions of bees—to take a moderate estimate—who gather in the Swiss honey-harvest during the hot summer days shall give place to a still more numerous army.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER II.



WHEN Browne reached the yacht, after bidding good-bye to the girl he had rescued, he found his friends much exercised in their minds concerning him. They had themselves been overtaken by the fog, and very naturally they had supposed that their host, seeing it coming on, had returned to the yacht without waiting for them. Their surprise, therefore, when they arrived on board and found him still missing was scarcely to be wondered at. In consequence, when he descended the companion-ladder and entered the saloon, he had to undergo a cross-examination as to his movements. Strangely enough, this solicitude for his welfare was far from being pleasing to him. He had made up his mind to say nothing whatsoever concerning the adventures of the afternoon, and yet, as he soon discovered, it was difficult to account for the time he had spent ashore if he kept silence on the subject. Accordingly he made the best excuse that occurred to him, and by disclosing a half-truth induced them to suppose that he had followed their party towards the waterfall, and had in consequence been lost in the fog.

'It was scarcely kind of you to cause us so much anxiety,' said Miss Verney in a low voice as he approached the piano at which she was sitting. 'I assure you we have been most concerned about you; and, if you had not come on board very soon, Captain Marsh and Mr Foote were going ashore again in search of you.'

'That would have been very kind of them,' said Browne, dropping into an easy-chair; 'but there would not have been the least necessity for it. I am quite capable of taking care of myself.'

'Nasty things mountains,' said Jimmy Foote to the company at large. 'I don't trust 'em myself. I remember once on the Rigi going out with old Simeon Baynes, the American millionaire fellow, you know, and his daughter, the girl who married

that Italian count who fought Constantovitch and was afterwards killed in Abyssinia. At one place we very nearly went over the edge, every man-jack of us, and I vowed I'd never do such a thing again. It would have been a nice bit of irony—wouldn't it?—after having been poverty-stricken all one's life, to drop through the air thirteen hundred feet in the company of five million dollars. I'm perfectly certain of one thing, however: if it hadn't been for the girl's presence of mind I should not have been here to-day. As it was, she saved my life, and, until she married, I never could be sufficiently grateful to her.'

'Only until she married!' said Lady Imogen, looking up from the novel she was reading. 'How was it your gratitude did not last longer than that?'

'Doesn't somebody say that gratitude is akin to love?' answered Foote, with a chuckle. 'Of course I argued that, since she was foolish enough to show her bad taste by marrying somebody else, it would scarcely have become me to be grateful.'

Browne glanced at Foote rather sharply. What did he mean by talking of life-saving on mountains, on this evening of all others? Had he heard anything? But Jimmy's face was all innocence.

At that moment the dressing gong sounded, and every one rose, preparatory to departing to their respective cabins.

'Where is Maas?' Browne inquired of Marsh, who was the last to leave.

'He is on deck, I think,' replied the other; and as he spoke the individual in question made his appearance down the companion-ladder, carrying in his hand a pair of field-glasses.

For some reason or another, dinner that night was scarcely as successful as usual. The English mail had come in, and the Duchess had had a worrying letter from the Duke, who had been commanded to Osborne among the salt of the

earth, when he wanted to be in the Highlands among the grouse; Miss Verney had not yet recovered from what she considered Browne's ill-treatment of herself that afternoon; while one of the many kind friends of the American Ambassador had forwarded him information concerning a debate in Congress, in order that he might see in what sort of estimation he was held by a certain portion of his fellow-countrymen. Never a very talkative man, Browne this evening was even more silent than usual. The recollection of a certain pale face and a pair of beautiful eyes haunted him continually. Indeed, had it not been for Barrington-Marsh and Jimmy Foote, who did their duty manfully, the meal would have been a distinct failure as far as its general liveliness was concerned. As it was, no one was sorry when an adjournment was made for coffee to the deck above. Under the influence of this gentle stimulant, however, and the wonderful quiet of the fjord, things brightened somewhat. But the improvement was not maintained; the pauses gradually grew longer and more frequent, and soon after ten o'clock the ladies succumbed to the general inertness, and disappeared below.

According to custom, the majority of the men immediately adjourned to the smoking-room forward. Browne, however, excused himself on the plea that he was tired. Maas followed suit; and, when the others had taken themselves off, the pair stood leaning against the bulwarks, smoking and watching the lights of the village ashore.

'I wonder how you and I would have turned out,' said Maas quietly, when they had been standing at the rails for some minutes, 'if we had been born and bred in this little village and had never seen any sort of life outside the Geiranger?'

'I don't doubt but that we should have been better in many ways,' Browne replied. 'I can assure you there are times when I get sick to death of the inane existence we lead.'

'*Leben heisst trümen; weise sein heisst angenehm trümen,*' quoted Maas, half to himself and half to his cigar. 'Schiller was not so very far out after all.'

'A beautiful sentiment,' said Browne as he flicked the ash off his cigar and watched it drop into the water alongside. 'But, however desirous we may be of dreaming agreeably, our world will still take good care that we wake up just at the moment when we are most anxious to go on sleeping.'

'In order that we should not be disillusioned, my friend,' said Maas. 'The starving man dreams of City banquets, and wakes to the unpleasant knowledge that it does not do to go to sleep on an empty stomach. The debtor imagines himself the possessor of millions, and wakes to find the man-in-possession seated by his bedside.

But there is one cure; and you should adopt it, my dear Browne.'

'What is that?'

'Marriage, my friend! Get yourself a wife and you will have no time to think of such things. Doesn't your Ben Jonson say that marriage is the best state for man in general?'

'Marriage!' retorted Browne scornfully. 'It always comes back to that. I tell you I have come to hate the very sound of the word. To hear people talk you would think marriage is the pivot on which our lives turn. They never seem to realise that it is the rock upon which we most often go to pieces. What is a London season but a monster market, in which men and women are sold to the highest bidders, irrespective of inclination or regard? I tell you, Maas, the way these things are managed in what we call English society borders on the indecent. Lord A. is rich; consequently a hundred mothers offer him their daughters. He may be what he pleases—an honourable man, or the greatest blackguard at large upon the earth. In nine cases out of ten it makes little or no difference, provided, of course, he has a fine establishment and the settlements are satisfactory. At the commencement of the season the girls are brought up to London, to be tricked out, regardless of expense, by the fashionable dressmakers of the day. They are paraded here, there, and everywhere, like horses in a dealer's yard; are warned of the men who have no money, but who might very possibly make them happy; while they are ordered by the "home authorities" to encourage those who have substantial bank balances and nothing else to recommend them. As the question of love makes no sort of difference, it receives no consideration. After their friends have sent them expensive presents, which in most cases they cannot afford, but give in order that they may keep up appearances with their neighbours and tradesmen, the happy couple stand side by side before the altar at St George's and swear the most solemn oath of their lives; that done, they proceed to spend their honeymoon in Egypt, Switzerland, or the Riviera, where they are presented with ample opportunity of growing tired of one another. Returning to town, the man usually goes back to his old life and the woman to hers. The result is a period of mutual distrust and deceit; an awakening follows, and later on we have the *cause célèbre*, and, holding up our hands in horror, say, "Dear me, how very shocking!" In the face of all this, we have the audacity to curl our lips and to call the French system unnatural!'

'I am afraid, dear Browne, you are not yourself to-night,' said Maas, with a gentle little laugh. 'The mistake of believing that a society marriage, with money on the side of the man and beauty on that of the woman, must irretrievably result in misfortune is a very common one.

For my part, I am singular enough to believe it may turn out as well if not better than any other.'

'I wasn't aware that optimism was your strong point,' retorted Browne. 'For my part, I feel, after the quiet of this fjord, as if I could turn my back on London and never go near it again.'

He spoke with such earnestness that Maas for once in his life was almost astonished. He watched his companion as he lit another cigar.

'One thing is quite certain,' he said at length; your walk this afternoon did you more harm than good. The fog must have got into your blood; and yet, if you will not think me impertinent to say so, Miss Verney gave you a welcome such as many men would go through fire and water to receive.'

Browne grunted scornfully. He was not going to discuss Miss Verney's opinion of himself with his present companion. Accordingly he changed the subject abruptly by inquiring whether Maas had made any plans for the ensuing winter.

'I am a methodical man,' replied the latter, with a smile at his companion's naïve handling of the situation, 'and all my movements are arranged some months ahead. When this charming voyage is at an end, and I have thanked you for your delightful hospitality, I shall hope to spend a fortnight with our dear Duchess in the Midlands; after that I am due in Paris for a week or ten days; then, like the swallow, I fly south; shall dawdle along the Mediterranean for three or four months, probably cross to Cairo, and then work my way slowly back to England in time for the spring. What have you thought of doing?'

'Goodness knows,' Browne replied lugubriously. 'At first I thought of Rajputana; but I seem to have done, and to be tired of doing, everything. They tell me tigers are scarce in India; this morning I felt almost inclined to take a run out to the Cape for three months with the big game.'

'You said as much in the smoking-room last night, I remember,' Maas replied. 'Pray, what has occurred since then to make you change your mind?'

'I do not know myself,' said Browne. 'I feel restless and unsettled to-night, that is all. Do you think I should care for Russia?'

'For Russia?' cried his companion in complete surprise. 'What on earth makes you think of Russia?'

Browne shook his head.

'It's a notion I have,' he answered, though for my own part I am certain that until that moment he had never thought of it. 'Do you remember Demetrovitch, that handsome fellow with the enormous moustache who stayed with me last year at Newmarket?'

'I remember him perfectly,' Maas replied; and had Browne been watching his face, instead of looking at the little hotel ashore, he would in all probability have noticed that a peculiar smile played round the corners of his mouth as he said it. 'But what has Demetrovitch to do with your proposed trip to Russia? I had an idea that he was ordered by the Czar to spend two years upon his estates.'

'Exactly! so he was. That accounts for my notion. He has often asked me to pay him a visit. Besides, I have never seen Petersburg in the winter, and I'm told it's rather good fun.'

'You will be bored to death,' the other answered. 'If you go, I'll give you a month in which to be back in England. Now I think, with your permission, I'll retire. It's after eleven, and there's something about these fjords that never fails to make me sleepy. Good-night, *mon cher ami*, and pleasant dreams to you.'

Browne bade him good-night, and when the other disappeared into the companion, returned to his contemplation of the shore. The night was so still that the ripple of the wavelets on the beach, half a mile or so away, could be distinctly heard. The men had left the smoking-room; and save the solitary figure of the officer on the bridge, and a hand forward by the cable range, Browne had the deck to himself. And yet he was not altogether alone, for his memory was still haunted by the recollection of the same sweet face, with the dark, lustrous eyes, that had been with him all the evening. Do what he would, he could not endow the adventure of the afternoon with the commonplace air he had tried to bestow upon it. Something told him that it was destined to play a more important part in his life's history than would at first glance appear to be the case. And yet he was far from being a susceptible young man. The training he had received would have been sufficient to prevent that. For upwards of an hour he remained where he was, thinking and thinking, and yet never coming any nearer a definite conclusion. Then, throwing away what remained of his cigar, he bestowed a final glance upon the shore, and went below to his cabin, to dream, over and over again, of the adventure that had befallen him that afternoon.

Whatever else may have been said of it, the weather next morning was certainly not propitious; the mountains surrounding the bay were hidden in thick mist, and rain was falling steadily. After breakfast the male portion of the party adjourned to the smoking-room, while the ladies engaged themselves writing letters or with their novels in the saloon below.

Browne alone seemed in good spirits. While the others were railing at the fog, and idly speculating as to whether it would clear, he seemed to derive a considerable amount of satisfaction from it.

About ten o'clock he announced his intention of going ashore, in order, he said, that he might confer with a certain local authority regarding his proposed departure for the south next day. As a matter of politeness he inquired whether any of his guests would accompany him, and received an answer in the negative from all who happened to be in the smoking-room at the time. His valet accordingly brought him his mackintosh, and he had put it on and was moving towards the gangway when Maas made his appearance from the saloon companion.

'Is it possible you are going ashore?' he inquired in a tone of mild surprise. 'If so, and you will have me, I will beg leave to accompany you. If I stay on board I shall go to sleep, and if I go to sleep I shall wake up ill-tempered; so that, if you would save your guests from that annoyance, I should advise you to take me with you.'

Though Browne could very well have dispensed with his company, common politeness prevented him from objecting to the proposal. Accordingly he expressed his pleasure at the arrangement, and when they had descended the gangway they took their places in the boat together. For the first time during the excursion, and also for the first time in the years they had known each other, Browne felt inclined to quarrel with Maas; and yet there was nothing in the other's behaviour towards him to which he could take exception.

Maas could see that Browne was not himself, and he accordingly set himself to remedy the trouble as far as lay in his power. So well did he succeed that by the time the boat reached the tiny landing-stage his host was almost himself again.

'Now you must do just as you please,' said Maas when they had landed. 'Do not consider me in the matter at all, I beg of you; I can amuse myself very well. Personally I feel inclined for a walk up the mountain road.'

'Do so, then, by all means,' said his host, who was by no means sorry to hear him arrive at this decision. 'If I were you, however, I should stick to the road; these fogs are not things to be taken lightly.'

'I quite agree with you,' said Maas. Then, bidding the other good-bye, he set off on his excursion.

Browne, who was conscientiousness itself, walked along the hillside to the residence of the functionary whom he had professedly come ashore to see, and when he had consulted him upon the point at issue, made his way in the direction of the hotel. Accosting the manager in the hall, he inquired whether it would be possible to obtain an interview with Madame Bernstein.

'Most certainly, sir,' the man replied. 'If you will follow me I will conduct you to her.'

So saying, he led the way down the long wooden passage towards a room at the farther

end. Into this Browne was ushered, while the man departed in search of the lady. What occasioned the delay it is impossible to say, but fully a quarter of an hour elapsed before madame made her appearance. She greeted him with a great show of cordiality. Taking both his hands in hers, she held them while she thanked him, in fluent French, for what she called his bravery on the preceding afternoon.

'*Mon Dieu!*' said she. 'What should I have done had you not been there to help her? Had she been killed I should never have known happiness again. It was such a risk to run. She is so reckless. She fills me with consternation whenever she goes out alone.'

This was not at all what Browne had bargained for. However, under the circumstances, it would not only have been unwise, but practically impossible, for him to protest. You cannot save a young lady's life and expect to escape her relatives' thanks, however much you may desire to do so. After these had been offered to him, however, he managed to discover an opportunity of inquiring after her present well-being.

'The poor child is better this morning,' madame replied, solemnly wagging her head. 'But, alas! it will be several days before she can hope to be able to put her foot to the ground. She begged me, however, to thank you, monsieur, should you call, for your goodness to her.'

Try as he would to conceal it, there could be no sort of doubt that Browne was pleased that she should have thought about him. He begged Madame Bernstein to inform her that he had called to inquire, and then bade her good-bye. He had hoped to have discovered something concerning the girl's history; but as it was plain to him that madame was not one who would be easily induced to make disclosures, he abandoned the attempt.

He had passed down the passage, and was in the act of leaving the hotel, when a voice reached him from a room on the right which caused him no little surprise. At the same instant the door opened, and no less a person than Maas himself stood before him.

'Why, my dear Browne, really this is most charming,' he cried as he came forward. 'I had not the very least idea of finding you here.'

'Nor I of finding you,' Browne retorted. 'I understood that you were going for a walk up the mountain.'

'I did go,' the other replied, 'but the fog was so thick that I changed my mind and came in here for a glass of Vermouth prior to going on board. Believe me, there is nothing like Vermouth for counteracting the evil effects of fog. Will you let me persuade you to try a glass? The brand is excellent.'

Browne thanked him, but declined. He did not like finding the man in the hotel; but, as things were, he could not see that he had any right

to complain. He only hoped that Maas knew nothing of his reason for being there. Conversant, however, as he was with his friend's peculiarities, he felt certain he would say nothing about it to any one, even supposing he had discovered it.

Leaving the hotel together, they made their way down to the boat, and in something less than a quarter of an hour were on board the yacht once more. The fog still continued, and was destined to do so for the remainder of the day.

On the following morning they had arranged to leave Merok for Aalsund, and thence to turn south on their homeward journey. Fortunately the weather had cleared sufficiently by the time

day dawned to admit of their departure, and accordingly at the appointed hour, dipping her ensign to the village in token of farewell, the yacht swung round and headed for the pass under the Pulpit Rock. Browne was on the bridge at the time, and it was with a sensible feeling of regret that he bade farewell to the little village nestling at the foot of the snow-covered mountains. Never did he remember to have experienced such regret in leaving a place before. Whether he and Katherine Petrovitch would ever meet again was more than he could tell; it seemed to him extremely unlikely, and yet— But at this juncture he shook his head very wisely at the receding mountains, and told himself that that was a question for Fate to decide.

COLLECTORS AND COLLECTING.



THE instinct of the collector is among the commonest among men, and there are few which develop earlier. The contents of the pockets of the schoolboy, wonderfully varied and including many treasured articles for which he would never pretend to have a use, all prove that this instinct exists in him; and it would be difficult to say how much of happiness he must lose if it is anyhow stifled in the course of his up-growing. For the collector is by way of being the happiest of men.

Young people should be trained to collect. The son of a lady who may here be called the Wisest Mother on Earth has one very early recollection. It is of an occasion when he was led to a curious old escritoire and presented with a green Servian stamp of the value of fifty centimes, which had been kept in one of the small drawers almost from the day of his birth against the time when it should be thought well to start him on the career of a collector. He still has the stamp, along with many thousands of others; but other things have come to interest him more than these, and 'tis but rarely he opens his album. More than once he has been tempted to sell the collection in order that he might have the funds wherewith to purchase some article more to his taste at the present time. He is inclined to regret the fact that he never had the heart to do so when he recollects a lovely bureau-bookcase by Chippendale which would otherwise have been his to-day. But the collection will never be sold so long as he lives, nor will the album ever be entirely forgotten.

He was given many hundreds of hours of happiness along with that green Servian stamp, and of these the collection remains for a monument. How should one sell at its mere market value a Mulready envelope when one remembers

the joy with which one found it at the very bottom of a huge pile of ancient letters that were just about to be burned by the executors of him to whom they had been addressed? How should a five-pound note appear in any way the equivalent of a certain obsolete Ceylon, when one can recall, if one opens the album at the page it adorns, the tale of how it was stolen while its owner was at school, and recovered only after two whole terms of detective work that might have fitted that boy for permanent employment at Scotland Yard? Some day his executors will do the album up in a parcel and send it off to the auction-room; dealers will fight for it, and the man whose bid is highest will break up the collection, robbing the stamps of that individual history which each of them now possesses. But for the present the stamps are quickly growing more and more valuable; and once a month, or thereabouts, their owner looks at them and gratefully recalls the good times they gave him in the old days that are gone by.

Here is the place for a confession. He has collected eggs, and butterflies, and minerals; but in these he has no longer any interest, though in the course of acquiring them he gained much information whose possession tends to make life pleasant. But the stamps were his first love, and to this day he cannot be quite cold. There were certain countries in which he took a special interest, striving to render his sets of the stamp complete. Even now he occasionally finds himself tempted to stop outside the window of a dealer; and if those countries have been issuing new stamps, he is quite certain to go within and buy them in the end. With the philatelist the instinct exists perhaps in its most rudimentary form. His desire is merely to accumulate, and his only criterion is that of mere rarity. He has much of the blessedness of the collector; but he

reaches a higher stage when he gives himself over to the search and accumulation of things which are beautiful as well as rare. The owner of the album sometimes feels that all the money he can spare ought to go in the purchase of prints and china and beautiful old furniture, and is a little ashamed of the survival in him of the rudimentary form of that instinct whose indulgence has given his life its pleasantness.

Prints, china, and furniture: they are enough to occupy the whole of a man's leisure, and to render it delightful. The art of Japan is much derided by the vulgar, and to collect the colour-prints which illustrate the ancient life of the country is to be looked askance on by one's house-keeper, who ignores them so scrupulously as to make one wish she would openly protest. You know that she finds them altogether unintelligible, and so worthy of all condemnation. The faces of dead and gone beauties she would declare to be unlike the faces of any women who ever lived; the postures of famous actors strike her as the merest manifestations of stark lunacy; the landscapes convey to her no more definite an impression of the country than would be suggested by the smudgy drawings executed by a child with its first box of water-colours. To the man who has studied them, and gone forth to seek them in salerooms or in the shops of soft-voiced, obsequious Japanese dealers, they appeal quite differently. They are a rest to the eye in quiet moments, for colour and tone are alike delicious. They are an unfailing source of interest in moments more active, for they are continually recalling something new about the life men lived in old Japan, when great artists worked for wages of a few pence daily, and executed masterpieces for a few shillings apiece.

One has also, as one looks at them upon the walls and turns them over lovingly in the portfolio, the delight of remembering how and where they were acquired. It is a part of the business of being a collector to have very little money, so that one may have the privilege of wondering afterwards how it is that one has been able to convert so small a sum into so great an accumulation of beauty. Time was—and by no means long ago—when one could buy these colour-prints cheaply in long-established tea-shops, or from dealers in curios who had never heard of Utamaro, Hiroshigé, Hokusai, and a score of other great painters. Nowadays they have been discovered by the art critics, and there is scarcely a man of them but we are more or less reliably informed as to his life and his method of working, his course of study, and the students who came to him for instruction when he was famous at last. Concerning two of them books have been written, and it was only the lamented death of M. Edmond de Goncourt which robbed several of the others of similar honours which had been promised.

The prints, then, begin to be costly; but if the task of the collector has been made more difficult, it is hardly less pleasing. You will not any longer—except by a miracle, such as happens once in the life of many a collector—get a complete set of Hiroshigé's *Views of the Tokaido* for a trifle of three pounds ten, which was what was paid by one proud owner of the set. But if you know what is beautiful you may very likely come across an honest dealer whose ideas are merely commercial. He may consider that two prints he lays before you are of precisely equal value. Your opportunity comes when you recognise that one of the two, being perfectly beautiful, is priceless, and presently buy it at the figure that will be paid for the other later on by some misguided collector who has not the saving sense of beauty.

This sense, unfortunately, stands in need of educating. Every collector should possess a locked lumber-room, or play the dealer now and again; for all must make mistakes, and the results of these are all the more obvious according as the general average of one's successes is high. There must be a constant process of elimination. One collector, who is not altogether unknown, has earned the gratitude of unnumbered friends. To each as a wedding-present he has given a Chippendale chair, or a blue-and-white plate, or perhaps a pair of brass candlesticks. These are presents not likely to be duplicated, and his friends have felt themselves delicately flattered by his gift of a thing that must have cost him some research. It has been noticed, however, that he does not make presents of this kind to such of his friends as are themselves collectors. He has never bought anything that had not a good deal of merit; but this little habit of his affords some explanation of the fact that the uniform beauty of his personal collection excites the admiration of all the cognoscenti.

This sense of beauty is the saving of the collector of moderate means. There are dealers who are themselves most excellent judges. One such man, possessing objects that are infinitely desirable in almost all the branches of art, is perennially poor, because he hates to sell you anything for which he can conscientiously charge a decent price. Great people visit his shop continually, and he might ask what he liked and be sure of getting it. He has been known, however, when he has received warning of an impending visit, to hide the very objects which he knows the coming connoisseur would surely buy if he should see them. Once upon a time (and this is no fairy-tale!) he had an unlimited commission to buy choice pieces of Nankin for a wealthy collector. He bought a few choice pieces, and took his commission, albeit he loathed himself for so doing. Then he heard privately that a small but exquisite collection was in the market. He went straight to his employer and imparted the fact to him; then

he resigned his commission. The employer thinks him mad to this day. The truth was that he could not endure the thought of buying so lovely a collection and handing it on to another, even though he would have taken a handsome reward for so doing, and could never have afforded to purchase it for himself. The only way in which one may deal profitably with him is by acquiring a knowledge and an enthusiasm equal to his own. Then he will part with all that is best among his possessions — things that the ordinary wealthy customer is never even allowed to see; and you afterwards suspect that he has sold them to you without the smallest profit.

He is always poor, and occasionally he is absolutely bound to sell extensively. At such periods his company is not to be sought, for his temper is capricious. He gathers together a great quantity of goods, and sells them in the mass to certain people in London. Then he goes back to his shop and broods over what remains until he has found comfort in its beauty and in the acquisition of new objects of virtue. He is quite happy, and quite regardless of the ordinary rules of commerce until new purchases have entirely depleted his purse. But happily he is not the sort of dealer with whom one has usually to reckon.

The dealer of the more ordinary type is the man who knows the commercial value of everything; he would rarely be deceived into buying a modern imitation, however clever. But he has not the sense of beauty, and, be he never so set on getting the highest price for his wares, you may still get bargains in his shop. You have been told that such-and-such a man in some small provincial town has usually a big stock of antique furniture. The opportunity of a holiday comes; and, although the weather is abominable, you journey down by a slow train and hardly give yourself time for a meagre lunch before visiting the shop. It happens that you have arrived on a day when the man has a big stock, and has not for some time received a visit from any of the dealers who are wont to come down from bigger towns and buy up what he has collected. You imagine he will be in want of cash and ready to accept the most moderate of prices. Before long you are utterly amazed, and wonder why you did not stop in the big city you inhabit and spend your money there. His demands are exorbitant.

But you have endured an uncomfortable journey, and it may be some of your friends have been told that you were about to make beautiful additions to your collection. Moreover, the man has an extensive stock, and so you wander about his show-rooms and continue to inspect it. In the end you have probably made several purchases, and, simply by knowing the difference that is made by even the slightest change in the curves of the back of a good chair, and by recognising beauty when you see it, you are just as able to congratulate

yourself as the ordinary man who tumbles on a place where prices are low and buys there with a judgment less refined. It may be added that this sort of success may just as well as not await you in the shop of the man who does not scruple to attempt to sell you the modern products of Whitechapel as genuine antiques. In such journeys as this, moreover, there is always the chance that you may light on some small shop where the prices happen to be ridiculously low and the wares good. Then you are quickly rewarded for all your labours. There is a certain Sheraton table, for example—

A brief account of all the collectors one knows would be interesting, for each has his peculiarities, usually engaging. One of these is so poor that he can but rarely buy for himself the beautiful things he discovers. Yet he is for ever wandering in quest of them, for he is genuinely distressed that any loveliness should remain in the hands of people who do not understand it. He has a marvellous taste, and a deal of technical experience in certain branches of art. Only convince him that you know and love what is beautiful and he will place both these qualities at your disposal, telling you of all his discoveries, and buying you the most delightful additions to your collection at the most ridiculously low rates. He is afterwards fully satisfied with the knowledge that you possess and understand them.

There has perhaps been over much talk of prices; but, as was said above, it is part of the business of being a collector to have but little money, and to make sacrifices in exchange for rich rewards. The world calls every one who is engaged in the gathering together of objects of art by the title of collector, but it errs in so doing. The joys and the griefs of the true collector can never be known to the man who is in a position to send his agents into all parts of the world, bidding them use their taste and their knowledge to find out beautiful objects, for which he will straightway write a cheque when he has been told of their whereabouts and properly assured of their beauty. The poor collector rejoices when he has bought something at a low price, because he has thus the more money left to rescue some other desirable object from the hands of the Philistine.

One is apt to dwell a little sadly on the fact that men must die, and that every collection, even if it be not scattered, must lose in the hands of a new possessor a great part of the interest it had while it belonged to him who originally brought it together. But there is consolation to be had, and it were well if every collector would learn by heart the words of Edmond de Goncourt, who loved his collections passionately, and yet joyfully foresaw that they would be scattered: 'It is my desire that my drawings, my prints, my books—all the art objects, in short, which have made the happiness of my life—shall not suffer the cold tomb of a museum, and be looked on without apprecia-

tion by the indifferent passer-by. I order that they be sold under the hammer of the auctioneer, so that the delight I got in the acquisition of each object may be given again, by each of them,

to some inheritor of my tastes.' *Tout casse, tout passe*; but one's beautiful possessions will never cease to be cared for so long as they continue to exist.

THE ISLAND OF 'PAUL AND VIRGINIA.'

By CARLYLE SMYTHE, B.A.



IF all British possessions, Mauritius has, I believe, the most vexatious system of quarantine. Like the *Legion d'Honneur*, few escape it. The reason is not far to seek. Half the population of the island is in mourning, and the other expects to be. Exclusive of Indians, there are about 350,000 persons—mostly widows; and St Pierre struck a true local note when he made of his two leading ladies one a widow and the other a derelict. The principal reason of this prevailing widowhood is that the capital, which is almost exclusively composed of males, has been gutted by fire, and more than once ripped up by cyclones, which find an admirable theatre for their work in the semicircle of hills which encloses the town. But the devastation committed by fire and wind counts as nothing when compared with the havoc dealt by plague and pestilence. In addition to malarial fever, which is always with them, and which alone in one year swept off a ninth of the inhabitants of the island, Mauritius has so often extended its hospitality to epidemics of the most virulent form of measles, typhoid, scarlatina, chicken-pox, small-pox, and cholera that these diseases may now be regarded as quite at home there. The death-rate of the capital is about fifty-three. In these circumstances some stringent form of quarantine was needful; but the local council of health have put it on the wrong end: vessels should be quarantined when they leave Port Louis, not when they arrive. To have carried about the person one of the local bank-notes, which have the odour of a graveyard and are unfit for publication, should warrant the isolation, if not vaccination, of any person going into a clean community. Talking of vaccination reminds me that in these out-of-the-way places that operation is not as pleasant as it might be. I was forced to undergo it, and when the doctor was finished I asked, pricked by curiosity, how he managed to obtain pure calf-lymph in such a place. 'Oh, bless you!' replied this resident medical officer, 'that's not calf; that's the best black baby. What's more, it never fails.' It didn't. On the contrary, it was a huge success and enjoyed a prolonged run. But I doubt whether smallpox itself would have been more painful than that conversion of my body into an arena for some young barbarian's blood to play in.

In a sense Mauritius is an annexe, a sort of

remote suburb, of India, with which doubtless it was at some early geological period quite intimately related, since both the fauna and flora of the island are much more Asiatic than African. To-day, by its inhabitants, it is singularly like a bit of India that has drifted out to sea. As you land there is the dear old Indian crow on the docks, as perky and familiar as his cousins in Bombay; the rowers in the 'plying-boat' that takes you ashore are Hindus; while the rupee is the medium of exchange. Nearly half the population of the island is composed of Indians, most of whom were originally imported by the sugar-planters, who, indeed, still continue the practice of introducing the blackleg labour, under contracts for three years, at a monthly wage of about five rupees and all found. At the expiration of their indenture, being skilled sugar artisans, the Indians can earn a rupee a day on the plantations, or, as they mostly prefer, set up for themselves and cultivate small plots of their own, selling the produce to the big dealers. They are a thriving, industrious, peaceable section of the community, keeping the fasts and feasts and worshipping the gods of their ancestors in that far country. In Port Louis there is a Hindu temple, a mosque, and a joss-house; while there are almost as many Buddhists in the island as there are Nonconformists. The influx of Indians is in nowise due to the absence of native labour, but to the lazy and worthless character of the Creoles, as they are called—a mongrel race issuing from Malay, Dutch, and French progenitors, and mostly the descendants of liberated slaves. As might be imagined from a glance at their genealogical tree, the Creoles are an idle, dishonest, and insubordinate class.

Nobody who by any means can avoid it lives in Port Louis, where at any moment the hot hand of malaria may, like a grim constable, run you before a magistrate who sentences oftener than he acquits. In addition to this abiding dread, there is another objection to a residence in the capital, and that is the wreckage wrought by a cyclone within the amphitheatre that holds the town. Whenever a cyclone is signalled, and its direction, distance, and dimensions are ascertained, the inhabitants of the port are warned by a concerted code of signals. The first merely indicates that a suspected stranger is prowling about in the neighbourhood; the second, that its intentions are piratical—begin packing; the third and last, leave town at once and look out for squalls. When this dread sound is heard a

frantic stampede from the capital begins, and every avenue, every means of conveyance, by road and rail, is crowded to suffocation in the mad rush for safety. This of a tolerable sort is found in the residential highlands, where the houses are constructed to resist the gyrating gale. Provisions having been laid in upon the first signal, every aperture in the houses is closed, every door is firmly bolted, and the windows, every one of which is protected by a wooden door on the outside and another on the inside, are locked and barred. Here, hermetically sealed from all sunlight, the people are confined, sometimes three or four days, until the hurricane is spent and the wind gone off on another tack. If the centre of the cyclone passes over the place bars and barricades are of no earthly avail; everything and everybody are swallowed up in the maelström of wind. When all is quiet again and the danger over, the inhabitants return to Port Louis; and the capital has to undergo a process of reconstruction. But at any time Port Louis is a place of few attractions. Once a year it indulges in a 'season,' when there are high jinks in the little town. To do the thing in style the inhabitants import a grand opera company from France, with a full ballet, of course; they also purchase in Australia a few horses, at about £20 a head, for the race carnival, where the elegance of Mauritian society may disport itself. Finally, excursion steamers are run from Africa.

For the passing stranger there is only one habitable spot in the island: Curepipe, situated about fifteen miles from the capital, and lying two thousand feet above the sea, is the highest and healthiest settlement in Mauritius. This village is situated in the very heart of sugarland, on Plaines Wilhelms, where, in fact, the cane was first cultivated in the island by two Dutchmen of the name Wilhelm. There or thereabouts high society has settled itself, and Government House, which is close by, gives a tone to the neighbourhood; the greater part of the British garrison is quartered on the outskirts, and Curepipe is one of the principal escapes during a cyclone. But the atmosphere is far too heavily laden with moisture for personal comfort. Even in the driest and sunniest weather clothes become covered with mildew in the course of a day, whilst the poor smoker has often to get a light from the kitchen fire because he has thoughtlessly left his match-box on the table for an hour. They sometimes have rain at Curepipe, and in one summer shower lasting thirteen hours twenty-five inches were registered. In some parts of Australia the inhabitants do not get as much in three years.

This exceedingly warm and moist climate is as good as if it had been made to order for the luxuriant growth of cane, to the cultivation of which the whole plateau is devoted. Among sugar countries, Mauritius enjoys the distinction of being the spot where growing cane from seed was first successfully

accomplished. The government, in order to stimulate eager research in this direction, offered a heavy bonus for the discovery; and M. Perramet, with whom I spent a very pleasant day in sugarland, was the fortunate man, although, as he himself admits, the find was largely the result of an accident. The reward was considerable, and everybody, amateur and planter alike, became a collector of seed and competitor for the prize. Seed in consequence went to a premium, and it was considered a pardonable petty theft to steal the precious fluffy little things that had blown from some field on to your neighbour's coat in the train. M. Perramet, being a planter on a large scale, neglected no opportunity, and always kept a business eye on his neighbour's clothes, thence transplanting many a strayed seed into his own pocket. Some of these had been left by chance in a coat that was put aside at the change of the season, and when this garment was brought out to be worn again the seed had sprouted. Although the secret was soon out, M. Perramet continues to be the most successful grower, raising last year five thousand seedlings.

The village of Curepipe is quite pretty, with its unpretentious light-blue and white villas encompassed with rich tropical vegetation—palms, tree-ferns, and plantains—in the midst of vast fields of cane; and with its prim green lanes, in whose natural hedges grow the bougainvillia, morning glory, and lantana entwined in thick and amorous tangles; whilst the warm moist air is perfumed from an unseen censer with champak odours and frangipani. The place is almost entirely French, and scarce a word of English is ever heard in either street or store. The people are hothouse specimens of the country-folk of France. The priest that one passes in the street is not the regular priest of an English colony, but l'Abbé Constantin, with long black cassock, broad-brimmed hat, and inseparable umbrella. The very funerals are decked with Gallic gewgaws and tinsel, whilst the person at the head, attracting to himself the attention that should be devoted to the dead, is some Delobeele burying his daughter Desiré; and the couple walking in the cool of the afternoon, arm-in-arm, serious and silent as if resolving the mysteries of the Cosmos, are monsieur and madame from St Servan. Everything is foreign. Here and there about the bijou township are stores bearing the strange legend, 'Consolidated Retailer.' That conceals John Chinaman, in whose hands is most of the small retail trade of the island. Even he, I was informed, endeavours to pass himself off as of French extraction, palavers the *patois*, and affects a Gallic patronym—Leon Say, Anatole Paris, Calais Ahoy, I suppose, or something of that sort. The very streets of this out-of-the-world village have a French accent in their immortal names. In the green sequestered lanes of Curepipe, Lamartine, St Pierre, Buffon, Molière may still live when France has become a Russian province

and some wanderer from the underworld shall take his stand, in the midst of a vast solitude, on a broken arch of the Bridge Alexandre III. to sketch the ruins of the Panthéon.

The place is so thoroughly and tranquilly French that the sight of a couple of Tommies walking in the streets and whistling 'Mrs 'Enery 'Awkins' comes with the shock of an invasion. These symbols of foreign domination irritate both Creole and Frenchmen, who alike hate the ubiquitous red-coat; for, as Curepipe is, so is the whole island essentially French in language, manners, and morals. It is difficult to make one's self understood anywhere in this British colony without being able to speak the bastard *patois* known as Creole French. English is, of course, the official language, and compulsory both in the schools and courts, although evidence may be tendered in French, providing the judge and jury approve, while French is also permitted in the Legislative Council. The Code Napoléon is still the basis of all local law, and will remain so until the century of English occupation is reached—that is to say, until 1910. The newspapers are published either entirely in French or one-half French and the other a literal translation, which is quite unnecessary, since everybody who can read understands a sort of French.

Among the mass of the people, apart from the Indian population, there is always a strong feeling in favour of France and antagonistic to England, and the slenderest excuse is seized upon to exhibit this. When France alleged that her army had subdued the Malagassies, a committee was formed in Mauritius to collect funds with a view of presenting a sword to the conquering hero, General Duquesne, as a memento of his victorious entry into Antananarivo. Thereupon a few English residents, not to be behindhand in their recognition of the real merits of the French general's exploit, clubbed together to buy him a walking-stick as an emblem of his stroll from Tamatave to the capital. This acute racial feeling is naturally a constant source of trouble, and makes the government of the colony a matter of difficulty and delicacy. Nor does the trouble promise to diminish as the century of British dominion approaches its end, particularly as some alarmist members of the French community apprehend that the Code Napoléon will be superseded as the base of local law by the imperial statutes. This fear, real or feigned, is probably quite groundless; but nothing will ever persuade a Frenchman that the English can resist an occasion for perfidy. In Mauritius especially the querulousness and plotting of the French section are at once unreasonable and ungrateful, as may be seen from a passing glance at the history of this island of many *aliases*.

Probably the date of the real discovery of Cirne, as the island was first called, will always remain a debatable question; but there is a very strong probability that Dom Fernando Pereira visited it in 1507—which would entitle him to the kudos

of discoverer—and named it after his own vessel. At any rate, the credit of the earliest historical discovery belongs to the Portuguese, because—beyond all challenge—Mascaregnas, after whom the whole group was called, visited Cirne in 1528. Spain took possession of the island in 1580, but only to be ejected nineteen years later by the Dutch, who, in honour of their Stadtholder, christened the island Mauritius. The Dutch East India Company occupied Mauritius simply as a station on the highway to Batavia, the great Eastern depôt of the company. Until 1712 they were the landlords, and then deserted the island as of no value. Almost immediately Mauritius became the headquarters of a race of pirates, or, as they were termed, Maroons (Malay slaves, mostly, whom the Dutch had introduced); but three years later the French India Company took possession, and, exercising the right of a new tenant, named their acquisition *L'île de France*. For nearly a century the island continued a fortified outpost of France, and was mainly used as a base of operations against India. During the whole of that occupation the inhabitants were subjected not only to the piratical raids of the Maroons, but, in addition, to all the changes and chances of the Napoleonic wars. In 1810 the English captured Port Napoleon, freed the island from the Maroons, liberated the slaves, and settled a long peace on the land, which, if it had remained a French colony, would have been exposed to all the factions and disasters that have distracted and decimated France during the past century, and, in all likelihood, would have been utilised as a convict settlement. Instead of that the only disturbance caused by the English annexation is that the island changed its name once more, and reverted to the old style—Mauritius. The disaffected section may, however, possess their souls in patience with the double assurance, first, that John Bull is always glad to let well alone and place the government of his colonies as much as possible upon the shoulders of the colonists; secondly, that as long as Mauritius is of the slightest strategical value to India the English dominion will endure.

But it is not on account of its early legendary history, or the island's military importance, or because it is a common centre for cyclones, and was once the home of the dodo, that Mauritius has an abiding interest for the general reader, but because of the current supposition that in this colony the originals of *Paul and Virginia*, those two children of Nature, pure and simple, enjoyed the innocent rapture of love until awakened to the relentless bitterness of life.

Bernardin de St Pierre, it is true, passed three years in *L'île de France*, and wrote the novel after his return; although, by the way, twenty-two years elapsed between his departure from the island and his commencement of the story. True

it is, also, that he affirmed the characters to be real persons, and the narrative faithful and exact in every detail. Despite this express statement, it is now generally admitted that the hero and heroine had their only existence in the imagination of their author. This deliberate false assertion accorded precisely with the whole character of the man, St Pierre, whose life was one long lie to all the beautiful principles which he preached as the disciple and in the style of Rousseau. St Pierre's text was that true beatitude can be attained only by living in harmony with Nature, by loving Virtue itself alone, and by scorning the illusory advantages of wealth. His practice was to desert his *fiancée* because she was virtue itself, though poor, and to marry one whom he disliked, but who possessed the 'illusory advantages of wealth.' In glowing prose he insisted upon the harmony of Nature; in cold blood he married at sixty-three a girl of eighteen. Beautiful as Paul and Virginia are in their lives, it is difficult to believe that their creator could have felt anything in common with characters whose guiding principles are so diametrically opposed to his own leading motives. It was the popular cant of that period of unbridled license in France to affect an admiration for innocence and to maintain that civilised man was unhappy and vicious, while man in his natural state was happy and virtuous. St Pierre simply pandered to the craze of the moment, and in doing so achieved by this one book an enduring fame.

Every visitor to Mauritius may readily detect evidences of the author's carelessness in the matter of local colour and topography. There are particularly two glaring instances. That beautiful and poetic description of the panorama of the whole island, gained from the eastern side of the mountain behind Port Louis, is an absolute impossibility. Again, the hero and heroine in bare feet and one day journey through tangled and trackless forests, over several mountains, across five tributary streams and one wide, deep ravine to the slave-owner's farm and back. The distance traversed covers about thirty miles, and, in the circumstances, the journey would require at the least a week, not to mention a commissariat service by the way. But critical investigation has gone further than the local colour, and discovered that Virginia is a synthesis, in trivial details, of several persons, men and women. Her name was borrowed from the girl whom St Pierre jilted for 'the illusory advantages of wealth.' For her life on the island there was no original as far as critical research can prove, although unimportant incidents have been traced to little events which it is known St Pierre witnessed on the boulevards of Paris. But three persons are mingled together to build up her dramatic death. For some time a Mdle. Mallet was identified by what purported to be the record of an eye-witness, her brother, as the unique original of this scene in the story. True

enough a vessel named the *St Geran* was wrecked somewhere about the spot mentioned in the book, and a Mdle. Mallet was among those who were lost; but here her part in the making of Virginia ends. On board the same boat was also a Mdle. Caillon, who, according to an official record of the wreck, was the lady whom an officer offered to assist in reaching Amber Island. This officer had paid his attentions to Mdle. Caillon during the voyage out, and his gallantry was thus only natural. Upon such slender facts (for Paul appears to have been a complete figment), all of which were inextricably mingled in treatment, did St Pierre build his somewhat tiresome and wholly untrue picture of the beatitude and chastity of life when exempt from the contaminations of civilisation. But the wide and instantaneous reception of the work—the picture of an ideally pure life—among the corrupt and debased society preceding the Revolution is, after all, the most inexplicable circumstance connected with *Paul and Virginia*.

TO BOGGANING.

I WATCHED a gay and fascinating throng
Go aliding down a snow-slope, one by one,
Until the last of that procession long
Had turned a distant corner and was gone.

Some sat upright and swayed from side to side;
Some lay at length, their hands embracing pegs;
Some trailed an alpenstock behind to guide;
And some accomplished marvels with their legs.

I said, 'A lovely picture, framed in snow,
The figures faultless and the colours warm;
There never lived an artist who could show
Such gaiety of heart or grace of form.'

Yet I have heard there are, among the rest,
Who seem to think the 'human form divine'
Is not seen altogether at its best
When wobbling wildly down a steep incline.

They say that garments lose their graceful curves,
That boots assume too prominent a place,
That unaccustomed speed upsets the nerves
And stamps a look of terror on the face.

But hypercritical and captious these
Who look at Nature's self with jaundiced eyes,
Who see no loveliness in moonlit seas
Or fleecy clouds that fleck the summer skies.

And so, next turn, I took my place among
The crowd that glided down the smooth snow-slope,
And looked, like all the rest of that gay throng,
A not unpleasing spectacle, I hope.

C. J. BODEN.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SOME OLD-TIME RECOLLECTIONS.

By T. W. S.

IN the course of last autumn I was led by circumstances to spend a few days in the remote third-rate country town—even at this date it numbers only some fifteen thousand inhabitants—where I was partly brought up and educated, and which I left, a raw youth, somewhat over half a century ago, in search of that fortune which comes so wooingly to some, while others pursue it in vain to the end of their days. As I paced the town's long main street and rambled about its outskirts, it almost seemed to me that, so far as its external aspect was concerned, I might have been absent only one year instead of fifty.

But observation and inquiry soon revealed to me that in other respects the little town had not stood still, that it had not failed to advance with the times, and that in many ways the conditions of life in it differed widely in these later days from those which obtained when I was a boy. It is a few of the differences in question that I am desirous of briefly recording in this article.

To begin with, let us take the question of locomotion. In those days even the great trunk-lines of railway were only in process of construction, and no one, unless it were a few dreamers and enthusiasts who were regarded by their more sober-minded fellow-townsmen as being slightly 'cracked,' ever dreamt, so secluded did we seem, so far shut out from the great world's noise and uproar, that in less than a dozen years the pretty vale in which Dimchester hides itself would echo with the shriek of the locomotive. But so it was.

Situated on one of the great highways running due north and south, quite a number of mail and other coaches used to pass through it every week-day, stopping to change horses at the 'King's Head' hotel, where a little crowd of idlers always assembled to watch the operation, take stock of the passengers, and pick up whatever crumbs of news the guard or driver might condescend to scatter among them. Subscribers to the *Times*

or other London papers received their copies on the second day after publication—that is to say, Monday's newspaper reached them in the course of Wednesday, which was considered a quite remarkable achievement. With few exceptions, however, the good folk of Dimchester were content to assimilate the week's news, so to speak, in a lump, as summarised for them in the local paper, which made its appearance every Friday morning.

But for travellers from Dimchester going south the favourite mode of locomotion was not by coach but by the canal packet-boat, which ran between there and W—, and *vice versa*, once a day, the distance between the two places being about fifty miles. It is, or rather it was—for with the coming of the railway the packets died a natural death—one of the most enjoyable modes of inland travel with which I am acquainted. It is true that the speed was only a fraction over six miles an hour; but what did that matter to people who hardly knew what it was to be in a hurry? The boats were comfortably upholstered and well protected from the weather. They were drawn by a couple of horses, which kept up one slow, even trot, and on one of which a youth rode postillion. There was no noise, no dust, no discomfort of any kind. The scenery was pretty, and you had time to notice it, and to discuss local topics with your neighbour, read your newspaper, or comment on the state of the crops, &c. At the locks, of which there were some half-dozen, the male passengers usually got out to 'stretch their legs,' and were picked up by the packet when it had got through the last of the series. You were pretty sure to meet some one on the boat that you knew, and then out came the snuff-boxes, and you felt almost sorry when your journey had come to an end. Decidedly there are worse modes of travelling than by the defunct packet-boat.

The mention of snuff reminds me that when I was a lad fully half the population of both sexes, rich as well as poor, the banker equally with the working-man, were snuff-takers. My first school-

master always carried his snuff loose in his waistcoat pocket, and innumerable were his dips into it with two fingers and a thumb in the course of the day, while the big goffered frill which protruded from the bosom of his shirt was always thickly sprinkled with it. We used to notice that he never seemed to relish one of his huge pinches so much as immediately after having administered a sound castigation to some recalcitrant pupil.

On the other hand, there was little or no open-air smoking, except in the case of labouring men going to or from their work. In this respect lucifer-matches have something to answer for; but for them the practice of outdoor smoking would never have grown to its present enormous proportions.

In those days the better class of tradesmen and shopkeepers, men of substance and standing many of them, used to make a point of meeting on most week-day evenings, in little coteries of a dozen or more, in the sandèd parlour of one or other of the numerous taverns of the town, there, with the aid of their snuff-boxes, their long clay pipes—for such of them as smoked—and their frequently replenished jorums of grog, to spend a pleasantly convivial couple of hours. When the time for parting came they were generally all more or less boisterously merry, some being merely comfortably 'full,' others comfortably 'fuddled,' and a brace of them might often be seen, arm-in-arm, zig-zagging their way homeward more or less unsteadily. Wives regarded it almost as a matter of course that, say, three evenings out of five their husbands should come home somewhat the worse for liquor. Total abstainers, the few there were of them, were looked upon with a certain measure of distrust, and as lacking in some of those qualities which go to build up a manly character.

There was a curious Sunday observance at Dimchester, the like of which may or may not have been in operation elsewhere. On that morning it was the custom of the Mayor and Corporation, preceded by their two mace-bearers, to walk in procession to the parish church, and there worship in the comfortably cushioned pews set apart for their use, which faced the pulpit. Then, just before the reading of the first lesson, four or five of their number would walk quietly out of the church, not to reappear till a few minutes before the sermon was due to begin. Their duty was to perambulate the lower streets of the town, and arrest any loose characters who were not sufficiently on the alert to keep out of their clutches, or any vagrants who could not give a good account of themselves. They were also empowered to enter taverns and beerhouses, and satisfy themselves that no drinking was going on during prohibited hours. Any delinquents whom they might capture were haled into church and placed, in charge of the beadle, on a bench under the pulpit and in full view of the congregation, where they remained till the end of the service,

when they were conducted to the vestry and there lectured by the vicar and the Mayor conjointly. Incurables who were thus captured three or four times were given in charge to a constable, and punished next day by fine or imprisonment.

Another old custom was for the incoming Mayor, on the day of his election, to give a cart-load of apples to be scrambled for by the mob. The apples, a couple of big basketfuls at a time, were thrown out of an upper window to the rough crowd of two or three hundred assembled below. It was an excuse for an unlimited amount of horse-play, and was a far from edifying spectacle.

At the foundation-school at which I was educated we religiously kept up certain old-time holidays, each and all of which, I doubt not, have long ago fallen into desuetude. Thus, we celebrated the 30th of January in memory of the martyrdom of Charles I., and the 29th of May in memory of the birth and return of his graceless son. Then there were the 5th of November and coronation-day. On each of these anniversaries a special thanksgiving service, in accordance with the rubric, was held in the parish church.

When any one died the friends and acquaintances of the deceased were invited to the funeral by word of mouth. There was a man in the town who added to his living by going about from house to house, in accordance with the list of names furnished him for that purpose. Many a time did the sound of the three solemn knocks—always after nightfall—which preluded his lugubrious errand send a shudder through me. Then, when the door was opened, he would deliver himself in a monotonous sing-song as follows: 'You are respectfully bidden to the funeral of A. B., who died on Saturday last. The body will be lifted at two o'clock precisely on Thursday next.'

It was the custom for those who had been 'bidden' to assemble at the house of the deceased, where large tankards, filled in some cases with hot spiced ale, in others with mulled wine, but always having a lemon stuck with cloves floating on the top, were passed round from guest to guest, and it would have been considered exceedingly disrespectful to the dead had any one declined to drink therefrom. In those days hearses were unknown; indeed, I never remember to have seen one the whole time I lived at Dimchester. The coffin was carried to the grave by relays of bearers, the mourners walking two and two behind; such processions, in the case of a well-known person, sometimes extending fully a quarter of a mile.

Although I have no recollection of having seen a hearse, I can just remember seeing a Sedan-chair, in which sat a fat old dowager wearing an immense yellow turban. I fancy she must have died shortly afterwards, and probably the Sedan-chair died with her. Several pairs of Hessian boots figure in my memory, worn by ancient gentlemen who had probably been great bucks or dandies in their day. Numbers of men who were getting into years, in

addition to the tail-coat which was common to old and young alike, wore knee-breeches, and white or gray worsted stockings and broad-toed shoes, with the addition of short gaiters in cold weather.

The young men were addicted to gorgeously embroidered vests, over which meandered a yard of gold chain; their trousers were strapped tightly over their Wellington boots; round their neck they wore a stiff stock about six inches deep, and fastened behind with a buckle; the broad ends, usually of satin, hid the whole of the shirt-front, and were commonly kept in place by a couple

of breast-pins connected by a very fine chain. Above this the sharp starched points of the collar peered forth. The face was clean shaven except for a short whisker; but the well-pomatumed hair was worn considerably longer than is now the fashion, and on Sundays and dress occasions was carefully curled. Occasionally the wristbands of the shirt were worn turned back over the cuffs of the coat. One dandy I remember who used to appear at church with lace ruffles round his wrists.

Such are a few of the memories called up by a return to my native place.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER III.



IX months had elapsed since the *Lotus Blossom* had steamed out of the Gieranger Fjord and its owner had taken his last look at the little village of Merok. During that interval Browne had endeavoured to amuse himself to the best of his ability. In spite of Muas's insinuation to the contrary, he had visited Russia; had shot bears in the company and on the estates of his friend Demetrovitch; had passed south to the Crimea, and thence, by way of Constantinople, to Cairo, where, chancing upon some friends who were wintering in the land of the Pharaohs, he had been persuaded into engaging a *dahabtyeh*, and had endured the tedious river journey to Luxor and back in the company of a charming French countess, an Austrian archduke, a German pianist, and an individual whose accomplishments were as notorious as his tastes were varied. A fortnight in Monte Carlo and a week in Paris had followed the Nile trip; and now the first week in March found him, free of engagements, ensconced in the luxurious smoking-room of the Monolith Club in Pall Mall, an enormous cigar between his teeth, and bitterly regretting that he had been persuaded to leave the warmth and sunshine of the favoured South. The morning had been fairly bright, but the afternoon was cold, foggy, and dreary in the extreme. Even the most weatherwise among the men standing at the windows, looking out upon the street, had to admit that they did not know what to make of it. It might only mean rain, they said; it might also mean snow. But that it was, and was going to be still more, unpleasant nobody seemed for an instant to doubt. Browne stretched himself in his chair beside the fire, and watched the flames go roaring up the chimney, with an expression of weariness upon his usually cheerful face.

'What a fool you were, my lad, to come to this sort of thing!' he said to himself. 'You might have known the sort of welcome you would receive. In Cannes the sun has been shining on

the Boulevard de la Croisette all day. Here it is all darkness and detestation. I've a good mind to be off again to-night; this sort of thing would give the happiest man the blues.'

He was still pursuing this train of thought, when a hand was placed upon his shoulder, and, turning round, he found Jimmy Foote standing beside him.

'The very man I wanted to see,' said Browne, springing to his feet and holding out his hand. 'I give you my word you couldn't have come at a more opportune moment. I was in the act of setting off to find you.'

'My dear old chap,' replied his friend, 'that is my métier: I always turn up at opportune moments, like the kind godmother in the fairy tale. What is it you want of me?'

'I want your company.'

'There's nothing I'd give you more willingly,' said Jimmy; 'I'm tired of it myself. But seriously, what is the matter?'

'Look out of the window,' Browne replied. 'Do you see that fog?'

'I've not only seen it, I have swallowed several yards of it,' Foote answered. 'I've been to tea with the Verneys in Arlington Street, and I've fairly had to eat my way back through it. But why should the weather irritate you? If you're idiot enough to come back from Cairo to London in March, I don't see that you've any right to complain. I only wish to goodness Fate had blessed me with the same chance of getting away.'

'If she had, where would you go and what would you do?'

'I'd go anywhere and do anything. You may take it from me that the Bard was not very far out when he said that if money go before, all ways lie open.'

'If that's all you want, we'll very soon send it before. Look here, Jimmy; you've nothing to do, and I've less. What do you say to going off somewhere? What's your fancy—Paris, south of France, Egypt, Algiers? One place is like another to me.'

'I don't want anything better than Algiers,' said Jimmy. 'Provided we go by sea, I am your obedient and humble servant to command.'

Then, waving his hand towards the gloom outside, he added: 'Fog, Rain, Sleet, and Snow, my luck is triumphant, and I defy thee!'

'That's settled, then,' said Browne, rising and standing before the fire. 'I'll wire to Mason to have the yacht ready at Plymouth to-morrow evening. I should advise you to bring something warm with you, for we are certain to find it cold going down Channel and crossing the Bay at this time of the year. In a week, however, we shall be in the warm weather once more. Now I must be getting along. You don't happen to be coming my way, I suppose?'

'My dear fellow,' said Jimmy, buttoning up his coat and putting on his hat as he spoke, 'my way is always your way. Are you going to walk or cab it?'

'Walk,' Browne replied. 'This is not the sort of weather to ride in hansoms. If you're ready, come along.'

The two young men passed out of the club and along Pall Mall together. Turning up Waterloo Place, they proceeded in the direction of Piccadilly. The fog was thicker there than elsewhere, and every shop window was brilliantly illuminated in order to display the wares set out within.'

'Oh, by the way, Browne, I've got something to show you,' said Foote as they passed over the crossing of Charles Street. 'It may interest you.'

'What is it?' asked Browne. 'A new cigarette or something more atrocious than usual in the way of neckties?'

'Better than that,' returned his companion, and as he spoke he led him towards a picture-shop, in the window of which were displayed a number of works of art. In a prominent position in the centre was a large water-colour, and as Browne glanced at it his heart gave a great leap. It was nothing more nor less than a view of Merok taken from the spot where he had rescued Katherine Petrovitch from death upwards of seven months before. It was a clever bit of work, and treated in an entirely unconventional fashion.

'It's not by any means bad, is it?' said Foote, after Browne had been looking at it in silence for upwards of a minute. 'If I had the money— But I say, old chap, what is the matter? You are as pale as if you had seen a ghost. Don't you feel well?'

'Perfectly well,' his friend replied; 'it's only the fog.'

He did not say that in the corner of the picture he had seen the artist's name, and that that name was the one he had cherished so fondly and for so long a time.

'Just excuse me for a moment, will you?' he said. 'I should like to go into the shop and ask a question about that picture.'

'All right,' said Jimmy. 'I'll wait out here.'

Browne accordingly disappeared into the shop, leaving Foote on the pavement outside. As it happened, it was a dealer he often visited, and in consequence he was well known to the assistants. When he made known to them what he wanted, the picture was withdrawn from the window and placed before him.

'An excellent bit of work, as you can see for yourself, sir,' said the shopman as he pulled down the electric light and turned it upon the picture. 'The young lady who painted it is fast making a name for herself. So far this is the first bit of her work we have had in London; but the Continental dealers assure me they find a ready market for it.'

'I can quite believe it,' said Browne. 'It is an exceedingly pretty bit. You may send it round to me.'

'Very good, sir; thank you. Perhaps you will allow me to show you one or two others while you are here? We have several new ones since you were here last.'

'No, thank you,' Browne replied. 'I only came in to find out whether you could tell me the address of the young lady who painted this? She and I met in Norway some months ago.'

'Indeed, sir, I had no idea when I spoke that you were acquainted. Perhaps you know that she is in London at the present moment. She honoured me by visiting my shop this morning.'

'Indeed,' said Browne. 'In that case perhaps it would not be troubling you too much to let me know where I could find her.'

'I will do so at once,' the man replied. 'If you will excuse me for a moment I will have it written out for you.'

He disappeared forthwith into an office at the end of the shop, leaving Browne staring at the picture as if he could not take his eyes off it. So engaged was he with the thoughts it conjured up that he quite forgot the fact that he was standing in a shop in London with hansoms and 'buses rolling by outside. In spirit he was on the steep side of a Norwegian mountain, surrounded by fog and rain, endeavouring to discover from what direction a certain cry for help proceeded. Then the fog rolled away, and, looking up at him, he saw what he now knew to be the sweetest and most womanly face upon which he had ever gazed. He was still wrapped in this day-dream when the shopman returned, and roused him by placing on the counter before him an envelope upon which something was written. Browne took it up and read:

MISS KATHERINE PETROVITCH.

43 Holland Park Road, West.

'That is it, sir,' said the man. 'If it would be any convenience to you, sir, it will give me the greatest pleasure to write to the young lady, and to tell her that you have purchased her picture and would like her to call upon you.'

'I must beg of you not to do anything of the kind,' Browne replied, with the most impressive earnestness. 'I must make it a condition of my purchase that you do not mention my name to her in any way.'

The shopman looked a little crestfallen. 'Very good, sir; since you do not wish it, of course I will be sure not to do so,' he answered humbly. 'I thought perhaps, having purchased an example of her work, and being such a well-known patron of art, you might be anxious to help the young lady.'

'What do you mean by helping her?' inquired Browne. 'Do you think she needs assistance?'

'Well, sir, between ourselves,' returned the other, 'I do not fancy she is very well off. She was in a great hurry, at any rate, to sell this picture.'

Browne winced; it hurt him to think that the girl had perhaps been compelled to haggle with this man in order to obtain the mere necessities of life. He, however, thanked the man for his courtesy, and bidding him send the picture to his residence as soon as possible, left the shop and joined Foote on the pavement outside.

'Well, I hope you have been long enough,' remarked that gentleman in an injured tone as they proceeded up the street together. 'Have you purchased everything in the shop?'

'Don't be nasty, Jimmy,' said Browne, with sudden joviality. 'It doesn't suit you. You are the jolliest little fellow in the world when you are in a good temper; but when you are not—well, words fail me.'

'Don't walk me off my legs, confound you!' said Jimmy snappishly. 'The night is but young, and we're not performing pedestrians, whatever you may think.'

Browne was not aware that he was walking faster than usual, but he slowed down on being remonstrated with. Then he commenced to whistle softly to himself.

'Now you are whistling,' said Jimmy, 'which is a thing, as you are well aware, that I detest in the street. What on earth is the matter with you to-night? Ten minutes ago you were as glum as they make 'em; nothing suited you. Then you went into that shop and bought that picture, and since you came out you seem bent on making a public exhibition of yourself.'

'So I am,' said Browne; and then, suddenly stopping in his walk, he rapped with the ferrule of his umbrella on the pavement. 'I am going to give an exhibition, and a dashed good one, too. I'll take one of the galleries and do it in a proper style. I'll have the critics there, and all the swells who buy; and if they don't do as I want, and declare it to be the very finest show of the year, I'll never buy one of their works again.' Then, taking his friend's arm, he continued his walk, saying, 'What you want, Jimmy, my boy, is a proper appreciation of art. There is nothing like it in the world, take my word for it. Nothing! Nothing at all!'

'You've said that before,' retorted his friend, 'and you said it with sufficient emphasis to amuse the whole street. If you're going to give me an exposition on art in Regent Street on a foggy afternoon in March, I tell you flatly I'm going home. I am not a millionaire, and my character won't stand the strain. What's the matter with you, Browne? You're as jolly as a sandboy now, and for the life of me, I don't see how a chap can be happy in a fog like this and still retain his reason.'

'Fog, my boy,' continued Browne, still displaying the greatest good humour. 'I give you my word, there's nothing like a fog in the world. I adore them! I revel in them! Talk about your south of France and sunshine. What is it to London and a fog? A fog did me a very good turn once, and now I'm hanged if another isn't going to rival it. You're a dear little chap, Jimmy, and I wouldn't wish for a better companion. But there's no use shutting your eyes to one fact, and that is you're not sympathetic. You want educating, and when I've a week or two to spare I'll do it. Now I'm going to leave you to think out what I've said. I've just remembered a most important appointment. Let me find a decent hansom and I'll be off.'

'I thought you said just now this was not the weather for driving in hansoms? I thought you said you had nothing to do, and that you were going to employ yourself entertaining me? John Grantham Browne, I tell you what it is, you're going in that hansom to a lunatic asylum.'

'Better than that, my boy,' said Browne, with a laugh, as the cab drew up at the pavement and he sprang in. 'Far better than that.' Then, looking up through the trap in the roof at the driver, he added solemnly: 'Cabby, drive me to 43 Holland Park Road, as fast as your horse can go.'

'But, hold on,' said Foote, holding up his umbrella to detain him. 'Before you do go, what about to-morrow? What train shall we catch? And have you sent the wire to your skipper to have the yacht in readiness?'

'Bother to-morrow,' answered Browne. 'There is no to-morrow, there are no trains, there is no skipper, and most certainly there is no yacht. I've forgotten them and everything else. Drive on, cabby. By-by, Jimmy.'

The cab disappeared in the fog, leaving Mr Foote standing before the portico of the Criterion looking after it.

'My friend Browne is either mad or in love,' said that astonished individual as the vehicle rolled away. 'I don't know which to think. He's quite unnerved me. I think I'll go in here and try a glass of dry sherry just to pull myself together. What an idiot I was not to find out who painted that picture! But that's just like me; I never think of things until it's too late.'

When he had finished his sherry he lit a cigarette, and presently found himself making his

way towards his rooms in Jermyn Street. As he went he shook his head solemnly. 'I don't like the look of things at all,' he said. 'I said a lunatic asylum just now; I should have mentioned

a worse place—"St George's, Hanover Square." One thing, however, is quite certain. If I know anything of signs, Algiers will not have the pleasure of entertaining me.'

COCOA AND COCOA ADULTERATION.

By Prof. CARMODY, F.I.C., F.C.S., Trinidad.



HE adulterator of a substance which received from an excellent authority the title of 'food for the gods' must be a daring person indeed. And yet, of all our breakfast beverages, there is none at the present day so extensively adulterated as *Theobroma cacao*.

Tea, owing mainly to the supervision on importation exercised by the Board of Customs, and partly to the vigilance of food inspectors, is now very rarely found adulterated. Coffee, it is true, is still sold with an admixture of chicory in variable proportions, and when so labelled the person selling runs no risk of prosecution. But cacao adulteration is a mountain, that of coffee only a molehill.

It has been proved to the satisfaction of the representatives of justice, by scientific witnesses who have been examined before them, that mixtures are sold as cocoa which contain not more than *eight* per cent. of that substance. On the authority of evidence given by the largest manufacturers of cocoa in England before a recent royal commission on food adulteration, it is clear that the best mixtures sold do not contain more than *fifty* per cent. of cocoa; and from the published reports of proceedings under the Food and Drugs Act, we are convinced that cocoa mixtures are regularly sold with percentages of cocoa varying from the maximum of fifty to the minimum of eight referred to above. And although it is difficult to prove, except on figures supplied by the manufacturers conjointly, there are good grounds for believing that the mixtures—meaning by 'mixtures' the second type of commercial cocoa referred to below—which have the largest sale in this country do not contain on an average above twenty per cent. of cocoa.

Under the protection afforded by an act of parliament specially directed against food adulteration, and with all its machinery not only in good working order, but every day improving and becoming more popular, it might at first sight appear to any ordinary person that such serious adulteration is impossible. But this is very far from being so, for the vendor of cocoa is fully protected against legal proceedings by a label on the packet containing a printed statement (which may be in microscopically minute type, and further obscured by an overwhelming preponderance of other

printed matter) to the effect that 'this article is sold as an admixture of cocoa with sugar and arrowroot.' The vendor is not legally obliged to disclose the proportions in which he has mixed these ingredients; and, as a result, we find that it is possible to sell as *cocoa* a mixture which contains only eight per cent. of that substance. Such sales are so very detrimental to the interests of the purchaser and of the producer that public attention requires to be directed to it in a special manner, particularly at the present time, when the consumption of cocoa is evidently rapidly increasing, and when the public mind may not unreasonably be assumed to be in a state of pardonable uncertainty as to the respective merits of the essentially different preparations which, by persistent advertising, rival manufacturers have very properly submitted for the careful scrutiny and consideration of actual or anticipated consumers of cocoa.

A brief sketch of the cacao industry will prepare the way for understanding what follows. Cacao grows only in tropical climates. It is the fruit of a tree not unlike an apple-tree in appearance, and very unlike the palm-tree which yields the coco-nut—with which it is often confounded. The fruit consists of a pod, containing about forty beans or seeds. The pod is cut in two, and thrown on the ground to rot; the seeds, with their gummy adhering coat, are carried to the sweating-box, where they ferment in heaps for from two to sixteen days. Long fermenting produces cocoa of better colour and flavour; a bean which has been fermented only a few days has a rank flavour, which the adulterator utilises for the purpose of disguising larger proportions of starch and sugar than a fully-fermented, mild-flavoured bean is capable of. From the sweating-box the bean is carried to the drying-house, where the heat of the sun, or occasionally artificial heat, stops the fermentation and dries the bean sufficiently to enable it to be shipped with safety in bags to Europe or America. On its arrival in these countries it is again heated, but this time to a higher temperature, in order to separate the husk or shell which encloses the 'cocoa-nib.' The shell is still used by some to prepare a light infusion; but many hours are required for the preparation. The nib is the important part, and may be sold (1) simply ground (the only pure form of cocoa);

(2) ground, and mixed with starch and sugar; (3) ground, and part of the fat abstracted. Any one, then, who wishes to obtain pure cocoa must obtain ground nibs; and if this is properly prepared with a sufficiency of milk, no more strengthening or agreeable beverage could be desired.

It has been said, with what justification I know not, that the public demand for cocoa-nibs is very limited, and that this is a proof that people prefer the prepared forms placed on the market. But this is no proof of the latter statement, for not one in ten thousand of the public is aware that cocoa-nib is the only form of pure cocoa, and that only one firm of manufacturers places this form on the market.

The second kind mentioned above is a prepared cocoa—that is, ground nibs to which an equal, or greater, weight of starch and sugar has been added. The manufacturers of this class defend the practice by saying that natural cocoa does not make a palatable beverage, and that the addition of starch and sugar is necessary. They say that cocoa contains too much fat. As a matter of fact a spoonful of cocoa powder contains half a spoonful of cocoa fat, and herein lies its superiority over tea and coffee, which are merely stimulants, and possess no ingredients of any value as a food. The manufacturers appear to think that half a spoonful of fat is too much, and that by the addition of starch and sugar it should be reduced to a quarter of a spoonful, or less. It is also said that starch is added because, with hot water, it forms a thin kind of paste in which the cocoa powder remains suspended, and does not settle down to the bottom of the cup. The sugar is added partly for the same reason, and partly to disguise the insipid taste of the starch.

The third class of cocoa is the ground nib from which about half the fat has been extracted. This kind was first made on the Continent, but has forced its way steadily into popular favour here, notwithstanding that the home manufacturers are protected to the extent of one penny per pound against all foreign manufacturers. Its successful introduction proved at all events that that section of the public which could afford to pay the high price of this newly introduced preparation welcomed a change from the starch and sugar mixtures referred to above. Most of the home manufacturers now prepare a cocoa similar to this; and it is very probable that this kind would be more popular if the price charged for it were not so unreasonably high as it is at present.

Each of the three kinds of cocoa placed on the market has its defenders and assailants. Very few in this country will be found to support the first kind; but the people of the countries where cocoa is produced never take it except in this pure form—that is, with no starch added and no fat extracted.

For years it was said that the people of these islands would not use cocoa in any other form than the second kind referred to; but since the

popularity of the third kind has been so marked this representation is no longer strongly asserted. The defenders of the first and third forms assail the second, and declare that the addition of starch is wholly unnecessary.

The defenders of the third form urge that the large proportion of fat naturally found in cocoa makes an unpalatable beverage, and is, moreover, indigestible; they therefore remove half of it, and supply the public with an article which they assert is better suited to human tastes and requirements.

Supporters of the first and second types are, on the other hand, equally ready to assail the third. Fat, they declare, and with much justice, is the characteristic and most important constituent of cocoa, and by removing it you sell the public an impoverished residue at a greatly enhanced price. They point to the similarity of this proceeding to the sale of milk or linseed meal which has been deprived of its fat—both offences against the Food and Drugs Act; and they further urge that, instead of being sold at a higher price than ordinary cocoa, it should, like skimmed milk or linseed cake, be sold at a lower price than the genuine article. One other point is urged, which, however, is slightly fanciful—namely, that this Continental manufactured cocoa is made readily soluble by a very objectionable process which converts the fat of the cocoa into a soap by means of an alkali.

It is clear that the present spell of advertising must have the ultimate effect of enlightening the public; and with this must follow the extinction of such absurd mixtures as contain ninety-two per cent. of foreign ingredients. Whether the public will continue to prefer mixtures containing half cocoa and the remainder starch and sugar, or whether they will patronise the pure cocoa-nibs or the fat-extracted type, it is impossible to say. They may perhaps be allured by the newest preparation, which is admittedly a mixture of cocoa with malt, hops, and kola, and which is said to have an enormous sale at the present time. But the cocoa producer would prefer the public taste to run in the direction of the first and third types.

Chocolate, as a modern commercial article, differs from cocoa in this, that it is a mixture of cocoa powder and sugar, but without starch. This difference is not generally known.

The word cocoa is seldom used in cocoa producing countries. It is written cacao, and pronounced *kah-ko*. The ordinary pronunciation used here is apt to confound the word with one or two others; and although a grocer would probably supply you with *Theobroma cacao*, a hair-dresser might assume you were in need of a well-known preparation for increasing the growth of the hair; a greengrocer might present you with the familiar coco-nut (often very erroneously spelt cocoa-nut); while the skilled druggist might interpret your supposed wants by presenting some

preparation of the much-lauded stimulant—coca. Then we have such combinations as cuca-cocoa (or coca-cocoa), and such derivatives as cocoaine and cocaine. These, in the interests of the public, it would be desirable to avoid.

The writer can confidently recommend from experience the first type of cocoa; it will be

found to agree with most constitutions. If made with milk instead of water it is an advantage. If the fat is found in this type to be excessive, then I recommend the third. The second kind will, in my opinion, soon become obsolete, or will only be sold in the near future with not less than fifty per cent. of cocoa.

DR BARLOW'S SECRET.

CHAPTER II.



WHILE Nellie still hesitated with the letter in her hand, the lank figure of Mr James Tompkins appeared at the window carrying a blazer over his arm, and wearing a very anxious expression on his small, thin face.

'Ah, you're here, Miss Hawthorne!' he exclaimed. 'Dick tells me that Barlow's got my blazer.'

'I suppose he has, Mr Tompkins,' rejoined Nellie coldly. She was annoyed at being interrupted, and poor Tompkins was no favourite of hers.

'Eh? Did you see it on him?'

'He had one on.'

'Eh? Was it the same pattern as this?'

'Yes, I think it was.'

'You think it was? You're not sure?'

'Oh, I've no doubt it was,' replied Nellie impatiently.

'Well, you know,' said Tompkins, 'it's not quite the thing for a man to walk off with another man's blazer. Eh?'

'I'm sure Dr Barlow wouldn't have done it intentionally, Mr Tompkins,' said Nellie indignantly.

'Well, perhaps not, perhaps not; but he's done it, you see, all the same. This thing's no use to me. It's not the thing to go about in another man's blazer. I don't care to do it if Barlow does.'

At that moment Dick appeared at the window.

'Look here, Tompkins,' he said impatiently, 'how long are you going to be? We're waiting for you. The girls say they'll go home if you don't come at once.'

'Eh?' rejoined Tompkins, peering at him with his lack-lustre eyes. 'I want to know something more about my blazer.'

'Oh, bother your blazer!' exclaimed Dick. 'Come along, man. We can't wait all day.'

He tried to pull Tompkins away by the arm, but Tompkins clutched the window-frame and held on tenaciously.

'Oh, but look here, you know, there was a gold watch and chain in it—a very valuable gold watch—I wouldn't have anything happen to it for worlds.'

'Well, hang it all!' shouted Dick, 'you don't suppose that Barlow's going to make away with your blessed blazer—do you? It'll be all right. Come along.'

By this time Dick had obtained a satisfactory grip of Tompkins's belt, and now drew him gradually backwards and away from the window, still expostulating and protesting.

'But look here, you know, my dear fellow, look here.'

'Come along, come along,' cried Dick, seizing him by the arm and swinging him round. 'Hurry up, man. The girls will be off if you don't.'

In another moment they had disappeared round a corner of the house, and Nellie was once more alone. She withdrew her hand from her pocket. The ludicrous scene between Dick and Tompkins had made her laugh in spite of herself, and had entirely dispelled the morbid suspicions that were beginning to take possession of her.

'No, I won't look at it,' she thought to herself. 'I feel that it wouldn't be strictly honourable to do so, and I won't. Tom seems to think that I'm naturally curious, and I'm going to prove to him that I'm not. I won't even take it out of my pocket until I give it to him; and if he hints, even as a joke, that I've looked at it, I'll tell him that I'm not in the habit of reading other people's letters.'

This mood lasted for several minutes; but at the end of that time she felt again an irresistible craving to have one more look at the outside of the letter.

'I know it's from her,' she soliloquised. 'I don't know exactly why, but I feel instinctively that it is. I wonder what sort of a girl she is. I ought to be able to guess from her handwriting. Surely I might just have a peep at the address. There can be no harm in that.'

Stifling the still small voice that reminded her of the vow she had so recently made, she drew the letter from her pocket. Then a curious thing happened. Though she had hitherto put the forbidden fruit so resolutely away from her, she suddenly twitched the letter out of the envelope and hurriedly unfolded it.

'Oh, I must read it—I must!' she exclaimed. 'I can't live if I don't.'

And this is what she read:

NEW YORK, 21st June 1895.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—This being the anniversary of that strange incident in our lives which I never shall, never can, forget, I feel impelled to write a few lines to you. I have heard—oh, how glad I was to receive the news!—that you

are engaged to be married. How thankful I am that the cruel disappointment of which I was the innocent, the remorseful cause, has not cast a permanent shadow upon your life! Whenever I have remembered our last sad interview, at which you told me, with the despairing tears in your eyes, that your life was ruined, that you could never love again, that the world was henceforth a blank to you, it is impossible to give you any idea of the pain, the remorse I have felt. The news has removed a crushing burden from my mind. Oh! I do hope that you will be happy; that your future wife will make you far, far happier than I could ever have done. Will you let me give you one little piece of advice? If you can avoid it, never tell her about the extraordinary circumstances that wrenched us apart at the very moment when our happiness seemed assured. You cannot conceive how morbidly women brood over such things. It could do no good. It might do a deal of harm. With respect to this one incident I would not take your *fancie* into your confidence. There are usually some passages in the life of a man which he would prefer to pass over in silence, and this is one of them. [The writer had evidently provided Tom with both ideas and phraseology.] You have, I understand, severed your connection with Highchurch and all our old acquaintances; and even if you were to meet any of them, surely they would not be so cruel as to refer to the past in your wife's presence. There is one thing which troubles me. Did you ever inquire whether the page containing our signatures has been removed from the register? If not, would it not be prudent to make the inquiry at once? I must stop now.—Wishing you all possible happiness, I am, your ever-faithful friend,

DOROTHY PETTIGREW.

Nellie sat gazing at the letter for several minutes with round, wondering eyes. She was too bewildered to fully comprehend its meaning. Then she suddenly shook it out of her lap as though it had been a poisonous snake.

'Oh,' she exclaimed, with a shiver, 'what does it mean? What can it mean? What—what does she say about the register?'

She picked it up and glanced again at the last paragraph.

'Why, people sign their names in the register when they get married, don't they?' she exclaimed. 'Oh, no, no, it can't be that!—surely it can't be that! Oh! what shall I do, what shall I do?'

She buried her face in the sofa cushion and began to sob fiercely. Just as suddenly she jerked herself into a sitting posture, intertwined her fingers until the knuckles turned white, and stared straight before her. In another minute she jumped up, and, covering her pale face with her hands, began to walk up and down the room, ending by again flinging herself face downwards on the sofa.

'Oh, how cruel of him!' she moaned; 'how cruel and wicked of him!'

In a few minutes she started up, sat down at a table, seized a pen, and began to write a letter to Barlow demanding an immediate explanation. She commenced half-a-dozen and tore them all up. The floor was strewn with scraps of paper, her fingers smeared with ink, her hair dishevelled, her eyes swimming with suppressed tears. At this moment a servant entered with a note.

'The man that brought it said no answer would be required, miss.'

'Very well.'

The note was from Barlow, and even when the servant had gone she could scarcely summon up courage to open it. She was terrified lest it should confirm beyond doubt the dreadful suspicions which now seemed only too well founded. At length, with a desperate effort, she overcame her reluctance, and tearing open the envelope, took out and read the letter. It opened and closed with the usual affectionate expressions; but the gist of the meaning was contained in the following ominous sentences:

I am awfully sorry that I shall have to leave for Liverpool at once on most important business. I may even have to go as far as New York, but withhold particulars until I see you. I literally haven't a moment to spare, or I should come to say good-bye to you. In any case, dear, whatever happens, I shall be back in good time for our wedding. Will write or telegraph when I get to Liverpool.

This letter seemed to Nellie to confirm her very worst suspicions, and to put any hope of a satisfactory explanation entirely out of the question. The poor child broke down completely and began to sob hysterically. Even when the irrepressible Dick came swaggering into the room she made no effort to conceal her agitation.

'That ass of a Tompkins,' said Dick, 'kept the girls waiting so long that they've gone home in disgust. Hallo, Nellie, what's up now? Been squabbling with Tom, or has the governor been rowing you?'

Nellie was too wretched and desperate to attempt concealment. She pushed the letters towards Dick.

'Oh Dick!' she sobbed, 'just look at those dreadful letters, and tell me what I ought to do. I—I can't think. My head's swimming.'

Dick glanced through the letters with gestures of amazement and indignation.

'Well, I'm blowed,' he exclaimed, 'this is a jolly go! I tell you what, Nellie, if this fellow, Barlow, isn't a fraud and a scamp I'll eat my hat—that's all. You're jolly well rid of him, in my opinion. You just wait and see what the pater says about it. I wouldn't be in Barlow's shoes if the old man gets hold of him.'

'Oh, you mustn't tell papa, Dick!' exclaimed Nellie in alarm.

'Now, look here, my dear girl,' replied Dick, with the complacent self-confidence of seventeen, 'as you've put the matter into my hands, I mean to see it through. The honour of the family is concerned, and Barlow shall find that he's made a mistake in trifling with the affections of my sister. A girl like you can't be expected to understand such a scamp as Barlow. I can see through the whole thing at a glance. Barlow's bolted. As sure as fate he's gone to New York to join this Pettigrew woman.'

'No, no, no, Dick,' sobbed poor Nellie, 'I—I can't believe it. I won't believe it. There's some

dreadful mystery I don't understand; but I'm sure T-T-Tom couldn't do such a thing as that—I know he couldn't.

Even at this early stage of the proceedings Nellie began to show that beautiful, if illogical, tendency of almost every woman to believe in the loyalty and innocence of one she loves, in spite of the most convincing proofs to the contrary. But Dick was built on quite a different plan.

'Oh, couldn't he?' he exclaimed, with a superior smile. 'That just shows how much you know about fellows like Barlow. But don't you take on; don't you get into a state. We'll make the fellow smart for this, see if we don't. I'll take these letters to the pater and have it out with him. I guess there'll be an explosion. He'll go off like a bombshell. You'd better clear out till it's all over.'

'Oh Dick,' groaned Nellie, 'do you really think we ought to tell papa?'

'I do indeed, my dear girl,' said Dick more seriously. 'I don't see how we can get out of it. The governor ought to know; he must know sooner or later, and the longer we keep it dark the bigger row there'll be in the end. If the fellow's treated you like this he oughtn't to get off scot-free and be allowed to go and play the same game somewhere else.'

'Oh! I can't believe he'd do such a thing; I—I can't believe it.'

With her handkerchief to her eyes she left the room, and Dick, who was a kind-hearted lad with all his bumptiousness, watched her pityingly.

'Poor little girl,' he said to himself, 'it's beastly hard lines on her, and within a few weeks of her wedding-day, too. I should like to kick the fellow from here to New York, that's what I should like to do, though I think we're jolly well rid of him. Hallo, Tompkyns!'

Tompkyns had appeared at the open window, and was peering anxiously in.

'Oh, you're here, Dick,' said he. 'Has Barlow sent my blazer back yet?'

'Look here, Tompkyns,' asked Dick, 'didn't you say you'd left a gold watch in one of the pockets?'

'Eh?' exclaimed Tompkyns, stepping promptly inside. 'Yes. Why do you ask?'

'Well,' said Dick, calmly producing his cigarette-case, 'the chances are that you'll never see it again. Have a cigarette?'

If Tompkyns had been ordered out for instant execution he could hardly have shown more consternation.

'Eh? Never see it again?' he exclaimed. 'What the dickens do you mean, Hawthorne? What's the use of talking like that? Never see it again? No, I won't have a cigarette. I want to know what you mean by saying I shall never see my gold watch again.'

'Well, you see,' said Dick, striking a match and deliberately puffing at his cigarette, 'it turns

out that there's something fishy about Barlow. Here! where are you off to?'

He clutched at Tompkyns as he was disappearing through the window.

'Eh? I'm going to the police-station.'

'Don't be an ass,' expostulated Dick; 'I've taken the thing in hand. I'll see you through all right.'

'Oh, that's all very well,' said Tompkyns, 'but if there's something fishy about the fellow he may bolt with my gold watch and chain, and then I shall certainly never see them again. I know nothing about the man. I've only met him two or three times, and I never took to him. If he's a suspicious character, the best thing to do is to give him in charge at once.'

'Oh, hang it all!' said Dick impatiently, 'can't you leave the thing in my hands when I've told you I've taken it up?'

'No, I can't,' said Tompkyns bluntly. 'You're always so jolly cocksure, Dick; but you don't score every time all the same. What are you going to do?'

'Well, you see, the governor's just been made a J.P. I'm going to tell him all about the affair, and if there's enough evidence to show that Barlow's a fraud and a swindler, he can sign a warrant for his arrest, and all that kind of thing, you know.'

'Well, I don't care a hang,' said Tompkyns; 'I'm not going to risk the loss of my personal property while you discuss the matter with your governor or anybody else. I shall simply go to Barlow's house, and make him hand me back my blazer and watch and chain; that's what I shall do. You can do what you like.'

He turned on his heel and whisked through the window, Dick making an ineffectual grab at him as he passed.

'What an incurable ass the fellow is!' muttered Dick. 'Why couldn't he leave the thing in my hands? He's sure to make a mess of it. If there's a chuckle-headed way of doing things, Tompkyns is absolutely certain to find it out. He's built that way; can't help himself. Well, I suppose I'd better go and interview the pater. Can't say I'm very keen on it. There's sure to be an awful row. The worst of it is that when the governor goes on the warpath he always uses his tomahawk on the first fellow he comes across, whether he's to blame or not. It isn't my fault, goodness knows; but I don't mind betting five to one that he'll make out that it is. That's his little way. Well, I may as well get it over.'

He picked up the letters and glanced over them again.

'It looks bad,' he said; 'it looks about as bad as it can look. Yet, upon my word, I didn't think that Barlow was that sort. He always struck me as being an awfully decent chap. And yet I don't know. After all, we know next

to nothing about him. That comes of taking a man on trust. If the governor had had a grain of sense he'd have inquired into the fellow's antecedents before he allowed him to become engaged to Nellie. If I'd been in his place I should. Well, this'll teach him a lesson anyway.

But I'm sorry for Nellie; I'm awfully sorry for her, poor little girl. Never mind; we'll make him smart for it. He'll find out that he's made a very big mistake indeed this time.'

So saying, he went off to interview his father, who was still dozing placidly in the library.

AT DINNER WITH A CITY COMPANY.



OWHERE, perhaps, is the art of dining luxuriously better exemplified than in connection with the banquets of the various City guilds—or companies, as they have come to be called in these latter days.

It is alleged that many of them have so few ways of expending their incomes that a sort of friendly and informal rivalry exists for the honour of serving the choicest repasts. This may or may not be so; but there is no doubt that a guest at a company dinner is seated in the 'lap of luxury,' and where no expense has been spared to afford him something more than ordinary pleasure.

It is not everybody who enjoys the *entrée* to these functions, which, quite apart from their 'gastronomical' aspect, are so interesting as to call for some description.

Let us suppose, then, that the Worshipful Company of, say, Lacemakers are about to give a dinner, for which an elaborate invitation card has come to hand. A drizzle of rain and snow is falling in the quiet and crooked side streets of that corner of the City in which stands the magnificent hall of this powerful and ancient company. But, accentuating exterior discomfort, from windows and doors of the palatial edifice a wealth of warm and welcome light glints on the cabs and hansoms that splash up to the steps in the portico, set down their fares, and crunch away over the sodden gravel.

On a night so chill and comfortless, cheerful indeed is the appearance of the spacious entrance-hall, with fires of generous proportions blazing away on either side; with soft carpets to soothe the feet; with plenteous light shining from many-pointed electroliers of artistic fashioning; with stairways, banked with flowers and foliage, winding up past the marble busts and the painted portraits of famous, perchance defunct, Lacemakers. The Worshipful Master, surrounded by his wardens and by officials bearing wands of state with the arms of the company done in silver on the top thereof, gives each guest a welcome in the reception-room. For this little ceremony a constant stream of 'all sorts and conditions of men' is flowing over the threshold. The full style and title of each arrival is announced by an official, who appears to have been chosen for the part of crier because he possesses a voice which conveys

in a most politely ceremonial manner the full measure of a man's dignity.

The visitors enter in a curious sequence according with the priority of their advent, and not with laws of precedence. For instance, the usher calls out, 'The Right Honourable the Earl of Ruraldom, Knight of the Garter,' and his lordship steps forward; 'Mr William Greene,' and the commoner follows the peer; and after him, in curious medley, come 'Professor Drinkwater,' 'Mr John Jones,' 'Lieutenant Colonel Deering, Commander of the Bath,' 'Mr Justice Perrywig,' 'Mr Arthur Browne,' 'The Very Reverend the Dean of Greenminster,' 'Mr Sidney Poole, Member of Parliament,' and so on, until some two hundred visitors are assembled.

Presently the air is filled with the booming of a gong. The usher's voice breaks in, as the vibrations die away, with the announcement, 'My lords and gentlemen, dinner is served.'

The invitation is acceptable. It is, moreover, the signal for the Master, preceded by his attendants bearing insignia, to lead the procession up the steps, between the palms and ferns and banks of beauteous blossoms, into the banqueting-hall, wherein, perhaps, the climax of splendour is reached. Plans of the room have been given to every guest, so that he can find his way to his seat without confusion. If he finds himself in such hospitable quarters for the first time, there is much to claim his attention in the noble chamber, with its rows of tables, draped with spotless linen, and set out with plate and cutlery and candelabra and epergnes of flowers, all radiant with light that descends from clusters of incandescent gleams overhead. The walls, too, near the top, are picked out with lines of glowing points of light, which scatter the shadows from the angles of the ancient roof and revive the colours in the banners that droop beneath the mellow wooden beams. Every feature of the place, in fact, affords delight. The frescoes on the walls are by eminent artists; the carving of the wainscoting is beautiful beyond compare; the windows are filled with soft stained glass, recording the arms and names and days of past Masters of the craft.

But a rapping on the high table brings back one's thoughts to the present. Then the master of ceremonies, behind the Master's chair, lifts his voice to say, 'My lords and gentlemen,

pray, silence for grace by the reverend the chaplain.'

Another voice, in a few words, calls down the divine blessing; the lines of guests drop into their seats, and nimble waiters glide to their left hands with the opening course of a menu consisting of from thirty to forty dishes. Of course there is turtle-soup. But that is a mere nothing. What strikes the casual visitor is the remarkable manner in which the 'seasons' have been more or less defied, whereby he gets choice things set before him that he does not expect to see upon his own table for weeks to come. Some sort of glamour, too, is imparted to the occasion by the hum of conversation that rises up equally from all quarters of the room, blending with the jingle of cutlery and plates, and the fusillade of explosions as corks are drawn in order to release stores of choice and ancient vintages. So the feast goes on.

Midway through, the commanding note of the master of ceremonies exclaims, 'My lords and gentlemen, the Worshipful Master desires the pleasure of taking wine with you all.'

Immediately every guest is on his feet, his eyes set towards the chairman, his well-filled glass in hand. With one accord Master and guests exchange bows and sip the bubbling liquid; and, after this pleasant exchange of courtesies, they resume their places until 'the voice,' with the same ceremonial tone as heretofore, cries, 'My lords and gentlemen, pray, silence for grace.'

The chaplain does not respond this time, however, but a quartette of cultured songsters raise their voices in a melodious chorus of thanksgiving. This practically concludes the repast; dessert, of course, being lingered over after the waiters have borne round salvers of iced rose-water in which the guests may dip their fingertips.

The company now awaits the uprising of the speechmakers and the pleasant interpolation of musical items. Both in regard to the speakers and their toasts, everything is made clear by the superbly printed programmes, wherein is given not only the words of all the songs and glees, but occasionally the 'score' when the music is particularly choice. Cigars and cigarettes in dainty envelopes have been distributed; and ornamental match-boxes, embellished, as are plate, cutlery, and programmes, with the arms of the company, furnish means to start the fragrant weed as soon as the royal toast has been proposed and accepted.

There is no need to dwell upon the speechifying part of the proceedings. Everything, as before, is done in due order, the arrangements being characterised by a courtesy which, like all the amiable intentions of the Master and his court, are designed to continue the note of welcome which was given in the reception-room.

During the evening it is almost certain that the 'loving-cup' will be circulated round the tables. The massive, double-handled vessel, filled with choice wine, is started on its travels by the Master, who, having sipped the contents, brushes the edge of the cup with his serviette, replaces the sculptured lid, and, bowing towards his friend on his right, passes the cup on to him, standing whilst the latter tastes the wine and until the cup has been passed on.

So the evening rolls on to its close. If the company is more than ordinarily rich its hospitality does not end when the guests leave the table. In the hall each receives a handsome souvenir—a silver casket of delicious confections was presented on one occasion; and with such a permanent reminder a guest cannot well forget his experiences at Lacemakers' Hall.

DUNBAR'S FIND.

By BROWN PATERSON.



THE white mists hung as a veil around the magnificent mountain peaks, crowded sentinel-like at the head of the gorge. Here and there a hill-top appeared through the gauzy vapours and floated like some magic island above the sea of white, seeming to pierce almost into the brilliant blue of the sky. But below this gorgeous vision the coolies shivered miserably under their thin blankets, and Arthur Dunbar, hurrying to muster, thought regretfully of his English overcoat, long ago torn into shreds to stop the leaks over his bed in the ramshackle bungalow which was his lodging.

Arthur usually felt exhilarated by such a morn-

ing as this, and was apt to think no country in the world could possibly equal Ceylon for its scenery or its climate; but to-day he merely shivered and felt wretched. 'Hang it all!' he muttered, knocking off the heads of the glowing scarlet shoe-flowers irritably as he passed along, 'I am a born ass. As if I had any business to be laying money on horses, and getting swindled, when I have not one brass farthing to rub on another, and owe already more than I am likely to pay for a good time to come.'

That was it. Dunbar, as no one knew better than himself, had been 'going the pace' considerably of late, and now the climax was reached. He was a sociable being, and found the lonely bungalow perched up on the mountain-side a dull

enough place at times, for all his appreciation of the grand scenery to be surveyed from its door. Scenery is not enough when a man is only three-and-twenty and fond of fun. Neither did his nearest neighbours satisfy all his requirements. Penn, the tall Scotchman on the next estate, was a silent man, whose idea of hospitality consisted in giving you a clay pipe and long-sleeved chair, and smoking another himself in the long-sleeved chair opposite, without saying half-a-dozen words during the process; while Middleton, the planter, who was Arthur's nearest neighbour on the other side, though companionable enough, had lately taken to practising the concertina with a perseverance that drove all visitors off.

And in fact, from one excuse and another, Arthur had come to spend most of his leisure farther away among a fast set. These men did not look upon tea-planting as their business, but only as something which was to be shirked as much as possible. There was hard drinking at Elwatte, and a good deal of betting went on as well, in all of which Arthur took his share. All the men had money on the Ootacamund races. It was sheer madness on Dunbar's part, for he had nothing beyond his second year's salary as manager; nevertheless he had staked his thousand rupees with the rest, and—lost of course. That was what he learned the night previous when he rode over to Elwatte; and somehow—he did not know now precisely how—the draft in his pocket, received from his proprietor at home by the last mail for estate expenses, and just endorsed by himself, passed out of his hands into those of the winner. Such an act spells ruin when looked at in broad daylight, and ruin was the word which Dunbar saw written between him and whatever he looked at as he strode along this morning. Could the draft be got back? Manning, who had it, was not the sort to yield up his prey easily, nor had Dunbar anything to offer in its place if he were. 'I am done for,' thought the poor young fellow; and there were tears in his eyes as he looked round him as if for a way of escape.

At that instant he saw a coolie coming along the narrow estate-road towards him. It was his *peon* on his way back from the village, where he had gone overnight to fetch provisions. Salaaming to his master, the man brought out a yellow envelope from the recesses of his loin-cloth. 'Tappal dorai sent it,' he explained as Dunbar mechanically tore the missive open. It was a cable from his proprietor. Mr Grant was selling his estates to a syndicate, and was coming out by the next steamer to wind up his business.

That was the last straw. Arthur stood crunching up the flimsy paper in his hand, and growing paler every instant about the lips; while the coolie, lifting the beef-box on his head again, pursued his way to the bungalow. As he passed he seemed suddenly to remember something. 'Plenty rain, he bring down plenty-much stones,' he remarked.

'Elwatte plenty-much stone he come rolling down.' This coolie had an ambition to become an *appu*, and diligently improved his English on every opportunity with that end, but Dunbar hardly heard his jargon, and went on to the tea-house as if he walked in a dream.

The hours passed on drearily till breakfast-time. Dunbar was transplanting, and he passed between the factory and the fields many times that morning. But it was not the glare of the sun scorching down on the hillside, nor yet the intense heat of the drying-room, that made his cheek so white and the damp dew of perspiration to stand on his brow. Everywhere, everywhere he saw that word 'ruin' written before his eyes. At last the breakfast-hour came, and, mounting his pony, he took across the patena grass on to the short-cut to Elwatte. The good little pony knew the road well, and trotted over it smartly, though it was but a rough track, more like the bed of a torrent than anything in the shape of a path. Very like the bed of a torrent it was this morning, for there had been a severe storm in the night, and the water was pouring down the hillside in places as if coming from a lake. Again and again the pony had some work to keep its feet; but within four miles of Elwatte bungalow he and his rider had to come to a full stop. The track at this point took a sharp curve, with nothing but precipice above and below, and here the landslip of which the coolie had spoken had taken place. A gap yawned where the road had been only last night, when Arthur had ridden this same way home. The soil, soft and friable as sand, was completely washed out, and great lumps of earth and bushes torn up by the roots lay scattered on the edge or had rolled over beneath. Preoccupied as he was, Dunbar could not but look and look again at this picture of disaster.

'Good heavens!' he exclaimed, 'if this had happened last night, Tommy, before you and I came along in the dark, we would have been lying here, it strikes me, with our necks broken at this moment. Not that it would have mattered much—to me at any rate,' he added bitterly. 'Well, there's nothing to be done but to turn back and take the Government road, old fellow; so round you go.'

This was an operation requiring some care on so narrow a path, but it was accomplished in safety; and he galloped back till he reached another road, which he followed till it joined the high-track. Vexed at the delay, he pushed on as fast as he could. Manning had said he was going to Colombo to-day, and he must see him and get that draft stopped first. But he was all but too late, for as he came to the spot at which the Elwatte road led up the hill, the very man he was seeking came galloping down.

As soon as Manning saw him he shouted, 'Hallo! Keep out of the road, like a good fellow. Then go on to the bungalow and have a drink

if you will; but don't ask me to come back with you, for I'm posting down to catch the two train, and it's ten to one if I do it. That brute of a housekeeper of mine muffed the thing till I believe I've lost the connection.'

'Stop, Manning,' answered Dunbar, barring the way in spite of the injunction just received. 'I won't keep you a second; but I must speak to you. I must have that draft back.'

'The draft back! Confound you! What do you take me for?' cried Manning angrily. 'Unless you have the thousand rupees in cash, as is not very likely, my fine fellow, from what I know of your finances, I should be a pretty flat to do any such thing. If that is all you have got to say, get out of my way. I tell you I've got to catch that train.'

'Manning, I'll be ruined if you don't,' Dunbar returned. 'Grant is due here in a fortnight, and you know what that means. Everything will come to a smash up. But if you will let me have it back I promise you I will pay you in three months. My brother at home is a good fellow, and will help me out of the mess, and'—

'Go to — with your brother!' burst out Manning. 'What are you or your brother to me? You should have thought of all that before now. Let me pass, will you?'

'Not till you have listened to me, Manning. You ought to listen, for it's through you I ever began to bet; though that's no excuse, I'm aware. Still'—

'Still,' retorted Manning, who was somewhat in liquor, for all it was so early in the day—he was a heavily-built man, with a sallow grayish face and eyes that flitted backwards and forwards as he spoke—'still, if I stand here listening to your idiotic snivelling I'll lose my train. Once for all, will you let me pass?'

'Not till you have heard me out,' answered Arthur persistently.

'Then I'll make you,' shouted Manning in fury, bringing down his whip so sharply on Tommy's back that the poor beast reared upright and almost upset his master. But Dunbar was a good rider, and his blood was up. Setting the pony straight across the road, he called out, 'You are a brute, Manning; but you *shall* hear me.'

'Before I hear you I'll see you to Jericho,' roared Manning, wheeling round his horse ere the other realised the drift of the manœuvre. 'There's another road, as it happens, Mr Simpleton.'

He galloped up the road and round a corner. In an instant Arthur was at his heels.

'Manning, stop for heaven's sake!' he shouted. 'Come back—come back, I say!'

But Manning sped on. 'Done, you young fool,' he cried back, turning round with a grimace of triumph. 'Go home and have a weep, for that

draft you will never set eyes on again; you may rest assured of that.'

'You'll be killed, man!' almost shrieked Dunbar, but it is questionable if the other even heard him. If he did he paid no heed, and his horse, which was fresh and a far more powerful animal than Arthur's little tat, carried him in another moment round the curve and down the hill at break-neck speed.

Arthur drew up the pony. 'He'll break his neck,' he muttered, 'and serve him right.' The suspicion already rankling in his mind that he had not lost fairly was confirmed by Manning's conduct. 'Nobody can say I didn't warn him, either,' he added. Heavens! A cold sweat broke out on his brow. Was he murderer as well as thief? While he dallied here the man was riding to his death. The path Manning had taken was the same he had himself tried to travel, and the spot where the slip was, in the concave of a sharp curve, reached by abrupt angles on both edges, lay nearer to the Elwatte angle than the other—so near, indeed, to the jutting out of the hill on that hand that there would be danger for any one rounding the curve even at a foot-pace. For a rider galloping at Manning's headlong speed calamity was certain. Dunbar impetuously turned the pony round and made for the Government road with the sudden idea of getting back to his own side of the slip ere Manning reached it on the other, and warning him. But ere he had gone half-a-dozen yards he stopped. What was the use? Long ere he reached the gap by that way all would be over.

He drew up his pony in his uncertainty, and looked from side to side. Suddenly he was seized with an idea. If he climbed up the face of the hill, on the other side of which lay that awful hole, he might yet be in time. He sprang from Tommy's back and tore up, trampling the tea-bushes and setting the stones rolling under his feet as he struggled forward. Even in his haste the thought of the destruction he was doing vexed him. But this was no time to take account of that. It was a man's life and a horse's against everything else. Soon he had got through the planted slope, and came to what was far more difficult to push his way in. The top of the estate at this point had not been cleared, and a dense growth of fern and jungle plants barred his progress, and almost choked him. The only implement he had with which to force a passage was his thick riding-whip, and the great chains of scarlet and orange creepers which twisted their wreaths of flowers between his feet and round his arms were hard to break. Yet he pushed desperately on, and reached the summit at last, where he was fain to pause, draw breath, and wipe his scratched and streaming face. The next moment he set out on the descent. On both sides of the shoulder of the mountain planting had taken place in parts,

but here the old coffee which once flourished was all but stamped out by the weeds and creeping plants which in that country so speedily hide away all traces of cultivation once it is abandoned. Still, there was the trace of an old road, which Dunbar was not slow to take advantage of; and so rapidly did he go down, that in about five minutes he found himself close to the short-cut and just over the great gaping hole, which he could see right beneath him. In the silence the sound of Manning's horse's hoofs afar off could be faintly heard, and Arthur knew there was not a moment to lose. He half-slipped, half-ran the remaining distance, keeping always to the right, that he might land clear of the slip. He had got to within half-a-dozen yards of the road, when, jumping over a large lump of rock, he somehow miscalculated his distance, and fell, bringing away with him the very stone he had been trying to avoid. Along with it came another great slice of the sand and silt similar to that which had given way below, and Arthur, to his horror, felt himself going down with it. In vain he clutched at bushes and stones. The branches broke off in his hands, and the stones rolled away as he touched them. Every moment the impetus became greater. He was drawn on as if he were being sent through his own wire-shoot, and straight in a line for the first landslip. The fall he had tried to save Manning from was to happen to himself as well. He was not two yards from the verge of the gap; another second and he would be dashed over it, full twenty feet. 'Grant will think I did it on purpose,' he thought, and the notion bothered him oddly. 'I wish that transplanting had been finished,' he continued, cogitating half-dreamily; 'things would have showed up better for me then. I've messed the whole thing as it is, and done nobody any good.' He was on the edge now. His feet were over, and he closed his eyes to see no more, when suddenly he was stopped. His right hand, still clutching at the bushes, had found support at last. On the very edge of the hole an old coffee-stump, with part of its roots hanging exposed and bare in the air over the gap, still held firm on its upper side, and resisted all the force of the rushing earth, which had dislodged everything less deeply grounded. It rocked and creaked as Dunbar's weight bore on it, but it held firm in its place. Hardly daring to believe his good fortune, the young man, inch by inch, while the earth rattled under him over the precipice, dragged himself sideways till he had gained the upper side of the bush, and then lay there panting and exhausted. The next instant he heard a sound that roused him from his half-dazed condition. Manning was close on the place of danger now, for the noise of his horse's hoofs came distinctly to the ear. Cautiously Dunbar drew himself up to his knees, and next on to his feet, still keeping his grip of the stump which had saved him. Had he dared to do so he could

hardly have moved farther yet, for the sickening sensation of slipping was still strong on him, and his head felt giddy. But, drawing his dog-whistle from his pocket, he blew the shrill note again and again, till the air fairly rang with the sound. Then he desisted to listen. Manning, alarmed at so strange a noise, had checked his horse in spite of his haste. The next instant his unsteady step resounded on the road, and, rounding the corner, he stood below Dunbar, staring horror-struck at the peril he had escaped.

'Stay where you are,' shouted Dunbar. 'The whole place is slipping here. You must go back.'

'Dunbar!' exclaimed Manning, turning a face perfectly yellow with fear towards the point on which Arthur stood. 'How did you get there? This is ghastly.'

'Climbed over to tell you,' answered Dunbar briefly, 'and just missed tumbling in myself.'

'Can you get back again?' inquired Manning somewhat huskily after a moment's pause.

'Don't think so,' Dunbar replied; 'not without a rope or something. The wretched thing is like a sandbank.'

'Can you hold on for half-an-hour?' questioned Manning.

'Yes, I dare say,' returned Dunbar. 'It's all right as long as this stump holds out; but I don't believe there's a square inch of solid ground for a yard or two on either side of it.'

'I'll bring help from Penn's,' cried Manning. 'Keep up your pluck, old man, a bit longer.' He disappeared, and Dunbar heard him galloping off.

Then followed a weary while of waiting. Gnats and mosquitoes buzzed round Arthur's head; the noonday sun blazed overhead, and ever and anon low rumbles close to him, followed by the sharp rattle of small stones and sand, told him how precarious was his present position. At any moment the ground on which he stood might go also. At the roots of the coffee-tree a small heap of red earth, brought down and arrested in the same way as himself, grew momentarily higher as fresh slips took place. Dunbar took to watching this heap, and calculating curiously at every fresh split how much of the soil carried along would land at this haven of refuge. There were so many chances against that the game became intensely absorbing. As he watched, a tiny flash shone out like a ray of light from the red earth. It twinkled within reach of his arm; and, forgetful of his peril, he stretched out his hand to pick up the stone, when, whether his weight was at length too great for the ground, or what, he never knew, but with a great crash the coffee-stump, earth and all, gave way, and he was carried over the gap. At the same moment Penn and Manning with a gang of coolies reached the spot.

It was several weeks before Dunbar recovered from that fall. In fact, that he recovered at all

was a miracle. The stump beneath him broke the violence of the crash no doubt. Still, that he only broke his leg and not his neck was a marvel. He was still in hospital when Mr Grant came in, the day after his arrival, to see his young assistant. Dunbar stammered out a few incoherent sentences about the missing draft.

'The draft, my dear fellow,' answered the old gentleman soothingly; 'there's no lost draft. You're light-headed still, and no wonder. Manning cashed the draft—I suppose he found it in your pocket—and paid the coolies and all that. I never thought there was so much sense in the fellow's head; but likely enough he's right enough when he's sober. And, by the way, that's a grand stone you nearly killed yourself getting. It was a *coup* for me, for it's a gem syndicate that are offering to buy my ground, and I'll be able to put on the price now, I can tell you. That landslip is just on the boundary-line, as you know.'

'What kind of stone is it?' asked Arthur listlessly.

'A cat's-eye, my boy. Penn has it, and, by Jove! it's a good thing for you it didn't get into that other fellow's clutches. You had it so tightly gripped in your hand that Penn could hardly get it away. I've seen it, sir, and I'll give you twelve hundred rupees for it on the nail if you like. It's strange if I don't make that out of the syndicate over it. The very sight of it will send the shares up, and the directors will jump at it, if I'm not mistaken.'

Dunbar had also another visitor a few days later. This was Penn. 'Manning sends you a message,' he said in his slow, deliberate way. 'You had better not bet any more, he says, for you don't know how. Hanged uncivil, I call it.'

'I'll pay him that thousand rupees, on my honour,' broke in Arthur eagerly.

'I don't know what you're driving at,' returned Penn; 'and I don't want to. Manning's not my sort, but we're not likely to be bothered with him much more.'

'Why?'

'Because he's cleared out. He got the sack a week since, and is off to the Straits or somewhere.'

Arthur gave a low whistle.

'What for?' he asked.

'Hanged if I know,' returned Penn calmly. 'He was a bad fish. He's let in a lot of fellows over these races.'

'I'll pay him, he may be sure,' said Dunbar again.

'You confounded idiot!' growled Penn. 'Can't you see the fellow has let you off? It's the only good thing I ever knew him do.'

'He fetched you and the coolies to me,' Arthur remarked.

'Ahem! All things considered,' Penn returned dryly, shaking the ashes from his pipe, 'there's no great credit due to him for that. And, all

things considered again, young man, you may thank your stars you've got off so well.'

And that was all Dunbar ever saw or heard more of John Manning.

SUNSET ON THE NILE.

I SAW not such a placid stream as makes
A pleasant murmur through an English plain,
Ruffling the tranquil bosoms of the lakes,
Then speeding to the main;

Nor such a torrent as on Northern hills
Comes leaping crystal-clear from rock to rock,
Falls o'er the ledges in a thousand rills,
Rebounding with the shock

Into a thousand tiny water-jets,
That upward spring, as striving to regain
Their place upon the rocky parapets,
But always strive in vain.

I SAW a waste of waters, cold and drear,
Flow silent through a region desolate,
Which the sun lighted up but could not cheer—
As fathomless as fate.

On either side the palm-tree marked its path
Beneath great rocks, whose ridges seemed to swell
Like stormy billows rising up in wrath,
But frozen ere they fell;

And on the banks, in lichen-covered rings,
Fragments of massive walls, now crumbled low,
Castles and palaces of ancient kings
Long centuries ago.

Yet from the time-worn ruins may we trace
How strongly stood the bulwarks in their prime;
How haughtily defied with changeless face
All enemies but Time.

Chill grew the scene—the sun had disappeared—
Slowly the brightness faded all around;
A gauzy mist, that thickened as it neared,
Dropped down without a sound.

The black-browed rocks, the waters, and the sky
It covered with a cloak of pearly gray
That hid their sterner outlines from the eye
Of the unpitied day.

A tender sadness weighed upon the air,
A silent mourning for an unknown grief,
A sorrow that all nature seemed to share,
That asked for no relief.

When, lo! a ray of palest primrose light
Shot o'er the path of the departed sun,
And with slow-deepening brightness put to flight
The shadows one by one.

Hushed lay the river in its shingly bed,
The clear-cut palms were motionless and straight,
Like sentinels who hear a far-off tread
And raise their heads and wait.

Then suddenly the sky above me burned
With crimson light that glorified the flood,
Until I almost fancied it was turned
A second time to blood.

And, ere my dazzled eyes regained their view,
Colour chased colour o'er the evening sky;
In radiance ever-changing, ever new,
The rainbow hues swept by;

But ever growing fainter as they passed
And shrinking, till the clouds with threatening mien
Drove all the glory from the heavens at last,
And night fell o'er the scene.

JEAN H. MACNAIR.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

REMINISCENCES.

By Lieutenant-Colonel Sir R. LAMBERT PLAYFAIR, K.C.M.G.

I.—DISCOVERY OF THE ADEN RESERVOIRS.

AFTER fifty years' service under Her Majesty in India, Aden, Zanzibar, and Algeria, the time came when I was glad to exchange the cares and fatigue of public life for rest in my beloved and venerable native city of St Andrews. There, in my hours of idleness, I have been occupied in reading the MS. diaries and narratives of travel of my grandfather, Principal James Playfair, of this university, and of my father, mother, and other relatives, from which I have derived the utmost pleasure and instruction. The idea has occurred to me that if I could put together a few notes regarding the family history, and especially concerning my own life and career, it might be interesting to my children and grandchildren when I, like my own parents, have passed away. I had not, and I have not now, any idea of publication; but it has been suggested to me that a few episodes of my career might be considered as having more than mere family interest. I propose, therefore, giving a short series of such incidents in the *Journal*, of which all good Scotchmen are naturally proud.

In 1854 events occurred which necessitated an entire reorganisation of the government of Aden; every individual connected with the former administration, down to the junior clerk, was changed. Hitherto the chief civil and military authorities were separate; now it was resolved to unite them in the same person. Colonel, afterwards Sir James, Outram was selected as the first Political Resident and Commandant. He had just emerged triumphantly from his great struggle with the Government of Bombay, known as the Baroda *Khutput* Affair. The story of it is told by his biographer, Sir Frederick Goldsmid; but a much more graphic description is given by *Punch* in one of those beautiful poems which sometimes appear when a great man dies:

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He faced worse foes than tigers driven to bay:
Wrong leaning upon power, injustice throned
In Justice's high seat; for many a day
He fought that fight, single, unhelped, disowned,

But fearless in his faith, bearing his breast
Under the armour of a conscience pure:
True knight—with stainless shield, and lance in rest
That no gainsayer might for long endure!

I had passed an examination as interpreter in the Arabic language, and, during a visit of two years to Egypt and Syria, I had been associated with Outram in a quasi-political mission on which he had been engaged there. When, therefore, he was offered the Aden Residency he made it a condition that he should be allowed to choose his own assistant. It was a matter of no small pride and gratification to me to receive from him a copy of a letter which he had written to the private secretary of the Governor of Bombay, Lord Elphinstone, on the subject. I cannot resist the temptation of giving part of it:

On his lordship's intimation that I should be allowed to choose my own assistant, I mentioned the name of Lieutenant Playfair as particularly well qualified for the office, having known him in Egypt, and had many opportunities of seeing how he conducted himself with natives, as well as forming a judgment of his abilities. He is the man of all others of my acquaintance I would most readily trust for the efficient performance of the duties devolving on my assistant.

Thus I, a young second lieutenant of artillery, left purely military service never to return to it, and entered the Political Department, under a chief who well merited the eulogium engraved on his statue at Calcutta:

IF AN OPPONENT ONCE STYLED HIM
THE BAYARD OF INDIA,
THEY WHO SET UP THIS MEMORIAL
MAY WELL LACK WORDS
TO UTTER ALL THEIR LOVING ADMIRATION.

Colonel Outram arrived at Aden on the 3d
DEC. 24, 1898.

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June 1854, less than two months after the Crimean war had broken out. This, of course, affected us only very indirectly, yet it brought about the matter of which I am now writing. All the best seamen in England had volunteered for the Royal Navy, and it was only the scum of the merchant service who could be got to man the coal-tramps which came to Aden. The best of this bad lot were eagerly taken up by the vessels of the Indian navy on the station, and the men were quite willing to undergo the imprisonment imposed by the Mercantile Marine Act for refusal of duty if, after their release, they could enter that comfortable and well-paid service. On one occasion I had as many as fifty sailors in jail—as mutinous a set as it is possible to conceive. They set every prison regulation at defiance, and I was at my wits' end to know how to punish them for disobedience and keep them in due order. The great bulk of the ordinary prisoners were natives sentenced to hard labour on the public works outside the jail premises. I threatened the sailors that if they were not more amenable to discipline I would send them out to similar work. They laughed me to scorn, and dared me to do anything of the kind. The valley in which the ancient reservoirs are situated is narrow, and enclosed on each side by high and precipitous mountains. I selected this spot for their delectation, partly because it was long in shade and I did not wish to expose them to the heat, and partly because it would be easy to guard them by a cordon of police at the gorge of the valley. To this place I marched them early one morning, and told them that they should not be permitted to go back for their breakfast till they had excavated a certain number of cubic yards of soil from one spot and carried it to another. Finding themselves in a rat-trap, they set to work with a will to execute the very easy task that had been allotted to them. I left them there digging, and rode away. Very shortly afterwards the sergeant of police sent a man to my house to beg me to return and see what had been found. My astonishment was great to find that the outline of a reservoir had been unearthed, the existence of which no one in Aden had suspected; this led to another, and then to another, and eventually the entire system was brought to light.

The expedient of constructing reservoirs in which to collect and store rain-water has prevailed in Arabia from the remotest antiquity; these are generally found in localities devoid of permanent springs and dependent on the winter rains for a supply of water during the summer months. The most remarkable instance on record is the great dam of Mareb, in the country of Saba, better known as the kingdom of the Queen of Sheba. This country was frequently ravaged by impetuous mountain torrents, while at other times it was parched for want of a sufficient supply of water; in order, therefore, to remedy these evils, Abl-esh-

Shems, surnamed Saba, conceived the idea of building a dam across the gorge of a valley contained between two mountains, which he thus converted into a vast reservoir for the reception of the rain-water descending from the hills. The dam was of cut stone, secured by iron or copper cramps, forming a prodigious mass of masonry, three hundred cubits broad, one hundred and twenty feet high, and two miles in length; it was provided with thirty sluices, through which the water was conveyed into canals for the irrigation of the fields and gardens of Mareb, and by means of which that city became what Pliny styled it—'the mistress of cities and the diadem on the brow of the universe.'

The dike, having somewhat suffered from the lapse of time, was consolidated by the Himyarite queen Belkis, about the commencement of the Christian era, and in her time it was deemed too strong ever to be destroyed. That catastrophe did, however, at length take place; the dam, which had stood for seventeen hundred years, yielded to the pressure of water from within, and gave way, deluging the country far and wide, and carrying away the whole city, with the neighbouring town and people; and thus the prosperity of Mareb was destroyed. This event took place in A.D. 120, and is famous in Arabian history as the *Sail-el-arim*, or 'rush of water from the reservoir,' by which name it is mentioned in the Koran.

This, doubtless, suggested similar reservoirs in other parts of Arabia and the neighbouring coasts of Africa, which have usually been subject to it; and with the spread of the Khalifate westwards the idea was introduced into Spain and other Mohammedan conquests.

There is no certain record of the construction of the Aden Reservoirs. Aden was one of the principal seaports of the Himyarites. Inscriptions in their language have been found there; and, in the absence of any proof or tradition to the contrary, there is a strong presumption that the reservoirs there were the work of the same people who had constructed the great dam of Mareb. We know, however, really nothing of their origin; they might as well have been constructed by the Romans, or by the Persians who conquered Yemen in the seventh century, or, indeed, by the early Arabs, who, like the Moors of Spain, were quite capable of constructing works of this magnitude, and who really did make important irrigation works in various parts of the country.

Aden must at one time have been a place of great importance; it is called by the author of the *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea* 'Romanum Emporium.' The hills and valleys abound with remains of its ancient greatness. Every commanding point is crowned with the ruins of a watch-tower; a broad, well-engineered path, like the old Roman military roads, leads to

the summit of Shumshum, the highest peak, one thousand seven hundred and sixty feet above the sea, and the sides of the hills abound in ruined reservoirs, in addition to those before described.

There was much diversity of opinion as to the advisability of restoring these reservoirs. Some maintained that if they had not been hopelessly ruined they would never have been abandoned; but we determined to make the experiment with convict labour and the limited surplus of municipal funds at our disposal. Indeed, the water question was too important for any reasonable chance of solving it to be neglected. Water containing three-parts of saline matter in every two thousand is usually considered unfit for domestic purposes; here at least two-thirds of the population were obliged to drink water containing from five to ten parts. The few wells of better quality were rigorously reserved for the use of the troops and European inhabitants; the elaborate works subsequently carried out—condensing engines, an aqueduct from the interior, &c.—were then unthought of, and the only really good water available for the townspeople was brought in, at great cost, from the interior on camels. The efficient restoration of the reservoirs was far beyond the resources of the Residency. We had made the discovery, and proved that they could be made available once more; the work was therefore made over to the Public Works Department, and admirably completed by Captain Fuller of the Bombay Engineers. It is difficult without a plan to give such a description of the reservoirs as will enable any one who has not seen, thoroughly to appreciate them.

The formation of Aden is purely volcanic, and bears the appearance of having been in a state of activity at no very remote geological period. The town is situated in the crater, and is encompassed on every side by a range of hills except on the east, where the island of Seerah seems once to have completed the circular form, but has been detached by some convulsion of nature, and carried out to sea a distance of a few hundred yards, thus forming a small harbour. On the outer or western side of this crater the hills are precipitous, and the rain-water descending from them is carried rapidly to the sea by means of a number of long, narrow valleys separate from each other. On the inner or eastern side the hills are quite as abrupt, but the descent is broken by a tableland which occupies about one-fourth of the area of the peninsula. This receives the water from above, and leads it into the ravine in which the tanks are situated. Owing to the hardness of the rocks and the scarcity of soil upon them, a very moderate fall of rain suffices to send a stupendous torrent down the valley, which, ere it reaches the sea, sometimes becomes an unfordable river.

The tanks, which are situated under the foot

of the hills, are generally built at a re-entering angle of the rock which promises a copious flow of water. Here the soil has been carefully cleared away, and a salient curve of masonry built across it; while every feature of the adjacent rocks has been taken advantage of, and connected with small aqueducts to ensure no water being lost. The overflow of one tank leads to another, and thus a complete series existed, as far at least as the large circular reservoir, called 'Playfair Tank,' outside the gorge of the valley. Their construction is extremely fantastic; the only principle that seems to have been adhered to is the avoidance of straight lines. They are beautifully coated with hydraulic lime, and have flights of steps, gradients, platforms, &c., heaped together so as to give a picturesque appearance to the whole. Each large tank has a smaller one above, built for the purpose of receiving the earth and stones carried down by the torrent, and thus permitting only clear water to flow into the reservoir below.

A high Indian official returning to England in 1856 thus wrote to Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay:

I was much interested in the tanks which Brigadier Coghlan [who had now succeeded Colonel Outram] showed me. A short time ago they were as completely buried as Herculaneum; and we passed over some which, being filled to the brim with rubbish, have less the appearance of being what they are than Pompeii must have been before it was excavated. Six of them have been cleared out, and are quite ready to catch every drop of water which falls; they are admirable and substantial works, most beautifully *chunamed*, and most fantastic in their shapes, with all sort of queer steps.

The upper tank of all consists of a dam drawn across the head of the valley; that called 'Coghlan Tank' goes across the bottom of it. Between these two there are others on each side. The discharge of these is led by a substantial aqueduct into a large circular one outside the valley altogether. This is the largest and finest of all; it has been named 'Playfair Tank.' The aggregate capacity of the entire series is about twenty million imperial gallons. The cost incurred by the Public Works Department when I left Aden was about 334,028 rupees; but this only included 'Coghlan Tank' and those above it. Rain does not often fall at Aden, only once in several years; but when it does fall it pours in a manner unknown elsewhere.

I stood by 'Coghlan Tank' when it was filled for the first time, and I do not exaggerate in saying that from the moment the water entered it till it overflowed not more than ten minutes elapsed! The torrent from the mountain seemed to rush down, make two or three surges round the tank, and then burst out on the opposite side. This tank contained 4,645,273 imperial gallons! Had an indefinite number been in existence they would all have been filled. But I witnessed a greater storm than this on a subse-

quent occasion. Early on the morning of the 30th April 1859 it rained moderately, and all the tanks which were cleared out were filled to overflowing. This opportune supply of water was hailed with the greatest delight, and our apprehensions for the approaching summer were completely at rest, 8,000,000 gallons of water being collected; and after ample allowance for wastage and evaporation, the value of it would have nearly repaid all that we had expended. But at 11 P.M. the rain recommenced, and for two hours continued to fall with inconceivable violence. Within half-an-hour the whole peninsula was traversed by torrents, which swept away human beings, horses, camels, and property of every description. The rain did not entirely cease till daylight the following morning, when the appearance of the place was most distressing. Every road and street was so cut up as to be impassable for wheeled vehicles and difficult for horses and mules; the town appeared almost in ruins; the water in the reservoirs had been displaced by immense quantities of stone and soil washed into them; and upwards of twenty men, women, and children perished. One of the best men in the police force, a powerful Soudanese havildar, seeing a woman being carried away by the torrent rushing through the town, threw himself on the bank and extended his hand for her to grasp. She succeeded in doing so; but so great was the violence of the flood that he was drawn into it, and both were carried out to sea. I myself had a very narrow escape. I was riding through a street in the Jews' quarter, when an inspiration, of which I was not even conscious, induced me to dig my spurs into the horse's flanks; he bounded forward, and the house which I was passing fell down, filling the lane with its ruins. The discharge of water in the Taweela Valley, where the tanks are situated, was on this occasion calculated at 2368 cubic feet per second; and from the upper tank alone 43,000 cubic feet of *debris* were removed.

From the commencement of the work up to

the time that I left Aden, the amount of water actually issued from the reservoirs was 39,000,000 gallons, which realised 51,200 rupees.

A little garden was made about the tanks, which became a favourite evening promenade. I planted it with flowers and shrubs from India, and orange-trees from Zanzibar; and I succeeded in naturalising several species of frankincense from the eastern part of the Somali coast, which, when last I heard of them, were in a flourishing condition. Nothing can be more curious than the manner in which the frankincense-tree (a species of *Boswellia*) grows. Instead of springing out of the soil like any other well-regulated shrub, it prefers the bare and almost polished surface of the marble rock. It does not seem to insert its roots into natural fissures, but adheres to the vertical cliff by a sort of intumescence at its base, somewhat like a boy's sucker sticking on to a stone; it then advances at right angles to the cliff, after which it mounts vertically to a considerable height and becomes an umbrageous and handsome tree. It is so full of resin that on the slightest incision being made on the stem a copious discharge of the fragrant drug takes place. This is collected when dry, and becomes a large article of export under the name of *luban* or *olibanum*. It is hardly possible to find a more interesting field for botanical research than the region where this tree is found. On one occasion during a morning's walk at Bunder Murayeh, whence I brought the young trees planted in this garden, I plucked a few specimens at random and sent them to Sir William Hooker of Kew. He wrote me, in reply to my letter:

These are extremely interesting, and, with the exception of the Mangrove (*Avicenna tomentosa*), they are, every one of them, new to us and to science. This collection gives one an idea of the richness and peculiarity of the Somali flora, of which we had no previous idea. It is the rarest thing in the world to get a small collection with two or three new species from any part of the world; and here seven out of eight are all new to me and, I doubt not, to science also.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER IV.



WHILE Foote was cogitating in this way, Browne was rolling along westward. He passed Apsley House and the Park, and dodged his way in and out of the traffic through Kensington Gore and the High Street. By the time they reached the turning into the Melbury Road he was in the highest state of good humour, not only with himself but the whole world in general.

When, however, they had passed the cab-stand and turned into the narrow street which was his

destination, all his confidence vanished and he became as nervous as a weak-minded schoolgirl. At last the cabman stopped and addressed his fare.

'The fog's so precious thick hereabouts, sir,' he said, 'that I'm blest if I can see the houses, much less read the numbers. Forty-three may be here, or may be down at the other end. If you like I'll get down and look about.'

'You needn't do that,' said Browne. 'I'll find it for myself.'

It may have been his nervousness that led him

into doing such a thing—on that point I cannot speak with authority—but it is quite certain that when he did get down he handed the driver half-a-sovereign. With the characteristic honesty of the London cabman, the man informed him of the fact, at the same time remarking that he could not give him change.

'Never mind the change,' said Browne; and then he added, with fine cynicism, 'Put it into the first charity-box you come across.'

The man laughed, and with a hearty 'Thank ye, sir; good-night,' turned his horse and disappeared.

'Now for No. 43,' said Browne.

But though he appeared to be so confident of finding it, it soon transpired that the house was more difficult to discover than he imagined. He wandered up one pavement and down the other in search of it. When he did come across it, it proved to be a picturesque little building standing back from the street, and boasted a small garden in front. The door was placed at the side. He approached it and rang the bell. A moment later he found himself standing face to face with the girl he had rescued on the Gieranger Fjord seven months before. It may possibly have been due to the fact that when she had last seen him he had been dressed after the fashion of the average well-to-do tourist, and that now he was dressed in a top-hat and a heavy coat; it is quite certain, however, that for the moment she did not recognise him.

'I am afraid you do not know me,' said Browne, with a humility that was by no means usual with him. But before he had finished speaking she had uttered a little exclamation of astonishment, and, as the young man afterwards flattered himself, of pleasure.

'Mr Browne!' she cried. 'I beg your pardon indeed for not recognising you. You must think me very rude; but I had no idea of seeing you here.'

'I only learnt your address an hour ago,' the young man replied. 'I could not resist the opportunity of calling on you.'

'But I am so unknown in London,' she answered. 'How could you possibly have heard of me? I thought myself so insignificant that my presence in this great city would make no sort of difference to any one.'

'It makes more difference than you think,' said Browne, with a solemnity that would not have discredited a State secret. Then, thinking he might possibly have gone too far, he made haste to add, 'I cannot tell you how often I have thought of that terrible afternoon.'

'As you may suppose, I have never forgotten it,' she answered. 'It is scarcely likely that I should.'

There was a little pause; then she added, 'But I don't know why I should keep you standing out here like this. Will you not come in?'

Browne was only too glad to do so. He accordingly followed her into the large and luxuriously furnished studio before him.

'Won't you sit down?' she said, pointing to a chair by the fire. 'It is so cold and foggy outside that perhaps you would like a cup of tea.'

Tea was a beverage in which Browne never indulged, and yet, on this occasion, so little was he responsible for his actions that he acquiesced without a second thought.

'How do you like it?' she asked. 'Will you have it in the English or the Russian fashion? Here is a teapot, and here a *samovar*; here is milk, and here a slice of lemon. Which do you prefer?'

Scarcely knowing which he chose, Browne answered that he would take it *à la Russe*. She thereupon set to work, and the young man, as he watched her bending over the table, thought he had never in his life before seen so beautiful and so desirable a woman. And yet, had a female critic been present, it is quite possible—nay, it is almost probable that more than one hole might have been picked in her appearance. Her skirt—in order to show my knowledge of the technicalities of woman's attire—was of plain merino, and she also wore a painting-blouse that, like Joseph's coat, was of many colours. A detractor would probably have observed that her hair might have been better done. Browne, however, thought her perfection in every respect, and drank his tea in a whirl of enchantment. He found an inexplicable fascination in the mere swish of her skirts as she moved about the room, and a pleasure that he had never known before in the movement of her slender hands above the tea-tray. And when, their tea finished, she brought him a case of cigarettes, and bade him smoke if he cared to, it might very well have been said that that studio contained the happiest man in England. Outside, they could hear the steady patter of the rain, and the rattle of traffic reached them from the High Street; but inside there was a silence of a Norwegian fjord, and the memory of one hour that never could be effaced from their recollections as long as they both should live. Under the influence of the tea, and with the assistance of the cigarette, which she insisted he should smoke, Browne gradually recovered his presence of mind. One thing, however, puzzled him. He remembered what the shopman had told him, and for this reason he could not understand how she came to be the possessor of so comfortable a studio. This, however, was destined to be soon explained. The girl informed him that after his departure from Merok (though I feel sure that she was not aware that he was the owner of the magnificent vessel she had seen in the harbour) she had been unable to move for upwards of a week. After that she and her companion, Madame Bernstein, had left for Christiania, travelling thence to Copenhagen, and

afterwards to Berlin. In the latter city she had met an English lady, also an artist. They had struck up a friendship, with the result that the lady in question, having made up her mind to winter in Venice, had offered her the free use of her London studio for that time, if she cared to cross the Channel and take possession of it.

'Accordingly, in the daytime, I paint here,' said the girl; 'but Madame Bernstein and I have our own lodgings in the Warwick Road. I hope you did not think this was my studio; I should not like to sail under false colours.'

It struck Browne that, if he had his own way, he would give her the finest studio that ever artist had taken up a brush and pencil in. He was wise enough, however, not to say so. He changed the conversation, therefore, by informing her that he had wintered in Petersburg, remarking at the same time that he had hoped he might have the pleasure of meeting her there.

'You will never meet me in Petersburg,' she answered, her face changing colour as she spoke. 'You do not know, perhaps, why I say this. But I assure you, you will never meet me or mine within the Czar's dominions.'

I fancy Browne would have given all he possessed in the world not to have given utterance to that foolish speech. He apologised immediately, and with a sincerity that must have touched her heart, for she at once took pity on him.

'Please do not feel so sorry for what you said,' she replied. 'It was impossible for you to know that you had transgressed. The truth is, my family are supposed to be very dangerous persons. I do not think, with one exception, we are more so than our neighbours; but, as the law now stands, we are prohibited. Whether it will ever be different I cannot say. That is enough, however, about myself. Let us talk of something else.'

She had seated herself in a low chair opposite him, with her elbows on her knees and her chin resting on her hand. Browne glanced at her, and remembered that he had once carried her in his arms for upwards of a mile. At this thought such a thrill went through him that his teacup, which he had placed on a table beside him, trembled in its saucer. Unable to trust himself any further in that direction, he talked of London, of the weather, of anything that occurred to him; curiously enough, however, he did not mention his proposed departure for the Mediterranean on the morrow. In his heart he had an uneasy feeling that he had no right to be where he was. But when he thought of the foggy street outside, and realised how comfortable this room was, with its polished floor, on which the firelight danced and played, to say nothing of the girl sitting opposite him, he

could not summon up sufficient courage to say good-bye.

'How strange it seems,' she said at last—'does it not?—that you and I should be sitting here like this! I had no idea, when we bade each other good-bye in Norway, that we should ever meet again.'

'I felt certain of it,' Browne replied, but he failed to add why he was so sure. 'Is it settled how long you remain in England?'

'I do not know that it is,' she answered. 'We may be here some weeks; we may be only a few days. It all depends upon Madame Bernstein.'

'Upon Madame Bernstein?' he said, with some surprise.

'Yes,' she answered; 'she makes all our arrangements. You have no idea how busy she is.'

Browne certainly had no idea upon that point, and up to that moment he was not sure that he was at all interested; now, however, since it appeared that Madame Bernstein controlled the girl's movements, she became a matter of overwhelming importance to him.

For upwards of half-an-hour they continued to chat; then Browne rose with the intention of bidding her good-bye.

'Would you think me intrusive if I were to call upon you again?' he asked as he took her hand.

'Do so by all means, if you like,' she answered, with charming frankness. 'I know no one in London, and I shall be very glad to see you.'

Then an idea occurred to him—an idea so magnificent, so delightful, that it almost took his breath away.

'Would you think me encroaching if I inquired how you and Madame Bernstein amuse yourselves in the evenings? Have you been to any theatres or to the opera?'

The girl shook her head. 'I have never been inside a theatre in London,' she replied.

'Then perhaps I might persuade you to let me take you to one,' he answered. 'I might write to Madame Bernstein and arrange an evening. Would she care about it, do you think?'

'I am sure she would,' she answered. 'And I know that I should enjoy it immensely. It is very kind of you to ask us.'

'It is very kind of you to promise to come,' he said gratefully. 'Then I will arrange it for to-morrow night if possible. Good-bye.'

'Good-bye,' she answered, and held out her little hand to him for the second time.

When the front door had closed behind him and he was fairly out in the foggy street, Browne set off along the pavement on his return home, swinging his umbrella and whistling like a school-boy. To a crusty old bachelor his state of mind would have appeared inexplicable. There was no

sort of doubt about it, however, that he was happy; he walked as if he were treading on air. It was a good suggestion, that one about the theatre, he said to himself, and he would take care they enjoyed themselves. He would choose the best seats at the opera; they were playing *Lohengrin* at the time, he remembered. He would send one of his own carriages to meet them, and let it take them home again. Then a still more brilliant idea occurred to him. Why should he not arrange a nice little dinner at some restaurant

first? Not one of your flash dining-places, but a quiet, comfortable little place—Lallemand's, for instance, where the cooking is irreproachable, the waiting faultless, and the company who frequent it beyond suspicion. And yet another notion, and as it occurred to him he laughed aloud in the public street.

'There will be three of us,' he said, 'and the chaperon will need an escort. By Jove! Jimmy called me mad, did he? Well, I'll be revenged on him. *He shall sit beside Madame Bernstein.*'

CIGARETTES AND CIGARETTE-MAKING.



HE practice of cigarette-smoking has developed in this country almost entirely since the Crimean war. Up till that time Britons had regarded the cigarette as a finicking toy of the foreigner, whose deft and ready skill in the rolling up of the little wisp of tobacco came naturally to the effeminate races of the Continent and the East, but was altogether unworthy of the emulation of our insular manhood. The Briton smoked his pipe, and, if he could afford it, his cigar; but the cigarette in the lips of the dusky stranger he regarded with contemptuous amusement.

When, however, British officers went out to that memorable struggle in the Crimea, among a good many other privations and hardships they had to endure was for a long time an inability to get their customary supply of cigars, and, as the best substitute within their reach, they took to the cigarette so generally in use among their French and Turkish allies. When the war was over, such of them as survived it came home skilful manipulators of the little slips of paper, and confirmed cigarette-smokers. What the officers of the army did could not, of course, be beneath the dignity of our young civilian dandies, and the thing became fashionable to a limited extent; and to roll a cigarette with graceful ease became a coveted accomplishment. Those who smoked them had to roll them themselves then, for the ready-made cigarette was hardly known. That fact in itself tended very considerably to impede any very rapid development of the fashion; and it was not for many years after the close of that war, in 1856, that this method of consuming the fragrant weed became at all general. Practically the whole habit of cigarette-smoking may be said to have been a growth of a single generation in this country.

For a long time people made their own. But that which came so easily to the light-fingered foreigner was to the Britisher often a matter of some difficulty, and for the clumsy and incompetent, little mechanical pocket appliances appeared

in the market after a while; but they never attained any great vogue, and little by little the ready-made cigarette came into favour, and then the consumption increased very rapidly.

Curiously enough, however, it does not appear to have affected other modes of smoking at all. The only exception to this was in the case of very small cigars, in which, however, there never was any great amount of trade done. The cigarette superseded these, but does not appear appreciably to have checked the consumption of cigars or the use of pipes. It seems generally to be believed by those most experienced in the trade that the consumption of tobacco in the cigarette form has been almost entirely a clear addition to the business. It has proved a sort of stepping-stone to the art of smoking, or it has been supplementary to the use of the pipe or cigar. People who could not take to the heavier mode of smoking, and would not have smoked at all but for the cigarette, were able to take to that; and by thus gradually inuring themselves to the use of tobacco found that they could by-and-by get on to the pipe or cigar. On the other hand, a smoker who has had enough of his pipe or his cigar-case is yet equal to a cigarette or two. And, again, there are circumstances in which a smoker feels that it is not worth while lighting up a pipe or cigar, but will nevertheless light up a cigarette. He is going to make a call perhaps, and has a short distance to ride or walk. He will think nothing of lighting a cigarette and tossing it away half-smoked when he reaches his destination; but a cigar would be extravagant. For regular use, however, the habitual smoker doesn't find the cigarette sufficient. It comes in only incidentally with him, while it is consumed to an enormous extent by those who are not habitually given to indulgence in pipes and cigars, and probably would not smoke at all but for the milder temptation.

To what extent cigarettes have come to be smoked in this country it is not very easy to say with any confidence. There are no trustworthy figures of any kind. In America it is different. Over there every packet of cigarettes requires a

government stamp, the value of which depends on the number the packet contains; and it is possible to tell precisely what is the consumption. Nine or ten years ago the yearly account stood at two thousand one hundred and fifty millions, or about six-and-thirty cigarettes for every man, woman, and child in the States; and as the consumption seemed to be going up at the rate of three or four millions a year, and the population has rapidly multiplied, the total must by this time have risen far above that figure. It was expected at the time those figures were put together that by 1895 the Americans would be smoking not less than four thousand million cigarettes in the course of a year, and the probability is they are doing more than that now. According to one of the trade journals a short time since, the smoking of even four thousand millions would be no very remarkable achievement, and certainly would not entitle the Americans to 'boss' this business. Taking the population of these islands at thirty-eight millions, this authority assumed that ten per cent. are cigarette-smokers, and that they consumed on an average five a day all the year round. This would give a total of nearly seven thousand millions. The tobacco contained in this number of cigarettes would weigh over nine thousand three hundred tons, and if it were stowed in carts, each carrying a ton, and the carts were marshalled in a line with twenty feet for each horse and vehicle, a procession would be formed over thirty-five miles long. It would yield customs duty amounting to more than three and a quarter millions of money. Reckoning each cigarette to be three inches long, the total length of seven thousand millions of them would be upwards of three hundred and thirty-one thousand miles, or more than enough to circle the globe nearly fourteen times round. It would make a line from here to the moon and nearly half the way back again.

It may perhaps be questioned whether ten per cent. of the whole population of the British Isles are cigarette-smokers, and whether five a day is not too high an average. It is impossible to say with much confidence; but the figures are not altogether without foundation either, as may be easily shown. At first, as has been said, each smoker made up his own cigarettes. He took the loose tobacco and a small strip of what had the credit of being rice-paper and twisted up the thing with the tips of his fingers. Then came the little mechanical cigarette-roller for private use; and after a while tobacconists offered the ready-made cigarette. But for a long time they were all made by hand, and it cost about half-a-crown a thousand to make them; and the charge to the customer was a great deal more than this. As soon as it became evident that there was a demand for cigarettes ready-made, mechanics of course began to put their wits to work to contrive a machine that would supersede hand-labour, and, after a good many failures,

they succeeded entirely. Of late, fingers in this business have been very rapidly giving way to machines, which will do the work quite as well, and at a cost of something like twopence-farthing a thousand instead of half-a-crown. These cigarette-machines are complicated to look at, but are said—most of them at any rate—to be extremely simple in working. The raw material—the tobacco and paper, that is—is put into the machine at one end, and the perfect cigarettes come out at the other. The tobacco is thrown into a kind of hopper, from which, as soon as the mechanism is set in motion, it is dragged down below by wheels armed with little brass spikes that pass it on in a light, loose condition just ready for rolling up. The paper is put into the machine in the form of a thin white ribbon rolled round a spool, and of just the required width for one particular size of cigarette. For small-sized cigarettes the ribbon is narrow; for the larger sizes it is wider.

The machine being set in motion, a thin stream of loosened tobacco begins to move along from the spiked wheels, and as it moves, the channel it fills gradually contracts until the line of fragrant weed is pressed between two metal wheels running one against the other, with their edges so grooved as to leave between them a circular passage just the size of the intended cigarette. Of course, the quantity of tobacco is made, by an adjustment of the machine, exactly to fill the passage between these wheels, which give it just the necessary pressure to bring it into cigarette form, but without squeezing it so as to make it hard. It passes through between these wheels like a brown cord, and on the other side is met by the strip of paper, which, winding up from the spool below, comes flat under it and moves along with it. If any printing is required to appear on the cigarette, the machine has already arranged for that, and the inscription, whatever it may be, will be found printed at the proper intervals on the under side of the paper. The mechanism has done this printing as part of its day's work, and as soon as the paper moves from its spool.

The narrow band of paper with its round cord of tobacco on it passes along on the top of the machine from end to end—a distance of perhaps eight or ten feet; and as it travels the mechanism gradually bends the edges of the paper over the line of tobacco until they nearly meet. When the paper nearly encloses the tobacco, one of its outside edges just touches, in passing, a little sticky wheel, which imparts the slightest portion of its stickiness to the paper and lets it pass on. This edge now runs flat down on to the core of tobacco, and the other edge quickly comes down upon it and is fastened to it, and the cigarette is made. At the next stage it is swiftly sliced off and rolls down a shoot into a receptacle placed to catch it. There is at least one machine in the

market which dispenses with any sticking material, and most ingeniously joins the two edges of the paper by mere folding and pressing. This, of course, obviates any detriment to the fragrance and flavour of the tobacco by the burning of gum or anything of the kind.

It takes a good while to describe the work, but the process itself is almost too rapid for the eye to follow; and, in the case of the most efficient of these ingenious pieces of mechanism—such as the 'Baron' machine—the cigarettes, white, round, or oval if preferred—perfect in form and wonderfully even in their filling—run down the little shoot at the end at the rate of from two hundred and forty to four hundred a minute. None of these contrivances were altogether successful at first. The tobacco was irregularly distributed, and the sticking was not satisfactory. Sometimes it failed altogether, and too great an overlapping of the edges of the paper imparted an unpleasant

flavour to the smoke, owing to the quantity of the paper burnt. In the best of the machines, however, all difficulties have been overcome, and hand-made cigarettes are now fast being driven out of the market, and probably all but those of the very highest class will soon be made without the touch of a hand. This exception is rather curious. According to the statement of a leading manufacturer, the reason why cigarettes made of the very finest Turkish tobacco are likely to continue to be made by hand is not that there is any superiority in the making-up; but so sensitive is the tobacco and so acute the taste of the real connoisseur—or so vivid is the imagination of some of those who consider themselves connoisseurs—that the metal of the machine is believed to impart an unpleasant flavour to the tobacco; and as price is, of course, no hindrance at all to many smokers, there will, it is said, always be some cigarettes made by hand.

DR BARLOW'S SECRET.

CHAPTER III.



MORNING HAWTHORNE was supposed to be improving his mind and preparing himself for his magisterial duties by the study of legal literature in the solitude of his library; but, as already mentioned, he was enjoying a quiet nap, with his hands crossed over his capacious waistcoat, and a handkerchief thrown over his head and face to keep away the flies. It was with some difficulty that Dick succeeded in rousing him; and when he eventually did so, the expression upon his honoured parent's countenance was by no means an amiable one. There was something positively owl-like about the worthy magistrate's aspect as he sat up with the handkerchief dangling at the side of his head and surveyed his obtrusive offspring with an irritable eye.

'Well, what is it? What's the matter now?' he asked gruffly.

'Well, the fact is,' blurted out Dick, 'that we've got into a jolly nice mess, dad; that's about the long and short of it.'

'Ah, you're always getting into some mess or other,' growled his father. 'I wish you'd take a leaf out of Barlow's book. You're old enough to know better. What's up now?'

Now this piece of advice happened to touch Dick on a sore point, for his father was constantly holding up Barlow before him as a model of all the virtues.

'Oh,' he exclaimed, 'you'd like me to take a leaf out of Barlow's book—would you?'

'And why not?'

'Because,' exclaimed Dick, 'the immaculate

Barlow turns out to be an unscrupulous fraud and swindler—that's why.'

'What? Pooh, pooh, Dick! somebody's been hoaxing you. Why, I saw the man this morning.'

'I dare say you did, but I'm very much mistaken if you'll ever see him again.'

'Why—what—where is he?'

'He's bolted.'

'Bolted!' exclaimed Mr Hawthorne, rising to his feet with extraordinary agility, and glaring at Dick through his gold spectacles—'bolted!'

'Yes; gone to New York to meet his wife.'

'His wife!' exclaimed Hawthorne, his rosy face turning purple with alarm and indignation—'his wife! Are you losing your senses, Dick, or are you trying to take your fun out of me? Don't you play any pranks with me, young man, or'—

'Just you read these letters, dad,' interposed Dick, handing him the letters, 'and you'll soon find out whether I'm in my senses or not.'

Words fail to adequately describe the wrath and consternation of Mr Hawthorne when he had hurriedly glanced through the letters. Instead of figuring upon the magisterial bench, it is more than probable that he might have posed in the dock charged with assault and battery had Barlow been present. That the fellow should have had the audacity to play such a trick upon him, a successful man of business, a landed proprietor, and a recently appointed magistrate, appeared too monstrous to be credible. His purple countenance and glaring eyes positively alarmed Dick, who began to fear that his excellent parent was about to succumb to a fit of apoplexy. For a time rage deprived him

of speech, and there was a perceptible pause before he could do justice to his feelings.

'The scoundrel!' he exclaimed at length; 'the cold-blooded, heartless scoundrel! And to think that my daughter has actually been engaged to marry a bigamist! Now I come to think of it, I always suspected there was something queer about the fellow.'

By this time Dick had recovered his equanimity. He had lit another cigarette, and was seated in an easy attitude on the table, swinging his legs to and fro.

'I think we're jolly well rid of him, sir,' said he, with a cheerful attempt at consolation.

'Rid of him!' exclaimed his father. 'We're not rid of him yet, I hope. Anyway, it'll be a good long while before he gets rid of me. Why, I advanced the fellow a cheque for a cool hundred this very morning to pay for some furniture. Of course, I meant to make Nellie a present of it, but that makes no difference now.'

'Phew!' whistled Dick. 'You'll never see that hundred again, dad.'

'We'll see about that,' growled his father. 'I must see Nellie at once.'

He picked up the letters and strode off to the sitting-room, with Dick in his wake.

'The audacity of the fellow,' he continued, 'that's what amazes me; the cool impudence of the scoundrel. But he shall pay for it—he shall pay dearly for it, or I'll know the reason why.'

He glanced impatiently round the room.

'She's not here. Where's the girl got to?'

'She's doing a weep, I believe,' said Dick.

'She's dreadfully cut up, poor girl. Hullo! here's Tompkyns coming. Barlow's done him too.'

'Tompkyns?'

'Yes; walked off with his blazer and a gold watch. Tompkyns is on the verge of lunacy. He's been after Barlow. He wouldn't keep quiet and leave the thing in my hands. By Jove, though, he seems to have got his blazer after all! Good old Tompkyns!'

At that moment Tompkyns, with a blazer over his arm, came through the window breathless and perspiring, and sank into a chair.

'Well, did you see him?' asked Dick.

'No; he's gone.'

'Bolted, by Jove! I said so. But you've got your blazer—eh?'

'Yes,' stuttered Tompkyns breathlessly; 'I made the servant let me have it. She wanted to keep me out, but I—I forced my way into the house, and took it—took it from a peg in the passage—and—and she threatened to give me in charge—but I didn't care—I—I wasn't going to be done out of my blazer. I believe there's a policeman after me now. I saw her talking to one as I came away.'

'And what about your watch?' asked Dick.

'It's gone. He's got clean away with it. I

felt instinctively that I should never see that watch again. I knew I shouldn't. I—I wasn't going to lose my blazer as well.'

Here Mr Hawthorne, who had been listening impatiently, interposed:

'Come, come, we're wasting time. We must act at once or the fellow will give us the slip. This woman Pettigrew talks about their signatures being in the register at Highchurch, and the 21st of June being the anniversary of something or other they were mixed up together in. We must have that register examined. There's a Bradshaw in the library, Dick. Just see when there's a train, and how long it would take you to get there and back.'

Dick was going, when he suddenly stopped with an exclamation of surprise and joy.

'By Jove! I'd forgotten. Look here, dad; I know the curate in charge there. You remember him—Will Johnson. He's *locum tenens* for the rector.'

'Then telegraph to him at once,' said his father.

'I will, by Jove! The rectory's within a stone's-throw of the church; so if Will happens to be in I'll jolly soon get at the truth of the matter.'

'Then don't waste time. Set about it at once. In the meantime I consider that I shall be fully justified in issuing a warrant for the fellow's arrest.'

Dick and his father hurried out of the room, leaving Tompkyns still panting in the easy-chair into which he had collapsed.

'This is the result of letting anything out of my sight,' soliloquised Tompkyns. 'I shall never see that watch again; I know I shan't. I shall keep my blazer on in future if the perspiration streams from every pore. I can take a warm bath when I get home.'

At that moment a form appeared at the window—a vast, bulky form, with a round, red, moon-like countenance. It was the form of Robert Jones, the village constable, and his somewhat dull, bovine eyes were fixed threateningly on Tompkyns. Tompkyns sprang to his feet, clutching his blazer tightly.

'What do you want?' he exclaimed angrily.

'I want you,' said Jones gruffly as he stepped inside the room; 'that's what I want.'

'Eh? Nonsense! Go away. You've no business here. Be off with you.'

'I must warn you,' said the ponderous constable, with a magisterial air, 'as anythin' you say may be used against you as evidence. You'd better come along quiet and peaceable, and make no fuss.'

'But what are you going to do with me?' asked the bewildered Tompkyns.

'I'm goin' to take you into custody on a charge of stealing a gentleman's tennis blazer.'

'Eh? A blazer! Stealing a blazer? Why, the

blazer's mine, I tell you. It was stolen from me.'

The constable shook his big head and eyed Tompkyns reproachfully.

'Come, come, now,' he said; 'that's too old. We know all about that. I shall also charge you with entering a dwelling-house, the residence of Joseph Hawthorne, Esq., J.P., with felonious intent.'

'But I tell you,' exclaimed the exasperated Tompkyns, 'that Mr Hawthorne's a particular friend of mine.'

For a moment a smile illumined the constable's large, fat face.

'Oh yes,' said he, 'of course he is. We know all about that.'

Then the smile faded away, and he eyed Tompkyns severely.

'Now you come along, and no more of your chaff,' he continued. 'I've had enough of it. We've had our eye on you for some time back. You're an old hand, you are.'

He made a grab at Tompkyns, who dodged behind the table.

'You colossal ass,' shouted Tompkyns, 'are you mad, or drunk, or both?'

The constable's face flushed a dull red and his eyes glittered angrily.

'Oh, I'm a hass, am I?' he exclaimed. 'We'll see which of us is the biggest hass before I've done with you.'

He stretched an elephantine hand across the table and caught Tompkyns by the collar. Tompkyns struggled vigorously, but he was like a child in the grip of the huge policeman. There can be little doubt that he would have been unceremoniously conducted to the lock-up if the door had not opened and Mr Hawthorne appeared.

'Why, bless my soul and body!' he exclaimed in amazement at the extraordinary scene. 'What's the matter? What's all this about?'

Tompkyns turned to him appealingly.

'Look here, Mr Hawthorne,' he said, 'will you convince this incurable idiot that I am not a burglar or a pickpocket? He wants to take me into custody for stealing my own blazer.'

Jones still kept his grip on Tompkyns's collar.

'I've warned him, sir,' said he, 'as anythin' he says will be brought forward as evidence against him.'

'Pooh, pooh, Jones!' exclaimed Hawthorne impatiently, 'you're making an egregious blunder. This gentleman is a personal friend of mine. I've known him a long time.'

But the constable was still unconvinced.

'So have the police, if you'll excuse me, sir,' he remarked stolidly. 'We've had our eye on him for many a day, and now we've caught him in the act.'

'Stuff and nonsense!' exclaimed Hawthorne.

'Let the man go at once, I tell you. Do you hear me?'

Slowly and reluctantly the constable unloosed his captive's collar, and Tompkyns, after glaring angrily at the representative of the law, retreated to the pier-glass to arrange his ruffled plumage.

'Now, look here,' continued Hawthorne; 'you take this warrant for the arrest of Dr Barlow.'

Even the stolid constable showed some symptoms of surprise.

'What!' he exclaimed; 'the doctor? Why, I thought as him and the young lady was'—

'Never mind what you thought,' interposed Hawthorne testily; 'just listen to me and do what you're told. My trap's at the door; get into it, and drive to the railway station at full speed. The Liverpool train leaves in ten minutes. I believe you'll find Dr Barlow on the platform. Take him into custody, and bring him here at once.'

But the constable still hesitated, with the corner of his eye still lingering suspiciously on Tompkyns.

'Well, don't you understand me?' asked Hawthorne irritably. 'What are you waiting for?'

Jones came a little nearer, and, shielding his mouth with one hand, pointed at Tompkyns with the thumb of the other.

'If you'll take my advice, sir,' he said in a hoarse whisper, 'you'll keep your eye on him; that's what you'll do—keep your eye on him.'

With a sage nod of the head, the constable withdrew deliberately through the window. A few minutes later, while Tompkyns and Mr Hawthorne were discussing the situation, Dick came hurriedly into the room, looking flushed and excited, with a telegram in his hand.

'Well,' asked Mr Hawthorne anxiously, 'anything fresh?'

'Anything fresh!' exclaimed Dick, flourishing the telegram. 'I should think so—rather.'

'Well, out with it. What is it?'

'Why, Barlow was married to Dorothy Pettigrew at Highchurch on the 21st of June 1893.'

Mr Hawthorne stood aghast at this confirmation of his worst forebodings.

'Good gracious!' he groaned; 'to think that my daughter should really have been within an ace of marrying a bigamist! I hope this will be a lesson to you, Dick.'

'A lesson to me!' exclaimed the bewildered Dick.

'Yes,' rejoined his father severely. 'Didn't you advise me to consult him instead of Barker? Didn't you introduce him to the family? Didn't you vouch for his respectability?'

'Certainly not,' retorted Dick indignantly. 'I simply heard he was a clever fellow, and so mentioned his name to you, and brought him here to play tennis once or twice. I never professed to know anything about him. It was you, dad, that was always cracking him up as a model for me.'

'Stuff and nonsense. I should never have had anything to do with the fellow if it hadn't been for you. I never quite approved of the engagement from the first, but Nellie was so bent on it that I gave way. I shall go and talk to her about it. I'm astonished at the girl taking up with such a fellow.'

'Well,' exclaimed Dick as his father left the room, 'if that doesn't beat everything! Why, only half-an-hour ago he was wishing that I'd take a leaf out of Barlow's book, holding him up to me as a model of all the virtues, by Jove!'

Tompkins regarded him with an unsympathetic countenance.

'I don't wish to hurt your feelings, Hawthorne, or anything of that kind,' he said, 'but I am bound to say that unless you can vouch for the respectability of your acquaintances I shall be glad if you will not introduce them to me. Otherwise I shall be obliged to discontinue my visits here.'

Dick wheeled round and stared at him.

'The dickens you will!' said he.

'Eh? Yes. I shall do so reluctantly, of course, but I cannot undertake to associate with bigamists and pickpockets.'

'And do you imply that I associate with such people?' asked Dick wrathfully.

'You introduced me to Barlow.'

Dick regarded him with a smile of mingled indignation and amusement.

'May I ask, Tompkins,' he said, 'if you labour under the illusion that I derive an unlimited amount of pleasure from your society?'

'I don't care whether you do or you don't,' retorted Tompkins; 'but in any case I don't want to go the length of dropping you if I can possibly avoid it. Still, I can't run the risk of

your friends making away with my personal property.'

Dick's face flushed angrily; but the situation tickled his sense of humour, and in spite of himself his wrath melted away, and he regarded Tompkins with an almost friendly grin.

'If you weren't naturally an ass, Tompkins,' he said, 'I should give you a piece of my mind, which, to say the least of it, would probably make you sit up. As it is, I advise you to take a cigarette and cool down.'

As he spoke he handed Tompkins his cigarette-case.

'Thanks,' said Tompkins; 'I don't mind if I do. Have you a match? Thanks. You must really select your acquaintances more carefully in future, Dick, if you wish to keep the reliable friends who stick to you in spite of your little failings.'

Before Dick could reply Nellie entered the room with a handkerchief to her eyes.

'Hullo, Nellie!' exclaimed Dick, 'has the governor been pitching into you?'

'It's all your fault, Dick,' rejoined Nellie irritably. 'It wouldn't have been half so bad if you hadn't meddled with those letters. I—I wish I'd never shown them to you. I'm sure Tom would have explained everything to me if I'd asked him quietly. You—you always think you can do things better than anybody else, and you always make a mess of them.'

'Just what I've been telling him, Miss Hawthorne,' said Tompkins complacently.

Dick glanced from one to the other, and shrugged his shoulders with the air of one who finds the ways of this world incomprehensible.

'Well, I'm blessed!' he exclaimed; 'this is all the thanks a fellow gets for trying to help people out of a hole. Keep it up; keep it up.'

WOMEN IN THE POST-OFFICE.

IT is probable that women have always been included amongst the employes of the Post-Office. The writer can remember when the head of the post-office in the great town of Sheffield was a woman, and when there was a 'postmistress' of Gibraltar. The post-office sometimes 'runs in families,' and cases are not infrequent where a postmaster is succeeded by his widow, or daughter, or other female relative. For the most part, such cases would indicate a desire on the part of the authorities to reward long and faithful service or to exercise compassion towards dependent relatives. Not only are postmistresses fairly common in these days, but postwomen—that is, female letter-carriers—are by no means uncommon. There recently retired from the Bristol post-office a postwoman who was

born in 1825, and who must have been delivering letters for the best part of *sixty years*. She was seventy-two years of age when she retired, and it is estimated that she must have walked a quarter of a million miles during her long service. Although she served a very sparsely populated district, she was never stopped nor molested in any way on her round, and it is needless to say that she gained the respect of all with whom she came in contact. The Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, recognising the exceptional circumstances of this woman's service, granted her half-pay in the shape of pension, and the inhabitants of her native village took the occasion of her retirement to present her with a handsome testimonial. Another postwoman in the Bristol district has just succeeded her aunt as sub-postmistress, the latter having served for forty-seven years and

reached the astonishing age of ninety-five. The niece had served for forty-two years as postwoman, so that she must be well on to sixty on taking up her new appointment. The post-office cannot be an unhealthy occupation, or its employées would not live to such abnormal ages. But there are young postwomen as well as old. We have seen the portrait of one who cannot be much above thirty, and who, attired in the official overcoat and cape, with a saucy felt hat and feather, looked uncommonly smart and business-like. She is the wearer of two good-conduct badges, and appears to take her full round of duties—making two rural deliveries a day, besides meeting the trains and attending to the travelling post-office apparatus. A man could hardly do more, and some men do a great deal less. But then this woman was Scotch!

But women have invaded the higher ranks of the post-office service. This may be said to have been brought about by the acquisition of the telegraphs in 1870, when a considerable number of female telegraphists were taken over by the Post-Office from the several telegraph companies then existing. It would appear that women were first employed in telegraphy in 1853, the innovation being due to the initiative of Major General Wylde, a director of the Electric Telegraph Company. General Wylde was in attendance on the Queen at the time, and it is said that Her Majesty expressed to him her approval of the employment of females as telegraphists. The extent to which such employment has obtained during the past forty-five years would probably be a source of surprise, as well as of gratification, to Her Majesty. At the present time the Post-Office employs not far short of thirty thousand women in various capacities, and of these it is probable that the largest number are employed in telegraphy or in duties relating thereto. In London alone the number would appear to exceed fifteen hundred, of whom no fewer than a thousand are employed at the Central Telegraph Office in St Martin's-le-Grand. The salaries range from ten shillings a week to a 'girl graduate' to £300 a year to the matron who superintends the establishment, the intervening grades being those of supervisor and assistant-supervisor, with salaries ranging between £100 and £200. There can be no doubt that, for all but the hardest duties and the night work, women are admirably adapted for telegraph work. They are more tractable and patient than men, and have a finer sense of touch and hearing, the latter being an indispensable qualification when so much telegraph 'translation' is now done by sound, aural signals having largely displaced visual in these days of progress. All kinds of instruments are worked at the central office, and there are few, or none, which cannot be efficiently operated by a fairly-skilled female telegraphist. The writer has even seen the Hughes type-printing instrument,

one of the most laborious and difficult to work, admirably operated by a young woman. Telephone work, too, is peculiarly suited to girls; and there is here a large field for female employment in the future. Not only in London, but in all the large cities—Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow—women are largely employed in telegraphy, and with equally satisfactory results. The romance of the telegraph has been heightened by the employment of women, and courting, and even kissing, are said to be practised on the wires. Mr Scudamore, whose commanding energy bestowed on the country the inestimable boon of cheap telegraphy, told in one of his early reports on the reorganisation of the system how a young woman in London formed an attachment for, and became engaged to, a young man in Berlin, whom she had never seen, and how they subsequently got married, purely on the strength of a telegraphic courtship! But then, as Mr Scudamore pointed out, 'the whole world is the country of the telegraphist. Sitting at one end of a wire, no matter what its length, he converses as easily with the clerk at the other end as if he were in the same room with him. Strange as it may seem, he knows by the way in which the clerk at the other end of the wire does his work whether he is passionate or sulky, cheerful or dull, sanguine or phlegmatic, ill-natured or good-natured. He soon forms an acquaintance with him, chats with him in the intervals of work, and becomes as much his companion as if he were working face to face with him.' What more can an amorous couple require than this?—unless it be an exchange of photos; for the telegraph has not yet achieved the transmission of likenesses, although in the fac-simile telegraph we have a close approximation to such a result.

Quitting the region of romance, it may be noted that young women of the class from which telegraphists are drawn are largely employed as counter-clerks or 'counter-women' at the various branch post-offices in London and other large towns. If it be remembered that a post-office clerk nowadays has to be something of a banker, an insurance agent, a parcel receiver, as well as a stamp-seller and an interpreter of the Postal Guide, with its five hundred odd pages, it will be seen that the department has great faith in the capacity of women for the performance of the most exacting duties. Such faith has, apparently, not been misplaced, for women are being employed in increasing numbers at post-office counters, and the work, it would seem, is neither too intricate nor too exacting for them. Time was when the public, or some portion of it, made rather a stand against the female post-office clerk, and when the comic journals delighted to expose her flirtations and frivolities from week to week. But it is much more dangerous to flirt across a post-office counter than through

a telegraph-wire between London and Berlin, unless the wire happens to be 'milked' by some inquisitive person *en route*. Somehow, the comic man was never very happy in his hits at the post-office girl, and it is now a recognised thing that certain post-offices shall be served by women, and very well served, too.

But a still higher development of female labour has taken place in the Post-Office since the acquisition of the telegraphs. The great account branches of the department have called in the aid of the woman clerk to such an extent that it is doubtful whether they may not one day outnumber the men employed. Thus, in the Accountant-General's department, where a total of more than eighteen hundred persons is employed, more than six hundred are women. These latter are employed in two separate branches—namely, the Postal-order Branch and the Clearing House Branch, and the salaries range from twelve shillings a week for sorters to £400 a year for superintendents, the intermediate classes being clerks, principal clerks, and assistant superintendents. The work in the Clearing House Branch is wholly connected with the telegraphs, and is largely taken up with the bringing to account of press telegrams, sent without prepayment, and the making out of accounts against the various newspapers on whose behalf they are transmitted. This is a more or less complicated class of work, but it is performed with perfect efficiency by the two hundred or so women clerks employed in it. The term 'Clearing House' is no doubt a survival from telegraph days, that being the designation given by the old companies to what is known in the Post-Office as the 'Message Branch.' The Postal-order Branch, although of more recent date, employs twice the number of persons employed in the Clearing House Branch, a large army of 'sorters' accounting for most of the difference between the two establishments. It is clear that much sorting must be required when millions of orders have to be placed away in pigeon-holes, regard being had not simply to the amount of the order, but to its number and cipher as well. The facility with which orders can mostly be traced is the best evidence of the care with which the work is done by the women sorters employed upon it. Last year upwards of sixty-seven millions of orders were issued, representing a total value only a trifle less than twenty-five millions sterling.

It is in the Savings Bank Department that the most extensive employment of female labour is to be found, the establishment for the current year exceeding a thousand persons, and nearly equalling that of the male branch of the office. A new feature is to be found in this year's list—namely, 'girl clerks,' of whom a total of sixty contrasts with one hundred and fifteen boy clerks. There are upwards of two hundred sorters and six hundred second-class clerks, the establishment

being completed by first-class clerks, principal clerks, assistant superintendents of two grades, and a superintendent who rises to the princely maximum of £450 a year. We wonder if a sorter or a girl clerk carries a superintendent's baton in her pocket, because, if so, there would be the splendid leap from about £30 a year to the princely amount just mentioned. It is not difficult to understand that there must be much work in the Savings Bank Department exactly suited to the female capacity and the female love for order and precision. Millions of documents have to be dealt with in the course of the year—acknowledgments for sums deposited, warrants for sums to be withdrawn, declarations of various kinds, and a host of forms which is positively bewildering. Most of these, no doubt, pass through female hands, and probably also some of the ledgers are posted by the more experienced women. The odd thing is that, of all the millions deposited and withdrawn during the year, not a penny enters or leaves the building in Queen Victoria Street known as the Central Savings Bank, which is simply an office of account. The money is dealt with by the postmasters throughout the country, and here again the female element comes in, many postmasters' assistants being women.

It remains only to notice one other branch of the service—the Returned Letter Office, where women are employed in any numbers. Here about fifty persons are engaged in the work of returning 'dead' or derelict letters to their senders, an operation requiring care and confidence, but no great skill. Hence the salaries only run from fourteen shillings a week in the case of a 'returner' to £170 a year in the case of the superintendent. This office used to be called the 'Dead Letter Office,' and is so called by many old-fashioned persons to this day. But the women clerks have never known it by this designation, as their employment in this branch of the service is of comparatively recent date.

Only one great department—the Money-order Office—has escaped the female invasion so far. But the fiat has gone forth, and henceforward money-orders, like postal-orders, will be sorted by female hands instead of by male. The Money-order Office is a comparatively small establishment, and it is understood that a small contingent of women clerks drawn from other branches will inaugurate the era of female labour there. By-and-by, no doubt, a proportionate number of women clerks will be borne on this establishment, as in the other great branches of the office.

One department we had very nearly missed—the Medical Department. Even here women are employed, there being a female medical officer and an assistant female medical officer. There is also, unless we are mistaken, a lady doctor at Manchester. It was Mr Fawcett, when he was Postmaster-general, who introduced women into

this department, and the large number of females employed in London would seem to afford an ample justification for this course.

We have thus seen how enormously the employment of women by the Post-Office has increased since the acquisition of the telegraphic service twenty-eight years ago. It has spread into nearly every branch of the service, not even excepting the secretary's office, where it is understood that women typists are employed; and it is probable that the solicitor's office is the only one which has escaped the invasion of the 'monstrous regiment of women.' Women solicitors are not yet an accomplished fact, but they will come in time no doubt. It would seem, too, that the example of the Post-Office has spread to other departments of the Civil Service, the Inland Revenue establishment showing a number of 'female assistants' in the office of the Controller of Stamps and Stores, and a number of 'female tellers' in the Stamping Department. The Customs is more modest, only figuring for a few women typists at the present moment; and this is probably the extent to which most other government offices are committed to the 'forward movement' so far. Even the Treasury, it is understood, has its women typists, so that 'My Lords' will be able to judge for themselves as to the value of female labour in the public service.

Appointments in all branches are eagerly sought

after, and the number of female candidates attending the competitions held from time to time is enormous. From twenty to thirty candidates per vacancy is a not uncommon proportion in the more important competitions, and a severe training must be gone through before a candidate has the smallest chance of success. 'Cramming' has to be done by women as systematically as by men before the ordeal appointed by the Civil Service Commissioners can be successfully faced; and the 'Civil Service factories,' as the crammers' establishments have been rather cleverly, if cynically, described, are almost as full of one sex as of the other. Whether the best material is obtained in this way is a matter beyond the scope of this article, although it is a point which has engaged attention in the recent past, and will be increasingly debated in the near future. Let it suffice for the present to say that the material turned out so far has been found sufficient for its purpose, and that the Civil Service sieve is not too narrow in the mesh, having regard to the enormous number of persons anxious to get through it.

It would be idle to speculate whether the increased employment of women in the public service is due to considerations of policy, of philanthropy, or of parsimony. It is a great fact, and it will remain so long as there is simple, useful work to be done, which can be as well, or better, done by women than by men.

PINE-APPLE GROWING IN FLORIDA.



SOME of the most profitable fruit-growing in the world is that at the present time being carried on in a town of Southern Florida, U.S.A., where the damp gray sand is bringing forth the luscious shed-grown pine-apple, to the pocket-filling profit of its lucky planters.

Five years ago the industry was in its infancy, and the number of acres set to this fruit in the whole country could have been told on the fingers of one hand. At the present date there are several hundred acres of these plants growing under sheds, and the number is daily increasing. Eight new pineries were planted around Orlando in the summer of 1898. Editors, lawyers, and physicians, merchants, ministers, and millionaires, have been bitten with the planting fever; in fact, almost every man in the country town who can scrape together the necessary capital has, or is about to, 'put out' his big or little pine-apple 'patch.'

The bygone profits have certainly been enormous. It is stated on good authority that the proprietor of a seven-acre 'pinery' cleared nearly £8000 from last season's (1896) crop, with only a portion of his plants fruiting! One woman cleared £400 on half an acre. No wonder an acre of pines

is regarded as a snug little fortune. The crop is an annual one; there are nine thousand plants to the acre; each plant produces an apple weighing from five to fifteen pounds, worth from sixpence to five shillings each, according to the season of marketing; also a number, varying from five to twenty-five, of offshoots termed 'slips' and 'suckers,' the present market price of which ranges from sevenpence-halfpenny to one shilling each.

The original pioneer of this paying enterprise now possesses more than a dozen acres of shedded 'pinery,' and is commencing an extension of several more. The property is styled 'The Klondyke Pinery,' a name and an association which, according to report, it does not belie.

The long vistas of the large plant-sheds, in the chequered light and shade, loom longer still, and the first sight of the serried ranks of plants, whose sharp-pointed, sword-like leaves reach well up toward the shed-slats, seven feet from the ground, fruit in all stages of curious growth and colour peeping from amidst its armed guardians, is strangely impressive.

Like orange and lemon growing in this country, pine-apple growing, however, is one of the luxuries of horticulture, the large indulgence chiefly of men of riches.

The risk at present most obvious is that from frost. The two very severe frosts of the winter of 1894-95, which killed to the ground nine-tenths of all the citrus-trees in the state, only 'set-back' pine-apples under sheds one year—all healthy plants sprouted immediately from the ground.' A recent device, the burning of resin briquettes, placed at intervals throughout the sheds, has proved of much service in warding off ordinary vagaries of the Frost-king; the dense smoke prevents the great radiation of heat during the night of visitation.

The juice of the pine-apple is reputed a specific in diphtheria, as also to possess properties similar to that of pepsin in dissolving albumen;

it is being prepared for these purposes in factories on the east coast of the state.

The fact has long been known that the nearer a fruit is grown to its northern limit the more excellent will be its quality; the pine-apple of Central Florida is an example. Certainly the luscious fruit grown in the moist half-shade of these slatted roofs is different indeed to the open-air product of the sand-hill slopes and rocky 'keys' of the more southern country.

In the opinion of many, the shed-grown pine-apple of Central Florida will make its mark in horticultural history, and will probably hold its own nobly against all comers in that final test of all fruit excellence—Covent Garden Market.

THE HAUNTED HOUSE.

THE rusty gate hangs on its broken hasp,
The ivy's green embrace the only clasp.
The only breath that breathes is deep decay
Brooding above the spot from day to day.
The yew-trees twine their arms about the bowers
Once chosen home of beauteous mingled flowers.
The green ferns droop above the darkened well,
The nightingale alone awakes the spell.
The sundial, overthrown, lies on the lawn,
And never more shall mark the rising dawn.
The daisy and the primrose from the grass
Forget the sound of gliding feet that pass.
The broken marble fountain throws no stream
Of dewdrops on the lilies' waxen gleam.
Choked is the pool with vegetation rank;
Hoarse croak the frogs from out the green weeds
dank;
Only the wild-birds oft-times come to drink
Their morning sip of nectar from its brink.
The ringdove builds her airy palace near,
And coos her love-song to no listening ear.
The throstle now alone awakes the rose,
Whose wild thrown sprays aloft the south wind blows.
No shutters close the staring windows' eyes;
Their sightless orbs look out to meet the skies.
No living foot treads o'er that silent floor;
No human hand throws open wide the door;
No fitful firelight banishes the night,
Nor gilds the mouldering walls with ruddy light.
No shadows dance upon the parlour wall,
Throwing reflections, weird and grim and tall.
Only the gray shades of the departed,
Only the pale ghosts of the true-hearted,
Hover anon about the closed door,
In mute remembrance of the days of yore.
Through summer's sunny days and du-ky nights,
Through all prolific Nature's deep delights,
'Mid all the desolation, listless roam
The shades of those who knew the place as home;

And down the cedar-walk a lady glides—
A velvet hood her dainty beauty hides,
The satin hoop her tiny feet reveals
As through the rustling leaves she silent steals;
And all adown the deep mysterious glade
The moonbeams flicker through, and softly fade.
A youth is strolling slowly by her side,
The dreamy shades their lingering kisses hide;
And through the bushes gleam a pair of eyes,
And muffled figures from the shadows rise.
A point of steel has vanished in her breast—
Her stifled cry and breathing are at rest.
When Winter's icy grip of crystal frost,
When song of bird and running stream are lost,
When every herb and leaf and fruit and flower
Slumbers, to gain anew their magic power,
Then empty echoing silence reigns supreme;
No more the sad-eyed ghostly forms are seen.
'Tis only with the waking touch of Spring,
When all the woods with fluty voices ring,
That slender shades creep round the home once
more,
That stealthy footsteps falter o'er the floor,
And scare the living from the mournful scene
Of former joys, and what they might have been.
They say a curse hangs o'er the old homestead;
Hence creeps the bindweed o'er the lilies dead,
The gray moss clothes the hoary apple spray,
And all things speak of ruin and decay.
Perchance if some pure spirit from the skies
Would loose a tear of pity from her eyes,
'Twould lay the tireless shades of dark despair
That through the summer, earth-bound, linger
there.
Then once again might girlish voices sing,
And happy chimes of children's laughter ring,
And lovers' whispers murmur deep delights
Through summer days and silent starry nights.

VIOLET TWEEDALE.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



THE LEGEND OF BLOOD POOL.

By Major A. F. MOCKLER-FERRYMAN.

HIGH up on the fjelds, under the shadow of the great domed snow-field known as the Jökul, stretches a weird, wild plateau strewn with mighty granite boulders, and seamed with countless rivulets draining off the snow-waters into a network of long, deep lakes. No one lives on this waste except for a few weeks of the short summer and autumn, when, if you wander up from the lowlands to the outlying sæters, you will find that half the peasants are away with their cattle, grazing them on the rich vegetation that crops up amongst the rocks or that fringes the borders of the tarns. Or, maybe, if you ascend to the plateau itself—four thousand feet above the sea—you will meet with solitary reindeer-hunters living in small stone shelters, and spending their time in netting the trout and stalking the deer. Occasionally, also, you may come on a herd of tame reindeer, watched over by wrinkled-faced Lapps, who roam throughout the highland pastures whithersoever their deer may choose to lead them.

The story I am about to tell was given to me by one of these wandering Lapps—Black Andreas—who, according to his own account, has weathered ninety winters, and whose puckered face has the appearance of having withstood the elements for several centuries. The old man is not garrulous; his tongue, in fact, can only be loosened by the application of raw spirits; and as he drinks and talks only at night, lapsing into a comatose state after about half-an-hour, it can be understood that the extraction of his story was a matter of considerable time. To reproduce it in his own words at all literally translated would be an utter impossibility; all I can hope to do is to relate the tale from memory, with the aid of a few rough notes that I took from time to time. Whether the whole thing is mere romance produced from a brain fired by ardent potatoes, or whether it is founded on fact, I am not prepared to say, though it is well known among the sæter-

folk of the neighbourhood, and many an old Norseman can throw light on several points.

It all happened when Svarte Andreas was a young man, and he himself speaks with a knowledge of facts and as one who actually knew the actors in the tragedy—for such, we shall see, it was. The scene lies in one of those small, sheltered valleys stretching down from the Jökul towards the east, where for eight months of the year the wonders of the land lie buried deep in snow. In the summer, however, it is fair enough to look upon; true, there are no trees, but a wealth of glorious scenery extends in all directions. If you look to the west you see the solid white sloping sides of the snowfield, which resemble for all the world the sugar surmounting a bridal cake—poured carelessly on the top and allowed to run over in parts. Turn in whichever other direction you will, the same scene meets your gaze—a vast stony waste, with here and there a black, rounded mountain-top standing up above the general level of the plateau, and a score of sparkling lakes, each in its setting of green-sward and marsh; while everywhere between the rocks stand banks of gray reindeer-moss and tufts of coarse grass, studded with brilliant-flowered alpine plants. It is a sight worth seeing in the early summer months, and the unspeakable solitude of the spot makes you feel that you are a trespasser in Nature's preserves. The stone-chats flit from rock to rock, uttering their cries of alarm; the golden plover calls plaintively to his mate, and the lemmings dart into their holes at the first sight of the intruder. At your feet, as you stand in this little valley, lies a deep, black tarn, surrounded by a morass of soft, peaty earth, where grow in wild luxuriance, between the bunches of white cotton-grass, the delicious multiberries—the yellow fruit like little balls of gold among their russet leaves. The tarn is known as Blood Pool; and thereby hangs the tale.

It was autumn; the harvest in the lowlands was over, and the farmers' sons were free to go to the

mountains and try their luck with the wild reindeer which, in the early years of the present century, roamed in vast herds over the Hardanger Vidde. Englishmen were as yet almost unknown in the land, and, indeed, the Englishman who figures in this story was said to have been the first that ever attempted deer-stalking in these parts. He was looked on as an eccentric individual; for, that any one of means should live in a *fiskebod* in the wilderness and shoot reindeer without wanting the flesh of the animals was to the Norseman a thing unheard of. The real name of this adventurous sportsman has unfortunately become unintelligible, for Veelpal (as Andreas calls him) can be converted into no English equivalent; yet possibly, when my story is read, some one may remember to have heard a similar tale of one of his relatives, and so be able to set the matter at rest for ever, and give to the sæter-folk the interpretation of Veelpal—the mad Englisher. Be that as it may, the shooting season had come, and for the second time the Englishman had taken up his headquarters in a small hut by the side of Tin-hölen Lake, whence, at sunrise each morning, he started, with his musket, in search of deer. The results of his first season had gained him a great reputation among the local hunters, and 'to shoot with English bullets' had become almost a proverb; yet he had been now a fortnight on the Vidde without doing any execution whatever. The cause of his bad luck he put down to the wind, which had kept in one quarter for several days, and thus attracted all the deer to one part of the vast plateau.

'This accursed lake again,' muttered the Englishman, who, after a hard day's toil in pursuit of a wounded buck, found himself on the sodden margin of what is now called Blood Pool, in the swamps of which the tracks of the beast had suddenly disappeared. Twice he beat round the edge of the morass, but not a footprint could he discern beyond a certain spot; then, having refreshed himself with multiberries to his heart's content, he abandoned the chase, and strolled up to a neighbouring ridge in order to scan the country. He was now several miles from his hut; the sun had long since ceased to tinge the Jökul with its expiring rays, and a heavy mist was creeping up the valleys. Suddenly, as he gazed northwards, he descried a thin wreath of smoke ascending from a mound by the side of a tarn at no great distance, and thither he at once decided to wend his way in search of a night's lodging. The mist had enveloped the country rapidly; and as the weary Englishman approached the spot where he had noticed the smoke, it became impossible to see ten yards ahead, and to right and left he wandered without discovering anything in the nature of a hut. The place, moreover, had grown uncanny; strange sounds issued from the depths of the mist, and even the great gray boulders appeared to be moving. Many a time had Veelpal

laughed at the old women's tales related by the sæter fire, of the trolls and the evil spirits that dwelt among the mountains; but now it seemed as if he were suddenly confronted by every species of ghost and goblin. He sat down and rubbed his eyes, thinking that, tired out and hungry, he must be suffering from a disordered brain. A great snowy owl swooped silently by him out of the gloom—a new terror; but, nerving himself, he arose and shouted at the top of his voice. The effect was magical; the large stones around him got up and fled out of sight, and, almost at his elbow, a small rasping voice asked in bad Norsk, 'Who is it calling?' The voice had issued from the mound, and Veelpal at once remembered that there was a particular kind of spirit that lived in mounds on the fjelds; but, on turning, he found that his questioner was a reality—a little old Lapp, whose head and shoulders were protruding from a trap-door in the side of the hillock on which he had been seated.

'Welcome to the palace of the King of the Lapps,' said the old man, with a certain amount of dignity; 'it is not often that we have visitors here, and I have never seen a foreigner in these regions before. I suppose you are none other than the mad Englisher who shoots the deer for amusement?'

Veelpal nodded, whereupon the Lapp rubbed his hands together, broke into a succession of chuckles, and then laughed until the tears ran down his cheeks.

'How many deer have you lost in the pool up yonder?' he asked.

'Which pool?' inquired the Englishman.

'Why, the pool away over the brow, where the water lies deep and black, and whither the hunted deer flee for shelter—shelter which they get, too,' chuckled the Lapp.

Veelpal became interested, for on several occasions he had had the same bad luck that had pursued him this day; he had followed the deer as they fled towards the snowfield, and then had suddenly lost all trace of them. His host, however, refused to enlighten him as to the disappearance of the animals, only nodding his head and smiling to himself when questioned. Then, getting up from his seat, he took down from a niche in the wall a number of small and well-polished bones, which he threw in a heap on the floor. These he gazed on for a while; then, gathering them up, he remarked, with a smile, 'There'll be more deer to disappear on the morrow, and Ravdna comes home. Ravdna is my granddaughter, and I had to send her this morning up into Sysendal to fetch back some of the herd that had strayed.'

It began to dawn on the Englishman that the Lapp was the owner of tame reindeer; and when the old man presently got up and said that he must go out and see to his animals, the mystery of the moving rocks that had troubled the sports-

man was now cleared up. He required no second invitation to take possession of the absent Ravdna's bed, and by the time his host returned he was fast asleep.

The sun had already been some time above the horizon when the old Lapp gently shook his guest, and bade him get up and partake of the coffee which he had prepared. Then, for the first time, the Englishman was able to see by the light streaming in through the open trap-door the interior of the 'palace of the king.' There was but one room—some ten feet square—lined throughout with stones and rough planks, and blackened by the smoke from the peat and juniper fire that burned in one corner. A few wooden shelves were ranged round the chamber, and pieces of reindeer horn stuck in between the stones served as pegs, on which were hung innumerable articles of wearing apparel, fishing-nets, cooking utensils, and odds and ends; while two rough wooden couches stood in opposite corners—the beds of Ravdna and her grandfather. There was nothing peculiar about the hut; it was very similar to many another *fjeldbod*; but from the centre of the dingy roof was suspended an object which at once attracted the Englishman's eye. This was a massive bowl of bright metal resembling beaten gold, and it hung by three chains of the same material. Round the rim was chased a Runic inscription, and the remainder of the vessel was engraved with quaint hieroglyphics. To a connoisseur of works of art, as was Veelpal, the bowl became a matter of the deepest interest; and, being a man of few words, he forthwith inquired of his host if he would part with it.

'Not for all the wealth that the earth has yielded up to man, nor for all the wealth that is still locked up in the bowels of earth, would I allow that bowl to leave my family,' was the curt reply. 'But,' added the Lapp, 'when I am called to join my forefathers in Valhalla, the bowl will pass to the man who weds Ravdna—the last of our race. As for you, forget that you have ever seen it, and if you desire peace in this world, pray to your God that you may never see into it.'

The Englishman would have asked further questions, but the arrival of Ravdna put an end to the conversation. With a wild whoop, she burst through the narrow doorway, when, suddenly discovering that her grandfather was not alone, she drew back, then, with flushed face, held out her hand to the stranger, and in a soft, melodious voice, said, 'Velkom til Finsebu.' Veelpal stood spell-bound; never before in Norway had he met with such an apparition, and his astonishment was the greater because he had imagined that the girl would be of the unkeimpt *sæterjænte* type usually encountered in these parts—instead of which, there stood before him a form whose portrait truly depicted would have made a painter's fortune. A dark-green dress trimmed with red braid, and a

crimson bodice laced with silver, covered her shapely figure; while a white shirt and a solid silver waist-girdle made up a costume at once neat and picturesque. Far below her waist hung two thick plaits of flaxen hair, and the flowered silk handkerchief used as a head-covering had fallen loose round her neck. On her feet were sandals of reindeer-skin, and a cloak of the same trimmed with lemmings' skins depended from one shoulder—the picture of this northern Diana being completed by a slung bow and quiver, and a short spear carried in the hand. There was nothing in the girl's face to bespeak a life of hardship and toil, as undoubtedly hers was, for her features were delicately modelled; and, though her face was sunburnt, her complexion was fair, even for a Norsewoman. It was all a revelation to the Englishman—a peep into an age long past; and it was with undisguised reluctance that, when the old Lapp hinted broadly that it was time for him to depart, he said 'farvel' to his new acquaintances.

'Welcome back again,' laughed Ravdna, in the most unconventional manner, holding out her hand, and, at the same time, piercing the stranger through and through with her pale-blue eyes.

It was a good fifteen miles from Finsebu to Tinhölen, and twice the distance it seemed to-day to the sportsman, who for once had no thoughts for the reindeer, no thoughts for anything but Ravdna—the princess of the Vidde. His boots, as they crushed the dried-up moss; his musket, as it jogged against his back; every trickling stream he passed, and every bird that chirped from tussock to tussock, uttered the same word—Ravdna. Twenty-four hours before he would have scorned to think that he would ever have crossed from ridge to ridge of this wild country without scanning every inch of it with his telescope in search of reindeer; yet here he was—he, the professed misogynist—the man who cared for nothing but the chase—plodding aimlessly along, with eyes on the ground and with thoughts for nothing but a Lapp girl.

Life for the Englishman was now a mere miserable existence; his hut, which before had been all that was desirable in his eyes, had become a wretched hovel; his weapons were put in a corner, and for the time being forgotten. To make matters worse, the two days following his adventure were wet, when it would, at any time, have been useless looking for reindeer; but the third day broke clear and bright, and Veelpal was early abroad. With his musket on his back, he walked without any apparent object, though at noon, by some strange fate, he found himself once again by the side of Blood Pool. Why he had come to the spot he would not have confessed even to himself. On starting at daybreak he had intended going in the opposite direction, yet, gradually some mysterious power had drawn him towards Finsebu; and here he stood gazing into the deep

black water, until suddenly a laugh behind him caused him to look round, when he descried Ravdna seated on a rock and waving her hand to him.

'Well, so you have come back again,' shouted Ravdna, standing up and making him a mock curtsy; 'but you have not sent us any deer to-day.'

'Sent you deer! How can I send you deer?'

'Why, don't you know that when the wind blows from the right direction every deer within miles comes up towards the Jökul? This narrow path is the only one hereabouts by which they can cross the swamps and lakes.'

Leading her companion down a little farther, she showed him how her grandfather benefited by the flight of the deer along the path. The track led by the edge of the pool, and between it and a far-extending swamp; at a certain point in the path Ravdna stopped, and, pointing to some layers of juniper twigs, exclaimed, 'Now I will show you what becomes of the deer when they take this path.' She stooped down, and, lifting a mass of branches, disclosed to the astonished Englishman a carefully concealed pitfall, some twenty feet deep, and lined throughout with stones. 'That is how we catch the wild reindeer,' said Ravdna; 'and now you know how you send us deer.'

The Englishman was disgusted at the sight of what he considered a mean, poaching device; but Ravdna's society soon drove the matter from his mind, and the afternoon passed pleasantly enough in listening to the half-wild girl discoursing on the habits of the reindeer. Many a strange tale had she to relate; her short life seemed to have been spent in a vortex of excitement and adventure; she had had single-handed encounters with wolves—had even slain a bear with the short spear which she always carried; and the number of reindeer that she had assisted in doing to death in the fatal pitfall was to Veelpal horrible to hear recounted.

Yet, in spite of the barbaric delight which the girl displayed in her bloodthirstiness, her nature was not altogether devoid of tender feelings, as was evidenced by a trifling incident which occurred on the occasion of this meeting. As the couple wandered over the rough fjelds they came on what at first they imagined to be a wounded plover; shortly, however, they discovered that it was merely the mother's ruse to draw off attention from her offspring—two little, long-legged balls of down—which were running wildly first in one direction and then in the other. Ravdna's solicitude for the safety of the family brought out all her womanly instincts, and increased the Englishman's admiration a hundredfold, so much so that he could not refrain from remarking on her conduct.

'Did you but know my story,' replied the girl, 'you would no longer wonder; but I have sworn on the great golden bowl that, until my grandfather's death, I will reveal nothing.'

To Veelpal the walk towards the pool became a daily habit. Reindeer-shooting was forgotten;

a sight of Ravdna was all he lived for, and his goddess he saw each day. The neighbourhood of Finsebu had long since been abandoned as a trysting-place, for the reason that the King of the Lapps had forbidden his granddaughter to meet Veelpal, whom he now regarded with the most bitter animosity. Still, such difficulties gave only a keener zest to their meetings; and Ravdna's duty of watching the herd allowed her full opportunity of wandering far from home. Sheltered by the rocks of some time-worn moraine, the couple would sit together for hours at a time, Veelpal ever endeavouring to persuade his fascinating companion to give up her wild existence and take her place as wife and mistress in his English home; while Ravdna, deeply impressed by all her lover told her, begged only for time—till her grandfather died and set her free.

So the days passed, and summer had drifted into autumn. The first snow had fallen and driven the ryper towards the lower slopes of the fjelds, and the Englishman had decided to make his final appeal to Ravdna on the morrow; his stone hut was becoming uninhabitable, and the cold was no longer to be borne. The morrow came, and Veelpal was early at the place of meeting, but Ravdna was absent. For an hour he waited impatiently, then strode along the reindeer path towards Finsebu. On the margin of the pool he found the Lapp girl, seated with her head buried in her hands, and sobbing as if her heart would break.

'What is it, Ravdna?' he asked.

'He is dead,' she murmured, 'and I it was who brought his death.' Then, gasping between the sentences, she related the catastrophe that had come upon her: how her grandfather had been preparing the pitfall in the morning, and how she, while tending the herd to the southwards, had come on a large number of wild reindeer, and had driven them towards the pool. Onwards to the Jökul they had sped, with the result that the old Lapp king had been caught on the narrow path, and had been trampled to death by the terrified beasts.

'Come and see him,' concluded the weeping girl; and Veelpal followed her to the hut. The body was laid out on the bed, and had been covered with a richly-embroidered shawl. A curious golden crown, studded with jewels, was placed upon the head, a spear in one hand and a knife in the other; while on the floor by the bedside stood the great bowl—and, horrible as it seemed to Veelpal, filled with blood. Bidding him follow, Ravdna lifted the bowl carefully, and retraced her steps to the edge of the pool, when, turning to Veelpal, she told him to gaze into the blood and tell her what he saw. She shook as she held the bowl, and the Englishman, awed by the weird situation, obeyed the girl, and looked down into the red fluid. There he saw reflected the troubled face of Ravdna side by side with

his own, the slopes of the white snowfield, and the strange hieroglyphics chased on the bowl.

'Tell me exactly what you see,' said Ravná; and he told her.

'Can you see no more than that?'

'No more.'

'It is because you are not of our people. You can see only the present; your sight helps you nothing in regard to the past or the future. I see many things in the bowl; do you hold it so that I may look the better.' Not liking to refuse, the Englishman reluctantly obeyed, and Ravná bent down, and clasping her forehead with her hands, spoke as one in a dream:

'I, Ravná, Princess of the Lapps, am looking into the past. My mother's face is before me—a fair face, the face of a Norse sæter girl. Why does she marry the Lapp king's son? She loves him. But he is cruel; he drives her from his hut to roam on the fjelds with her two little ones, and she and her small son are devoured by the wolves. Her people at the sæter swear to be revenged, and kill my father, hurling his body into the depths of yon pool, and I am saved and carried back to the sæter. In time my father's father comes and makes peace with my mother's people, and I am given into his care. I am looking now into the future. I see the face of Ravná and the face of a man'—

Thus far had the fair sorceress proceeded, when the Englishman, trembling with excitement, let the bowl slip from his hands, and its contents, trickling down through the black earth, gradually crimsoned the waters of the pool.

'What have you done?' screamed Ravná in agonised tones. 'Oh, see what you have done! The blood of the sacred white deer is mingling with the unhallowed waters. It is my father's curse.'

Then, stretching out her hands towards the towering Jökul, she murmured, 'O spirit of the great snow, have pity!' and, with a wild, piercing shriek, fell forward on her face. Veelpal lifted up the senseless form and conveyed it to the hut, placing it tenderly on the vacant couch. For hours he sat by her side, listening to her incoherent utterances, and endeavouring to make her understand the situation; but no sign of recognition did she give. She was living her young life over again, and at times her speech was quite unintelligible to the Englishman, though he gathered that she was cold and cheerless. He warmed up some reindeer milk and gave it to her, and he heaped up the juniper twigs on the fire. By sundown Ravná had fallen into a deep sleep, her hand tightly locked in his, and Veelpal, tired and weary, sat thinking over the events of the day.

That night two reindeer-hunters, from their hut at Halne Vand, noticed a strange glare against the background of the Jökul. Next morning they met a Lapp herdsman, who had seen the same light, and who told them that the herds of the Lapp king were scattered far and wide over the fjelds. Together the three men proceeded to Finsebu, where they found the hut burnt out, and amongst the débris they were able to discover the charred remains of three human beings.

'The golden bowl,' concludes Svarte Andreas, 'is still to be seen floating on the waters of the pool, which are even now tinged with the blood of the sacred deer; and maybe the beasts still get lost in the pitfall, but no Laplander or Norseman would care to lend a hand in taking them out.'

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER V.

IF Browne had ever looked forward to anything in his life, he certainly did to the dinner-party he was giving on the evening following his visit to the studio in Holland Park Road. On more than one occasion he had entertained royalty at his house in Park Lane, and at various times he had invited London society to functions which, for magnificence and completeness of arrangement, had scarcely ever been equalled and never excelled. Upon none of these affairs, however, had he bestowed half so much care and attention as he did upon the dinner which it is now my duty to describe. Having written the formal invitation, he posted it himself; after which he drove to the restaurant which was to be honoured with Katherine Petrovitch's presence, and interviewed the proprietor in his own sanctum.

'Remember, Alphonse,' he said to that delightful little man, 'good as the others have been, this must be the very best dinner you have ever arranged for me. It must not be long, nor must it be in the least degree heavy; in addition to which every item upon the menu must be the best procurable. You know my taste in wine, and I give you *carte blanche* to ransack London for what you consider necessary in the way of rarities. Reserve "No. 6" for me, if it is not already engaged; and make it look as nice as you possibly can. I will send the flowers from my own house, and my own gardener shall arrange them.'

Alphonse chuckled and rubbed his hands. This was just the sort of order he delighted to receive.

'Ver' good; it shall be done, M'sieu Browne,' he said, bowing and spreading his hands apart in his customary fashion when pleased. 'I have

made you many, many dinners before, but I give you the word of Alphonse that this shall be the best of all. *Ma foi!* but I will give you a dinner zat for its betterment you cannot get in England. Ze cost I will'—

'Never mind the cost,' answered the reckless young man; 'provided you satisfy me, I don't think we're at all likely to quarrel about that. But, remember, it must be the best in every way. Nothing short of that will do.'

'I will satisfy you, m'sieu; never fear that. It is my honour. Perhaps it is royalty zat you have to come to my house?'

'It is nothing of the sort,' Browne replied scornfully. 'I am asking two ladies and one gentleman.'

Alphonse's face expressed his surprise. It looked as if he thought his beautiful dinner was likely to be wasted.

Having arranged the hour and certain other details, Browne returned to his cab once more, and drove off in search of Jimmy Foote. It was some time before he found him, and, when he did, a considerable period elapsed before he could obtain speech with him. Jimmy was at the Welter Club, playing black pool with two or three youths of his own type. From the manner in which their silver was changing hands, it certainly looked as if that accomplished young gentleman was finding his time very fully taken up, picking up half-crowns from the table, placing them in his pocket, and paying them out again.

'Hullo, Browne!' said Bellingham of the Guards, after the black ball had disappeared into the top pocket and while the marker was spotting it again. 'Are you coming in?'

'Not if I know it,' said Browne, shaking his head. 'Judging from the anxious expression upon Jimmy's face, things are getting a little too hot with you all.'

As Jimmy Foote remarked at a later date, this came pretty well from a man who that evening had ordered a dinner for four people which was destined to cost him upwards of fifty pounds. At the end of the next round, however, the former retired from the game, and, putting his arm through that of his friend, led him to the smoking-room on the other side of the hall.

'I hope you have calmed down, old fellow,' said Jimmy as they seated themselves near the fire. 'To what do I owe the honour of seeing you here to-night?'

'I want you to do me a favour,' Browne returned, a little nervously, for he was afraid of what Jimmy would say when he knew everything.

'Anything you like in the world, old man,' said the latter. 'You have only to ask. There is nothing wrong, I hope?'

'Nothing at all,' replied Browne. 'Rather the other way round, I fancy. The fact of the matter is, I have asked two ladies to dine with me to-morrow evening at Lallemand's, and to go

to the Opera afterwards. I want you to make one of the party.'

'The young lady is the painter of that charming Norwegian picture,' said Jimmy, with imperturbable gravity, 'and the other is her chaperon.'

'How on earth did you know it?' asked Browne, blushing like a schoolboy, for the simple reason that he thought his secret was discovered.

'It's very plain that you never knew I was a wizard,' returned his companion, with a laugh. 'You old duffer; try and put two and two together for yourself—that is to say, if you have any brains left to do it with. In the first place, did you not yesterday afternoon invite me to accompany you on a delightful yachting trip to the Mediterranean? You were tired of England, you said, and I gathered from your remarks that you were counting the hours until you said "good-bye" to her. We went for a walk, and as we passed up Waterloo Place I happened to show you a picture. You turned as white as a sheet at once, and immediately dived into the shop, bidding me wait outside. When you reappeared you acted the part of an amiable lunatic; talked a lot of bosh about preferring fogs to sunshine; and when I informed you you were on the high-road to an asylum, said it was better than that—you were going to the Holland Park Road. Our yachting cruise has been thrown to the winds; and now, to make up for it, you have the impudence to ask me to play gooseberry for you, and try to propitiate me with one of Lallemand's dinners, which invariably upset me for a week afterwards, and a dose of Wagner which will drive me crazy for a month.'

'How do you know I want you to play gooseberry?' asked Browne savagely. 'It's like your impudence to say such a thing.'

'How do I know anything?' said Jimmy, with delightful calmness. 'Why, by the exercise of my own common-sense, of course—a commodity you will never possess if you go on like this. You are spoons on this girl, I suppose, and since there's another coming with her, it's pretty plain to me somebody must be there to keep that other out of the way.'

'You grow very coarse,' retorted Browne, now thoroughly on his dignity.

'It's a coarse age, they say,' Foote replied. 'Don't I know by experience exactly what that second party will be like!'

'If you do you are very clever,' said Browne.

'One has to be very clever to keep pace with the times,' Jimmy replied. 'But, seriously, old man, if you want me, I shall be only too glad to come to your dinner; but, mind, I take no responsibility for what happens there. I am not going to be called to account by every London mother who possesses a marriageable daughter.'

'You needn't be afraid,' said Browne. 'I will absolve you from all responsibility. At any rate

you assure me that I can count upon your company?’

‘Of course you can, and anything else you like besides,’ Foote replied. Then, laying his hand upon Browne’s shoulder, he added: ‘My dear old Jack, in spite of our long acquaintance, I don’t think you quite know me yet. I talk a lot of nonsense, I’m afraid; but as far as you are concerned you may depend the heart’s in the right place. Now I come to think of it, I am not quite certain it would not be better for you to be decently married and out of harm’s way. Of course, one doesn’t like to see one’s pals hurried off like that; but in your case it’s different.’

‘My dear fellow,’ said Browne, ‘as you said just now, you certainly do talk a lot of nonsense. Whoever said anything about marriage? Of course I’m not going to be married. I have never contemplated such a thing. It’s always the way; directly a man shows a little extra courtesy to a woman, talks to her five minutes longer than he is accustomed to do, perhaps, or dances with her twice running, you immediately get the idea that everything is settled between them, and that all you have to do is to think about the wedding present you are going to give them.’

‘When a man gives himself away as completely as you have done in this particular instance, it is not to be wondered that his friends think there is something in the air,’ said Jimmy. ‘However, you know your own business best. What time is the dinner?’

‘Seven o’clock sharp,’ said Browne. ‘You had better meet me there a few minutes before. Don’t forget we go to the Opera afterwards.’

‘I am not likely to forget it,’ said Jimmy, with a doleful face.

‘Very well, good-bye until to-morrow evening.’

There was a little pause, and then Browne held out his hand.

‘Thank you, Jimmy,’ he said with a sincerity that was quite inconsistent with the apparent importance of the subject. ‘I felt sure I could rely upon you.’

‘Rely upon me always,’ Jimmy replied. ‘I don’t think you’ll find me wanting.’

With that Browne bade him good-bye, and went out into the street. He hailed a cab, and bade the man drive him to Park Lane.

Once it had started, he laid himself back on the cushions and gave free rein to his thoughts. Though he had impliedly denied it a few minutes before, there could be no doubt about it: he was in love—head over ears in love. He had had many passing fancies before, it is true, but never had he experienced such a strong attack of the fever as at present. As the cab passed along the crowded street he seemed to see that sweet face, with its dark eyes and hair; that slender figure, and those beautiful white hands, with their long tapering fingers; and to hear again the soft tones of her voice as she had

spoken to him in the studio that afternoon. She was a queen among women, he told himself, and was worthy to be loved as such. But if she were so beautiful and so desirable, would she have anything to do with himself? Could she ever be brought to love him? It was consistent with the man’s character to be so humble, and yet it was strange that he should be so. Ever since he had been old enough to be eligible for matrimony he had been the especial prey of mothers with marriageable daughters. They had fawned upon him, had petted him, and in every way had endeavoured to effect his capture. Whether or not Katherine Petrovitch knew of his wealth it was impossible for him to say. He hoped she did not. It was his ambition in life to be loved, and be loved for himself alone. If she would trust him, he would devote his whole life to making her happy and to proving how well founded was the faith she had reposed in him. Vitally important as the question was, I believe he had never for one moment doubted her. His nature was too open and sunny for that, while she herself was of course above suspicion. The fact that she had confessed to him that her family was prohibited in Russia only served to intensify his admiration for her truthful qualities. Though he knew nothing of her history or antecedents, it never for one moment caused him any uneasiness. He loved her for herself, not for her family. When he went to bed that night he dreamt of her, and when he rose in the morning he was, if possible, more in love than before. Fully occupied as his day usually was, on this occasion he found it more than difficult to pass the time. He counted the hours—nay, almost the minutes—until it should be necessary for him to set off to the restaurant. By the midday post a charming little note arrived, signed Katherine Petrovitch. Browne was in his study when it was brought to him, and it was with the greatest difficulty he could contain his impatience until the butler left the room. The instant he had done so, however, he tore open the envelope and drew out the contents. The writing was quaint and quite un-English, but its peculiarities only served to make it the more charming. It would give Madame Bernstein and the writer, it said, much pleasure to dine with him that evening. He read and re-read it, finding a fresh pleasure in it every time. It carried with it a faint scent which was as intoxicating as the fabled perfume of the Lotus Blossom.

Had the beautiful Miss Verney, who, it must be confessed, had more than once written him letters of the most confidential description, guessed for a single moment that he preferred the tiny sheet he carried in his coat-pocket to her own epistles, it is certain her feelings would have been painful in the extreme. The fact, however, remains that Browne had the letter, and, if I know anything of human nature, he has it still.

(To be continued.)

LYDDITE—THE NEW EXPLOSIVE.



THE recent achievement of the Sirdar, Lord Kitchener, in compassing the final destruction of Mahdism, is one which will live long in the memory of the British nation. No example could be found which better illustrates the famous saying of Von Moltke, that 'war is now an applied science;' for the final rout at Omdurman, with all its examples of bravery and fighting skill, was only the culmination of a scientific campaign. The telegraph, the steamboat, and the railway were all utilised; and without their aid Omdurman would have been an impossibility. Probably one of the most interesting features of the campaign, however, from a military standpoint, was the great success achieved by the lyddite shells, which, used for the first time in actual warfare by the British army, proved that lyddite is the best explosive as yet discovered for use in shells. It is the object of the present article to give a short description of this substance, which is destined to play an important part in the wars of the future. Lyddite, as has previously been stated in this *Journal* ('Modern Shells and Projectiles,' August 27, 1898), is only a variety of picric acid, which has been melted and allowed to solidify, thereby becoming denser.

Melinite, recently introduced into the French army, is also another form of picric acid; indeed, most of the so-called 'new' explosives consist of this substance in one or other of its forms, disguised by different names. The history of picric acid as an explosive is remarkable, and furnishes a striking example of how great discoveries may frequently result from accident. Picric acid was discovered in 1771, and for more than a century was used as a dye for wool, silk, and leather, without its explosive powers being suspected. Some ten years ago, however, a fire occurred at a chemical-work in Manchester, and spread to a shed containing a quantity of this acid. Being melted by the heat, the acid flowed until it came into contact with a quantity of litharge stored in the same building. A terrific explosion followed, and subsequent investigation revealed the fact that under certain conditions picric acid behaved as a powerful explosive. Further experiments have made clear the necessary conditions; and at the present time picric acid bids fair to outrival all other explosives for the purpose of filling shells.

Before proceeding to describe the manner in which this body is caused to liberate its explosive power, it will be advisable to give a brief account of its manufacture and common properties, in order that the sequence may be made clear. Pure phenol, or carbolic acid (the common disinfectant obtained from coal-tar), is placed in a vessel with an equal amount of strong oil of vitriol (sulphuric acid), and the temperature raised to the boiling-

point of water. Strong nitric acid (aqua fortis) is then allowed to flow into the mixture, after which the whole is cooled, leaving a solid mass of yellow crystals in the vessel. These crystals are filtered and drained, and afterwards washed with cold water—when the residue is pure picric acid. The crystals so obtained have an intensely bitter taste, and for this reason have been largely employed on the Continent for the adulteration of beer. If handled, picric acid stains the fingers a golden yellow. If heated gently it melts quite tranquilly, and may be poured from one vessel to another. If strongly heated it chars with a slight fizzle; if hammered on an anvil no detonation occurs, as in the case of most other explosives. A cursory examination, such as the foregoing, gives no indication of its latent powers, and it is therefore a matter of little wonder that they should have remained undiscovered for more than a century.

To the uninitiated, such a body would appear to contradict all the ideas formed as to the properties of explosives. They are generally—and in the vast majority of cases rightly—regarded as substances extremely dangerous to handle, and which heat or a blow would cause to explode at once. The apparent discrepancy, however, may be easily reconciled if we consider the analogy furnished by a weight suspended by means of a string. Such a weight represents stored energy, ready to be liberated the moment the string is cut; similarly, an explosive yields its energy immediately its stable condition is broken down. A sensitive explosive, easily called into action, such as nitro-glycerine, resembles a weight suspended by a thin thread, and therefore easily severed; a stable explosive, whose constituents are not readily torn asunder, such as picric acid, resembles a weight held by a strong rope, and therefore more difficult to release. To set into action bodies of the latter type, it is necessary to provide a shock sufficient to break down the existing bonds, and thus set free the stored energy. We may pursue the analogy further: thus, a weak explosive contains little energy, and would be represented by a small weight; a powerful explosive, on the other hand, would be represented by a large and heavy weight. We are thus enabled, by means of this simple analogy, to understand all the difference in behaviour exhibited by these bodies.

The shock necessary to explode picric acid in all its forms is furnished by a class of bodies known as 'detonators.' These are sensitive bodies which explode with great violence; and if placed in contact with a large mass of picric acid, the shock to which their explosion gives rise causes the whole charge to detonate, an extremely small quantity of the detonator sufficing to set into action an indefinitely large quantity of the acid. Thus, by utilising a secondary substance to pro-

vide the shock, this powerful explosive may be made to yield its latent energy. The best detonators for this purpose may be readily made from picric acid itself, by causing it to combine with the oxides of metals. Thus, with lead-oxide (litharge) it forms lead-picrate; with potash, picrate of potash; and so on. All these bodies explode on the slightest blow or application of heat, and are capable of producing the requisite shock to explode the main charge. In this we see the explanation of the Manchester explosion. In itself the acid would have been harmless; but, coming into contact with the litharge, lead-picrate was formed, which exploded and spread the chain of destruction to the whole mass of acid.

We are now in a position to understand the manufacture of lyddite shells, and the reasons for the precautions adopted. Picric acid made by the above process is melted by gently heating, and poured into the interior of the shell to the amount required; and on cooling becomes a solid, compact mass now known as lyddite. The inner lining of the shell is coated with clean tin, a precaution rendered necessary by experience and a knowledge of the properties of picric acid. It has been shown how this body combines with oxides to form picrates, which are able to bring about its detonation; and hence, if ordinary iron shells be used, any rust in the interior (which is oxide of iron) would thus tend to produce premature explosion, and render the shell unsafe to handle. The detonating charge consists of a small quantity of lead-picrate, which is placed in the shell immediately before firing, and which on impact produces a shock which brings the main charge into action.

According to the accounts received from those who participated in the recent Soudan campaign, the destructive power of the lyddite shells was enormous, and far exceeded any results previously attained. In an incredibly short time earth-works were destroyed, leaving breaches through which the shrapnel or man-killing shells could be fired, and the work of destruction thus completed. The experience of the whole campaign leaves no room for doubt that lyddite is by far the most efficient shell-explosive known.

It is a very difficult problem to ascertain the numerical superiority of lyddite over other explosives. It is certainly six times more powerful than nitro-glycerine, which in turn is at least eight times more powerful than the same weight of gunpowder. Further, all experience shows that its effects are spread over a much greater area than in the case of nitro-glycerine or dynamite, which are intensely local in their action. It has been frequently erroneously stated that lyddite or melinite may be used as a substitute for cordite or gunpowder in propelling a projectile; such could not be the case, however, as the explosion takes place so rapidly that the chamber of the gun would be inevitably shattered. Probably one of the greatest advantages of lyddite is its absolute safety to handle, which we can realise when we recall its use in the arts for over a century without its powers being even suspected. In this respect, combined with its superlative destructive capacities, lyddite approaches an ideal explosive for shells; and it is safe to predict that it will play an extremely important part in the great military operations of the future.

DR BARLOW'S SECRET.

CHAPTER IV.



THE climax of this somewhat curious series of events took place in the library, where Mr Hawthorne, Nellie, Dick, and Tompkins had been sitting for some time, awaiting the arrival of the culprit. There had already been a very animated discussion; for Nellie, with the charming inconsistency of her sex, had definitely taken up the cudgels on behalf of the erring Barlow, and insisted, in spite of the most convincing proofs to the contrary, that he would be able to clear himself of the charges brought against him. She was quite incapable of suggesting in what way he would accomplish this apparently impossible task, but she asserted again and again that he would do so to the ultimate confusion of those who had so cruelly misjudged him. She stood entirely alone in her conviction of his innocence, and had consequently been reduced to tears by the scepticism of the others,

who were troubled with no doubt as to his guilt.

Nellie's illogical attitude exasperated her father. He would not admit the possibility of Barlow explaining away proofs that would convict him in the eyes of any impartial jury. Indeed, the newly-appointed magistrate would have been considerably disconcerted if he had been suddenly assured of Barlow's innocence; for, even as it was, he was haunted by doubts as to the strict legality of his somewhat high-handed proceedings. He realised that he might be placed in a very awkward position if by some extraordinary combination of circumstances Barlow could ensure a verdict of not guilty. He felt sure that he would not be able to escape the ridicule of the local press and the smiles of his brother magistrates, even if Barlow, for Nellie's sake, agreed to look over what had passed. These reflections no doubt added to the vigour of his onslaught upon

Nellie's feeble efforts to exculpate her betrothed. Nothing would please those newspaper fellows better, he reflected, than to poke fun at what they called, in their horrible jargon, 'the great unpaid.'

Dick and Tompkins simply smiled pityingly at Nellie's arguments. That any intelligent jury would convict Barlow of various crimes and misdemeanours seemed, in their opinion, a foregone conclusion. That Mr Hawthorne, in having the culprit dragged ignominiously before him to be subjected to a private cross-examination, might be acting irregularly never entered their minds. Barlow, in their eyes, was a convicted swindler, and Mr Hawthorne was the omnipotent exponent of the laws which he had outraged. They devoted their energies to the discussion of more practical questions. Most of their time was spent in comparing Barlow's case with others of a similar nature, in order that they might determine exactly how long he was likely to be lodged and boarded at Her Majesty's expense, and whether he would have to mend roads, work on the treadmill, or pick oakum. Tompkins, smarting under the loss of his gold watch, was disposed to think that seven years' hard labour would be a very moderate punishment for so grave an offence; but Dick, not having suffered in person or pocket, was inclined to take a more merciful view of the case, and suggested that five years' penal servitude would amply meet the requirements of the case. Mr Hawthorne, when appealed to, pooh-poohed these suggestions as the vague surmises of the inexperienced amateur, but had himself the most nebulous ideas as to what would actually happen to Barlow when he was duly tried and convicted.

This interesting discussion was brought to a premature close by the sound of wheels on the drive, and a few moments later the door was thrown open, and Jones, the constable, ushered in.

'Well?' asked Hawthorne impatiently.

'We've got him, sir,' exclaimed Jones, his face glowing with triumph; 'but it was a close shave. The train was just startin', and we had to bundle him out head first. A precious hard fight we had of it, too. I shall charge him with assaultin' the police in the execution of their duty. Shall I bring him in, sir?'

'Certainly,' said Hawthorne. 'I should just like to hear what the scoundrel has the assurance to say for himself.'

As the constable disappeared Mr Hawthorne rose, leaned his back against the mantelpiece, parted his coat-tails, and assumed his most magisterial air.

'If he supposes for a moment,' said he, 'that by fawning and whining he'll wheedle me into letting him off he'll make a mistake, I assure you—he'll make a very great mistake indeed.'

'That's right, dad,' said Dick. 'You give it him hot and strong. He deserves it. I'd like to have a go at him myself!'

'If he's made away with my watch he needn't expect any mercy from me,' said Tompkins.

'Oh papa!' said Nellie in a quivering voice, 'don't be too—too hard on him. Perhaps, after all, he'll be able to explain everything.'

'Explain everything!' exclaimed her father. 'Pooh, pooh! Ridiculous!'

'Impossible!' cried Dick.

'Absurd!' echoed Tompkins.

'It's nothing whatever of the sort,' cried Nellie. 'I don't believe he's done anything wrong at all, and it's very cr—cr—cruel of you to talk like that until he's had a chance to prove his innocence. It's very cruel and wicked, and'—

'Hold your tongue this minute,' cried her father. 'I won't allow you to speak like that to me. If I hear another word from you I'll pack you off to your room instantly. Indeed, I think you'd better'—

He was interrupted by the opening of the door and the appearance of Barlow and the constable. It was difficult to recognise the spruce and rather dressy young doctor in the dishevelled being who stood before them. His silk hat was dinged and battered, his tie and collar awry, his coat torn, his whole person bearing the marks of a prolonged and vigorous struggle. For a moment he stood speechless with indignation. Hawthorne, believing that he was overcome with shame, cleared his throat with the intention of delivering a highly moral exhortation. But the constable interposed.

'It's my duty to warn you,' he said, addressing Barlow, 'that anything you say may be used against you as evidence.'

Barlow fairly stamped with anger.

'Will you hold your tongue, you hopeless idiot?' he exclaimed savagely. 'And you, Mr Hawthorne, will you be good enough to explain the meaning of this outrageous performance? I can only come to the conclusion that you have temporarily taken leave of your senses.'

This unforeseen attack from one he expected to pose as a cringing, shamefaced culprit, pleading abjectly for mercy, threw the worthy magistrate completely on his beam-ends. The moral platitudes he was about to utter died away on his lips, and he stood speechless and bewildered.

'Here, don't you try that game on,' interposed Dick; 'don't you bully the governor. I'll not stand it.'

As Hawthorne seemed for the moment inarticulate, Barlow turned promptly on Dick.

'You're a self-sufficient young ass, Dick,' he remarked, 'but you've got some glimmerings of intelligence. What's the meaning of all this?'

Dick was never slow to grasp at any chance of coming to the front.

'I'll soon let you know the meaning of it,' he rejoined promptly. 'You see, we happen to have discovered that on the 21st of June 1893 you married a woman of the name of Pettigrew at Highchurch.'

'Yes, sir. How do you explain that, sir?' blurted out Hawthorne. 'You, a married man, undertake to marry my daughter.'

Dick caught up the letter which lay on the table, and flourished it in Barlow's face.

'You get a letter from your wife in New York'—he exclaimed.

'And you bolt,' blustered his father once more, purple with indignation—'you bolt with my cheque for a hundred pounds.'

'And my gold watch and chain,' chimed in Tompkyns.

Barlow glanced from one to the other with an air of stupefaction, as if he could scarcely credit the evidence of his own senses.

'Well, upon my word and honour,' he exclaimed at length, 'if any of you gentlemen ever want a certificate to prove you suitable inmates for a lunatic asylum, I hope you'll save yourselves any further trouble by applying direct to me. There's your watch, Tompkyns.' He took it out of his waistcoat-pocket and laid it upon the table. 'If it were a pinchbeck Geneva it could hardly keep worse time. I took it out of your blazer for fear the servants should meddle with it, intending, of course, to return it when I saw you. If you were in your right mind I should expect you to take that for granted.'

He extracted a cheque from his pocket-book and laid it beside the watch.

'There, Mr Hawthorne, is your cheque for £100 still uncashed. I think that, before making up your mind that I was a swindler, you might at least have inquired at the bank whether I had cashed it. As to the letter, I shall inquire later on by what code of honour you consider yourselves justified in prying into my private correspondence; and, if I see fit to do so, I shall at the proper time and place give a full and satisfactory explanation. I may say, however, that I did go through a form of marriage with Mrs Pettigrew at Highchurch on the date named.'

'Oh, you did—did you?' blustered Hawthorne, recovering from his embarrassment at the sight of the uncashed cheque.

'That settles it,' said Dick.

'Oh Tom, Tom!' exclaimed poor Nellie.

Barlow held up his hand.

'Stop a minute,' he said; 'I can explain the whole thing to the satisfaction of any impartial man or woman.'

'Stuff and nonsense,' snorted Hawthorne.

'Well, you must think us jolly green,' said Dick.

'Just you wait a minute. She had every reason to believe herself a widow. Her husband, engaged on a scientific exploration on the west coast of Africa, was *officially* reported to be dead. After an absence of three years he turned up at the church door on the day of the wedding as we came out after the ceremony, and he and Mrs Pettigrew drove away in the carriage which I

had provided, and for which, I may mention incidentally, I had to pay. I will give you the address of the clergyman who performed the ceremony, and he will corroborate every word I have uttered. And now I am prepared to admit, Mr Hawthorne, that I should most certainly have told you about this. I see now that it was clearly my duty to do so; but the fact is, I was so chaffed and ridiculed at the time that I had grown morbidly sensitive about the business, and couldn't bring myself to speak of it. Indeed, it was in consequence of this affair that I left Highchurch and came here. I need hardly add that I am, of course, as much a bachelor as if Mrs Pettigrew and I had never set eyes on each other.'

'There, papa,' cried Nellie triumphantly, 'didn't I tell you he would explain everything?'

Mr Hawthorne flushed and began to look excessively uncomfortable. Dick wriggled uneasily in his chair, and even Tompkyns appeared embarrassed.

'But, my dear fellow, if all this is true,' stammered Hawthorne—'and if it is I owe you a most sincere apology—if all this is true, why in the name of common-sense did you run away?'

Something like a gleam of hope appeared in the eyes of Dick and Tompkyns. Barlow's sudden disappearance was certainly a suspicious circumstance, and perhaps, after all, his glib explanation of what had taken place was a false one.

'Run away!' exclaimed Barlow, with an air of mingled amazement and indignation. 'I did nothing whatever of the sort. A wealthy patient of mine, an old maiden lady, a morbidly nervous hypochondriac, is sailing to New York by the *Lucania*, and, having a horror of sea-sickness, telegraphed to me to accompany her. I was going to Liverpool, intending to sail with her as far as Queenstown, or even accompany her to New York if absolutely necessary. Just as the train was starting I was pounced on by a couple of idiotic policemen, and dragged forcibly out of the compartment. Of course she'll be annoyed at my absence, and I'll probably never pocket another fee from her again.'

Mr Hawthorne wiped the perspiration from his brow with a voluminous coloured handkerchief, conscious that he had placed himself in a very awkward situation, and wondering how he was to wriggle out of it. His eye fell on Dick, and he experienced an immediate sense of relief.

'Well, Dick,' he said severely, 'you see what a mess your groundless suspicions have got us into.'

Barlow promptly wheeled round on Dick, who looked very red and foolish.

'So Dick was at the bottom of it, was he?' said he. 'I'm not surprised to hear that. He's always putting his foot in it.'

Tompkins clutched eagerly at the chance of whitewashing himself at Dick's expense.

'I must confess,' said he, 'that Dick was the first to arouse my suspicions. Otherwise I should naturally have supposed that you had simply taken my blazer by mistake. You ought to be more careful about throwing suspicions upon innocent people, Dick.'

'I shall certainly never allow Dick to interfere with my affairs again,' said Nellie emphatically.

'I shall trust to my own judgment of a man in future,' said Hawthorne. 'I was just telling Dick that he ought to take a leaf out of your book, Barlow, and I hope he'll follow my advice.'

All eyes were fixed reproachfully on Dick, who visibly squirmed.

'Well,' he muttered to himself, 'if ever I try to help any one out of a hole again may I be jiggered.'

'Oh, well,' said Barlow, 'let's say no more about it. It can't be helped now, and I must confess that things looked a little queer. There's another train in half-an-hour, and perhaps I shall be in time after all. I can't go out in these things, but I dare say Dick can lend me some toggery.'

'Certainly,' said Dick effusively; 'I shall be delighted.'

'I'll lend you my watch and chain with pleasure,' said Tompkyns, 'if you've forgotten your own.'

'Oh, we'll fix you up, my dear fellow, never fear,' said Hawthorne, with unctuous affability; 'and I do hope you'll oblige me by putting that cheque back in your pocket-book.'

'You'll have some refreshment before you go, won't you, Tom?' asked Nellie. 'I'll tell the servants to get it ready.'

'Jones,' said Hawthorne to the constable, waving his hand in the direction of the door, 'you can go.'

'Oh, very well,' said Jones gloomily; 'but what about these 'ere charges of assaultin' the police in the hexecution of their duty?'

Barlow, who was a thoroughly good-natured fellow, and was beginning to see the humorous side of the situation, laughed jovially.

'Oh, well,' he said, 'I believe I gave you a pretty tough job of it before you got me out of the train. Here's a sovereign for you, and let us hear no more about it.'

'And here's another for your mate below,' said Hawthorne; 'but not a word of all this, remember, especially to the newspaper men.'

The constable grinned and saluted.

'Thank you, sir. I'll remember, sir.'

'Now, Tompkyns,' said Dick, 'where's your contribution?'

'Eh?' said Tompkyns. 'Well, I don't approve of tipping on principle; but I suppose, under the circumstances, I must make an exception.'

He produced a purse, and deliberately extracted a shilling, which he handed to Jones.

'There you are,' said he, 'but don't expect anything from me in future.'

Jones gazed contemptuously at the coin lying in the centre of his huge palm, and then put it slowly into his pocket.

'A bob,' he muttered as he moved ponderously to the door. 'Well, I'm blown! A bob for assaultin' the police.'

A few minutes later, when Barlow and Nellie had slipped into the conservatory for a little private conversation, Nellie regarded him with a half-smiling, half-reproachful glance.

'Oh Tom, Tom!' she said, 'you told me you had never loved any one but me.'

'And I told you the truth, Nellie,' answered Barlow eagerly. 'My liking for Mrs Pettigrew was only a passing fancy.'

'Well,' said Nellie, 'I'm never going to doubt you, or be the least bit curious again; but, now that everything's come out, you won't mind showing me her photograph, will you?'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE STORAGE OF EGGS.



AN interesting experiment in egg storage was recently brought to a successful conclusion in the warehouse of Messrs Christianson of Bernard Street, Leith. In June a batch of 50,000 Scottish, Irish, and Danish eggs were sealed up in patent storage apparatus, and were opened and examined four months afterwards, only a small proportion of the eggs being found unfit for use. The secret of the method is to keep the eggs cool, to allow free access of air around each egg—to keep them upright in position, and to turn them periodically so that the yolk of the egg is constantly embedded in the albumen. These desiderata are

brought about by placing the eggs in frames, which by the action of a lever can be inclined in different directions as needed; in this way 23,000 eggs can be turned over in half-a-minute, without risk of breakage. Testimonials are at hand from reliable sources, showing that eggs so treated will remain perfectly fresh and good for at least five or six months.

SHIPS' BOATS.

In nearly every case of shipwreck—and unhappily we have had many of them of late years—it is common to read of the difficulty with which the boats are lowered; and it is no exaggeration to assert that if these boats were in readiness for instant use, and could be lowered into the water easily, hundreds of lives

would be saved. Any one who has made a coasting trip or crossed the Channel on an ordinary steam-vessel must have noted how the boats are disposed, carefully covered with tarpaulin, kept inboard, and with the appearance of not having been touched for months. It is easy to imagine how the only means of escape from a sinking vessel is vitiated by this state of unpreparedness. To quote two instances; there is first the wreck of the *Drummond Castle*, the inquiry into which elicited the information that 'the boats were not kept fit and ready for use, but swung inboard and resting on chocks;' and, second, there is the more recent case of the *Mohegan*, in which the same lamentable state of affairs seems to have obtained. We hold that on every ship there should not only be a boat-drill at least once a week, but that the boats should be kept supplied with tinned provisions and fresh water. With such precautions the terrors of shipwreck would be greatly diminished.

OCEAN TELEGRAPHY.

It is the proud boast of this country that it has laid and controls the major part of the electric cables which girdle the earth; and the masterful position thus created must be of incalculable importance in the event of war. It is, however, the fact that the cables are not so much used as a means of intercourse between friends and relations as they might be. Out of every hundred and ten messages passing between this country and Australia, one only is not devoted to purely business matters; and in the case of India the family message occurs only once in three hundred telegrams. The price of transmission—in some cases half-a-guinea a word—is the real bar to a more social use of the ocean cables. Mr Henniker Heaton, M.P., who has brought his imperial penny postage scheme to such a successful issue, has recently announced that his next great effort will be to establish perfect electrical communication between every part of the empire at a reasonable price. He looks forward to the time when any one in Britain will be able to wire to the antipodes almost as cheaply as one can between England and Scotland, and mentions a penny a word as a fair price to aim at. Whether at such a tariff it will be possible to pay a fair interest on the vast amount of capital invested in submarine cables, and whether it would pay to embark in fresh enterprises of the kind to meet the increase of work which might be expected, are questions which would have to be considered before such a radical change could be brought about.

ZULULAND.

According to the report of Mr J. J. Garrard, Acting Commissioner of Mines, the country of the Zulus, owing to its mineral riches, offers most favourable opportunities for the investment of capital. It has never been prospected, except in a

few isolated places, and even then in a very indifferent manner. Everything seems in favour of mining enterprise, for the geological indications promise valuable minerals, the climate is good, cheap labour is abundant, and there is easy access to a port. All these facts point to cheap supplies and mining at a minimum cost. 'What is wanted now,' says Mr Garrard, 'is the capital with which to make a fresh start in the right direction, the men capable of using that capital to the best advantage, and, lastly, the co-operation of the Government to encourage and foster what should prove to be the most important industry of this country for many years to come.'

MAGNETIC ROCKS.

Most persons will acknowledge that they retain in their memories the details of a fairy story learnt in childhood, while far more important things which occurred only a short time ago are forgotten. Hence when we read of that terrible shipwreck off the Manacle Rocks, Cornwall, which was brought about by the vessel being miles out of its right course, and see that the magnetism of the rocks is given as a possible initial cause of the disaster, the mind instantly reverts to the history of Sindbad the Sailor, where an incident of the same sort is vividly described. It is not by any means the first time that the influence of magnetic rocks has been gravely discussed; and about twenty-five years ago, when this question assumed an aggressive form, the matter was put to the test and finally set at rest under Government auspices. The then Astronomer-Royal at the Cape was provided with a small steamer and various instruments, and endeavoured, in coasting round different headlands, to detect their attractive power. This he failed to do, and the theory as to the attractive nature of rocks, so far as their alleged influence on ships is concerned, was proved to be a myth.

VENTILATION OF TUNNELS.

It seems certain that the passenger traffic of our large cities will in the near future be chiefly carried on by means of electric railways in underground tunnels, and many such works are now in progress. The experience gained in the use of steam locomotives for such service has shown that the problem of efficient ventilation—which resolves itself into a means of getting rid of the products of coal combustion—is one that seems incapable of solution. But the question has lately arisen whether, in case of accidental and protracted delay of a train in an electrically-worked tunnel-railway, the passengers would not be exposed to risk of suffocation. The fear seems altogether groundless, for the reason that these railways as now commonly constructed are constantly and most efficiently cleared of foul air. The carriages are shaped to the contour of the tunnel, with only a few inches to spare between their sides

and the wall, and they therefore sweep before them a huge mass of air, and suck after them as much more. In addition to this clearance there are enormous passenger-lifts at each station, which act as air-pumps. According to Sir Benjamin Baker, the designer of the latest of the Metropolitan electric railways, which is six miles in length, each passenger, even without the action of the lifts, will have at his disposal twenty times the quantity of air which would be provided, or be necessary, in a well-ordered hospital.

A MACHINE ROAD-MENDER.

In spite of the constant advance in mechanical contrivances there are certain occupations which must still depend upon handiwork. Such we assumed to be the business of picking up with the pickaxe the stones of a macadamised road before fresh metal could be laid and rolled upon it. But a machine called Rutt's Patent Macadam Road Scarifier may now be seen at work in London, and possibly elsewhere, tearing up the street roadway in the most satisfactory manner. It is of the nature of a plough, the ploughshare being represented by thick spikes of chilled iron, which, set at an angle, tear up the roadway as the machine is dragged behind a steam roller.

ELECTRICAL WONDERS.

Ignorance has of late years credited science with powers which are comparable only with those attributed to the genii of Arabian fairy tales. Whenever war shows its hideous face we are sure to hear of some daring chemist who professes to have invented a compound which will blow an invading host to pieces. Now it is the turn of the electrician, and we are gravely told that M. Tesla has discovered a means of annihilating an entire fleet. He has merely to switch on certain currents from a point far beyond the range of modern guns, and the ships and all that they contain will perish. A moment's consideration will show how idle such rumours are. Powerful as are the machines for the production of electricity, there is none known that will exhibit at one discharge a fraction of the energy let loose by a single flash of lightning. But even supposing that M. Tesla has discovered a rival to Jove's thunderbolts, are we to believe that the artificial is so much more potent in its effects than the natural article that it cannot be controlled by lightning-conductors?

CULTIVATED BLACKBERRIES.

Observant persons have noted that during the past year or two the wild bramble, or blackberry, has found a place in the fruiterers' shops and finds a ready sale. But it is not generally known that for years this common wayside berry has been successfully cultivated in various parts of England and Scotland. As the culture might with advantage be greatly extended and the matter

is of interest to fruit-growers and to the public generally, we give a few particulars as to the method pursued with great success by Mr Cadell at Larbert in Stirlingshire. Each bush is planted three feet from its fellows, and trained on wires which are fixed on posts six feet in height. Mr Cadell has two rows of bushes, each twenty yards in length, and running north and south, so that the sun can act equally on both sides of the rows. At first little manure is needed; but by the third year the plants will have reached maturity and can be treated more liberally. From the two rows of bushes described there was gathered in 1897 ninety-nine pounds of luscious berries, and as the weather last year was more favourable, the crop may no doubt have been greatly increased. The bramble has the merit of being a very hardy plant, and one which is free from the attack of insects and birds; moreover, its fruit remains in prime condition for a period of about two months—that is, during the whole of September and October. When the plant finds a congenial soil the berries are of large size and are not much inferior to the mulberry. Under cultivation and proper attention the tendency is, of course, in the direction of finer growth and improved flavour. Several of the many British sub-species of bramble repay culture. In America blackberries are extensively grown for their fruit; and of late years American kinds have with advantage been introduced into English gardens.

A VERY SANITARY HOUSE.

Japan has long rejoiced in earthquake-proof houses, and now we hear of an abode in Yokohama which possesses the unique distinction of being microbe-proof. It is said to have been erected by an eminent German bacteriologist, who hopes by its aid to avoid all the ills to which human flesh is heir so far as they are due to zymotic causes. The house is built of glass bricks, so that there is no need for windows, and the doors when closed are perfectly air-tight. Ventilation is brought about by air being forced into the building through cotton-wool filters, and in case this treatment does not rob it of all its bacteria, the air is further driven against glycerine-coated plates of glass. Of course when the door of this strange domicile is opened to admit visitors armies of air-borne microbes must come in too; but the sunlight which plays around the rooms will soon kill off these. We doubt whether this glass-case and cotton-wool treatment of human beings will bring any substantial advantage to the experimenters, and we should decidedly prefer a healthy, open-air life, microbes and all.

STEERING A BALLOON.

Many have been the attempts, by means of propellers and other contrivances, to render a balloon dirigible; and although on a very calm day the unwieldy thing has perhaps been coaxed

a point or two out of its course, little has been done to conquer its tendency to sail with the wind and in no other direction whatever. In his attempt to reach the North Pole by means of a balloon, Andr   had conceived the idea of trailing behind the car a heavy rope, the object of which was to retard progress, and thus have at disposal a surplus amount of wind which could be made to act upon a sail placed aslant, so as to alter the balloon's course towards the right or left at will. In order to test this theory, Mr P. Spencer, a well-known aeronaut, recently made a balloon journey over the flats of Essex, carrying with him a rope 500 feet in length, with a weight of 100 lb., together with a square sail of light material. It was found that the new equipment did what was expected of it, and that it was quite possible to avoid obstacles in the way of the trailing rope by manipulating the guy ropes attached to the sail. The trailing rope was also found to act as a splendid brake when the final descent was made, the car eventually touching the ground without the usual bump. The balloon was that which has been making captive ascents from the Earls Court Exhibition (London) for some months past.

TRICKS OF TRADE.

The art of adulteration has become, during these latter years, a scientific industry; and while the small retailer is fined for borrowing milk from 'the cow with the iron tail,' the cleverer, because better educated, purveyor of sophisticated wares too often gets off scot-free. A case in point has recently been brought under the notice of the Royal Agricultural Society, which shows to what impudent lengths an adulterator will go, and how difficult it is to bring him to book. Farmers are in the habit of steeping their seed wheat in a solution of sulphate of copper, otherwise known as blue vitriol, or bluestone, the cost of which is about twenty shillings per cwt. A compound called 'Finely ground vitriol, specially prepared as a dressing for wheat,' has been placed on the market at the price of twenty-eight shillings per cwt. On examination this was found to consist of sulphate of iron coloured with Prussian blue. Now, sulphate of iron is worth only four shillings per cwt.; but as it is commonly known as green vitriol, it cannot be said that the fancy compound of this salt and Prussian blue is sold under a wrong trade description. Luckily farmers have a simple and conclusive test ready to hand, for a solution of the genuine bluestone will quickly cover a knife-blade held in it with a coating of metallic copper.

LIFE IN THE DEEP SEA.

An expedition left London a short time ago, the object of which was to investigate a most important problem regarding the distribution of life in the sea. It used to be believed that the ocean depths were tenantless, and that all life

was confined to the shallow surface belt; but this idea had to be abandoned even before the *Challenger* went on her memorable voyage of scientific research. Next the idea was mooted that the oceanic fauna was confined to the surface and bottom belts, separated by an intermediate zone of barrenness. During the *Challenger* expedition it was found that if the depth at which the surface nets were towed was increased, new animals were enclosed in their meshes, an observation which pointed to the probability of life at all depths. The investigations now in progress are designed to settle this important point. The *Oceana*, fitted with deep-sea gear and every modern appliance, is at work off the west coast of Ireland. It was intended that extended observations should be made with a chain of tow nets, the length of which would be gradually increased until a depth of 2000 fathoms was reached. Experiments were also devised with nets of a self-opening and closing nature, so that samples of life at different depths could thus be secured. It was also intended to conduct experiments with a deep-sea trawl. The expedition was fitted out at the expense of the Royal Geographical Society and the Drapers' and Fishmongers' Companies.

CENTENARY EXHIBITION OF LITHOGRAPHS.

The beautiful art of drawing on and printing from stone was invented one hundred years ago by Senefelder. We are glad to note that the Committee of Council on Education have, on the initiative of the Society of Arts, determined to hold an exhibition at South Kensington Museum in honour of this event during the present winter. Lithography has been of immense service to mankind, and for certain work it still holds a premier position. In many respects the results it affords are far better artistically than those possible by the quicker, and therefore more convenient, processes which have partly superseded it. The exhibition cannot fail to excite widespread interest.

FORGOTTEN CHILDREN'S BOOKS.

In a previous number Mrs Molesworth sets down in pleasant and chatty fashion what she remembers of the children's books which charmed and instructed her own girlhood; and in the November part of this *Journal*, in the article, 'Writers for the Young,' the most popular names amongst the present-day authors were discussed. In his *Pages and Pictures from Forgotten Children's Books* (Leadenhall Press), Mr Andrew W. Tuer takes us much farther back, to the days of our great-grandmothers. These specimens are gleaned apparently from a period between 1788 and 1830, and comprise, besides Charles and Mary Lamb's anonymous *Poetry for Children* (which should have been so mentioned in the Preface), such voracious narratives as *A Present for a Little Boy*, *Trifles for*

Children, &c.; while we have Mr Anstey anticipated in the fish which holds the butt-end of the rod while the fisherman is dangling at the end of the hook, and the horse seated in a gig driving the groom. The paper and printing of Mr Tuer's volume must be much more sumptuous than his very numerous specimens, and his illustrations also have been improved in the reproduction and printing. The volume is interesting and instructive, as showing how much better off are the children of to-day in the matter of books for the young than their ancestors at the beginning of the century.

BREATHING AT HIGH ALTITUDES.

The experience of the doctor in charge of the men laying the now completed electric railway to the summit of the Gorner Grat in Switzerland (height, 10,289 feet above the sea) is that dwellers in the plains can never accustom themselves to physical exertion at great altitudes. According to a recent article in the *Revue Scientifique*, the workers, many of whom were from the low-lying province of Bologna, worked perfectly well in 1896, when the elevation was below 2400 feet; but in 1897, when they were getting above that height, the workmen began to complain of lassitude, bad headaches, loss of appetite, and other symptoms, which at first led the doctor to think an epidemic of influenza had broken out. None of the affected men could do anything like their usual amount of work; and though a short stay at Zermatt, in the valley below, banished the unpleasant symptoms, they returned as severely as before when the men resumed work on the mountain. The outcome of the observations was that the average man may be counted on to work up to a height of about 2900 feet; above 3300 his health and working power is seriously affected. In the end all the workmen from the plains had to be dismissed, and only mountain-born men engaged.

Experiments in breathing at high altitudes were discussed in this *Journal* in the number for the 6th of February 1897; and some references to mountain sickness occur in the article on the ascent of Aconcagua in the number for the 23d of last July.

THE IRISH GRANITE INDUSTRY.

There is far less known about the coloured or stained granites, with which the quarries of Galway literally teem, than there is about her marbles; but a granite industry is beginning to develop, with every prospect of a splendid future.

Mr Miller, of the Galway Marble Works, observing the beauty and abundance of these granites, got over workmen from Aberdeen some years ago to teach the local hands how to treat the stone, and these soon became adepts in the craft, and able to teach the new-comers. The quickness with which the Galway men master the details of the process is remarkable, and they are found to possess taste and no small amount of originality and capacity in designing. Four quarries lie close

to the town of Galway—those of Barna, Shantalla, Rahoon, and Ballagh. From Rahoon comes granite with stains of reddish tint and green cinctures, that of Shantalla is of a delicate mottled pink and green, and there are endless and beautiful varieties, all taking a very high polish which stands the effects of weather better than any marble, native or foreign, 'making this,' writes Mr M'Henry, one of the best geologists in Ireland, 'a peculiarly valuable stone, possessing two essentials, durability and beauty.' He also remarks on the close proximity of the vast and never-failing water-power of Lough Corrib, with all the facilities and advantages thus afforded for the works.

Hitherto no proper quarry has been opened, the stones being just removed when wanted from holes dug in the ground. Yet there is a good record of work done, and many beautiful and artistic products of it through the country. What will it be presently, when—according to a leading Scotch contractor, who, at the request of Colonel Courtenay, owner of the Shantalla quarry, has gone thoroughly into the matter—the works will be giving employment to at least 1000 men?

This is no idle speculation. Finding that Messrs Tapp & Jones, the great mineral surveyors, of Westminster, have more than confirmed previous reports, Colonel Courtenay has placed the whole business in their hands, and they are preparing plans for a regular quarry with a 'good face.' So the day may not be far distant when the clang of a great industry shall resound in one of the poorest districts in Ireland, and the City of the Tribes by the wild Atlantic, no longer desolate and forsaken, aloof from the stir and hum of the world's great business centres, shall take her place among them, self-helping and self-respecting.

DEATH AND SONG.

OH, sing to me of my beloved dead,
That I may meet their lips in phantasy,
And clasp their hands, and hear them speak to me
In sweet, familiar greeting: they have fled
O'er viewless seas, and now may press and tread
In spirit form about my path and see
The fashion of my life, whate'er it be,
And kiss me when asleep upon my bed.

Thus let me feel their presence in sweet song
That shall close-knit me to their golden spheres,
And make my life more noble, and more strong
To wrestle with the short or lengthened years
That hold me from their bosoms, and prolong
My flowering joys and little budding cares.

CHARLES LUSTED.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



MR BRAITHWAITE'S PERPLEXITY.

By Mrs HAMILTON SYNGE.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

MR BRAITHWAITE sat in his study composing his sermon. Surrounded by commentaries and Fathers of the Church, he was conscientiously striving to produce five-and-twenty minutes of instructive and original matter without undue reference to these mental props.

The life of a country clergyman is not, as a rule, exciting. It may often be somewhat monotonous. But it has its alleviations. For the last day of the week it grants an immunity from domestic or other disturbances which is quite unparalleled in other professions. 'The Rector is writing his sermon, and cannot be disturbed,' is generally lived up to by each member of a clergyman's household.

In the present case this period of repose was appreciated to the full. Mr Braithwaite rarely quitted the seclusion of his study from morning until dinner, except for some particular, urgent matter.

He sat most of the day dreaming in his chair—a way he had fallen into of late years. It made a change from the six days of bustling activity within the house, and the constant succession of sick persons, naughty choir-boys, and requisitioning parishioners without. Sometimes he took down his favourite books, and, surrounding himself with them, read from one and another in a desultory manner. But more often he would stroll up and down the room, pausing every now and then to gaze fondly at the coral-pink begonias, the pyrethrums, and the Madonna lilies which adorned the beds in front of his windows.

The Rector loved his flowers. His tenderness for them was one of the few natural and spontaneous elements remaining in the incrustation of long-enforced habit with which his real self was enclosed. The enchantment of their growth, their

smell, their colours, was the one form of sensuous enjoyment left to him. He was always happy amongst them, and while in their company he forgot his years, his careful asceticism of conduct, his self-contained reserve, and became as light-hearted as a child.

For five-and-thirty years the Rector had done his duty in the position of life in which he had been placed. He was orthodox, he was upright. His domestic life, though tempered by considerable trial, was without reproach.

The Rector had faced the inevitable.

When he discovered he had married a narrow-minded and tyrannical woman with only one point in view—her own—he had seen what his course must be. It was a case of fighting—wearied and incessant fighting, or surrender; and he had chosen the latter course. He was not very young and he was not very strong; he loved peace and quiet and goodwill, and hated wranglings and disputes. And so he procured immunity from these vexations by the withdrawal of himself from all subjects of disagreement. As far as was possible, he waived every doubtful question. It was not exactly the craven attitude of giving in, but it was avoiding all possibility of having to do so.

Not for one moment, however, was the Rector self-deceived. He knew he was a coward. He knew he had chosen the unworthy part. But he did not flinch when he surveyed himself from the outside. If he had bought his peace and paid a heavy price, that was his affair.

That the price was heavy he was fully aware. But it was not for himself that it weighed upon him, that each year that passed made him feel uncomfortable misgivings and regrets. It was as a father that the Rector's conscience rose up against him and disturbed his serenity of soul.

He was fond of his two daughters. He always treated them with kindness and politeness, and tried to gratify those of their requests which

managed to reach him unextinguished by the way. His second marriage had been more or less on their account—to supply an understanding supervision to all those matters in the elevation of the young, with which only a woman can deal.

The supervision had not been by any means after his mind; but he had never interfered. He had ignored. He had let things alone.

But that he had done so weighed upon him continually of late years; and though he said to himself that any other course was impossible, yet he was chafingly conscious that he was not released from the obligation of endeavour.

Kitty at present was only a child; but Maggie was nearly grown up, and her presence was becoming more and more a disturbing element in that condition of unruffled calm with which he strove to surround himself.

He knew so little about her. He had never tried to understand children's ways. He felt it might land him in difficulties, and so had stood on one side. But now that she had passed from childhood, her presence weighed upon him with a sense of obligation unfulfilled. He felt uncomfortable before her criticising, questioning brown eyes. Out of his set and measured existence, where each duty was mechanically performed, and where all disturbing questions were held ruthlessly at bay, what had he to offer her?

Thoughts such as these fluttered through his mind this Saturday afternoon. He could hardly give his attention to his sermon.

'Oh, hypocrite of hypocrites!' he seemed to read between the lines, 'what right have you to preach of duties rightly performed—you who neglect your own?'

Several times he put away his work. It seemed as if it almost refused to come into shape. He tried to cajole himself into serenity by sketching in his mind a system of reform, a fresh line of conduct, different modes of paternal solicitude, of the bestowal of advice. How often he had done it before! How often failed! He got up at last and went to the window. The rain-clouds of the morning had all passed away, and the sun flooded everything in a delicious glow. The flowers with their sweetness and colour, the songs of the birds, the hum of the pollen-laden bees, seemed soothing voices to his spirit. He longed to break through his rule and slip out amongst them. He only feared being seen. Mrs Braithwaite appeared to be composed of ears and eyes. She would find him out and ask him what the 'subject' was, and whether he had finished, and if the library windows might be cleaned.

Then, suddenly, as he stood irresolute, there came a knock at the door.

'Father, may I come in?' a young voice was heard to say, and, without waiting for an answer, his daughter Maggie came up to him and stood by his side.

'I'm busy,' died away upon Mr Braithwaite's

lips. He gathered up a pile of papers which lay beneath his hand, and placed upon them a letter-weight. Then he sat down in his chair.

'What is it, my dear?' he said in a slightly constrained manner. 'If it is not important I should prefer'—

'It is very important,' interrupted his daughter. 'Mayn't I speak to you now?'

'Certainly, dear,' said the Rector cheerfully. He had suddenly remembered—here was an opportunity! He tried to marshal in his mind the many things he had just been thinking out. He knitted his brows.

'I want to ask you something, father. You see, I have no real mother to ask; you are the proper person, are you not?'

'Yes, I believe so,' said the Rector somewhat timidly. 'Is it your allowance? Perhaps I can'—

'No, thank you, father, it's not that at all. It's advice. I want to know something. I have been reading a book where a girl always goes to her father for advice, and so everything ends well. I'm going to begin—to come and ask you things. The "step" is no good at all.'

'Yes,' said her father tentatively. He felt surprised. He felt that his knowledge of human nature was singularly small. Maggie had not been in the habit of coming to him for advice; and just through the chance suggestion of some ill-written novel, no doubt, she was entering upon a new course of action as easily as if she had done it all her days.

'I've been thinking it over,' continued the girl confidently. 'Though you don't talk to us much, and always leave the "step" to decide everything, I really believe you—you take our part sometimes. I can see it in your eyes.'

The Rector stared at her, amazed. This young unformed thing had reached the heart of the situation, had laid bare, in her simple matter-of-fact manner, the burden of his soul.

'Kitty is rather afraid of you,' went on Maggie after a moment's pause. 'She says you are not at all the sort of father she would choose. But, then, you could not understand a tom-boy like Kitty. You never were one yourself, I'm quite sure. But I'm not afraid of you at all. I'm going to be just the sort of daughter Eveline was—the girl in the story, you know. It would feel so nice and cosy and comfortable.'

The Rector was touched. He went so far as to lay his hand for an instant upon her arm. He looked at her in a new and interested way. As he did so he felt a pang. He noticed as he had never done before how like her dead mother she was growing. The great and overwhelming sorrow of his life, instead of peacefully fading away, seemed once more to hover over him. He could hardly bear to see her, and turned his eyes away.

'What is it you want to ask me, dear?' he

said at length, as he brought his thoughts back from the long-past years.

'Well—it's something I want to find out. Kitty thinks you wouldn't know anything about it at all; but I'm not so sure of that.'

'What is it, dear?' said the Rector, with a smile. He felt amused.

'Well, father, I want to know'—She hesitated for a moment, then went on. 'Did you ever—ever *love* anybody?'

The Rector stared blankly into the young face before him, with its frank, questioning eyes.

'My dear child, what do you mean?' he exclaimed in a more astonished voice than he had used for many years. 'I hope I am not wanting in that Christian charity which'—

'Don't, please, father! It sounds like the congregation. I don't mean that sort of—dull sort of thing. Can't you tell me—just between ourselves—were you ever *in love*?'

The last words were whispered close to his ear. She had knelt down by his side and leaned up against the arm of his chair.

The Rector gasped. He glanced at the girl's half-turned-away head, and then at the open window. He felt a sudden longing to escape. Then he felt annoyed with himself at wishing to do so. He passed his hand over his brow and did not reply.

'I suppose you were in love once,' said Maggie helpfully. 'With my mother, I suppose?'

She looked up at him in a pretty, affectionate manner. 'How does it *feel*?—that's what I want to know.'

'You are very like—her,' he stammered at length. His hands grasped the polished oak arms

of the chair, and his eyes looked out of the window into the far away.

'Yes!' The word was spoken encouragingly.

Suddenly he turned and looked at her with his deep-set gray eyes.

'What do you want to know for?' he said in a strenuously calm voice. 'You are only a little girl.'

She flushed, and looked down upon the floor. 'I only wanted to know—so as to know,' she faltered; 'and—I am past seventeen.'

But the Rector did not seem to hear. He had risen from his seat. His eyes gazed straight in front of him, out of the window, over the village and the valley and the tops of the trees.

'What—does—it—feel like?' he muttered. His voice had a curious, broken sound. 'What is it like?' he repeated, below his breath, so that she could hardly hear. 'When—it's taken away—like *hell*.'

The girl shrank back. She crouched down, almost hiding herself behind the chair. She was frightened. She had never seen him so moved before. He, who was so collected and so calm, and who disliked any emotional display.

There was silence for a minute. The clock ticked noisily from the mantelpiece. A sharply defined clattering of plates came from the kitchen. Then he spoke.

'My dear,' he said in his usual measured tones, 'I think the begonias must be watered this evening; hardly any rain fell. I believe Matthews is very busy to-day.'

'All right, father; I will go and do it at once,' she answered; and, without looking in his direction, she hurried out of the room.

A GREAT EDITOR: JOHN BLACKWOOD.



TO judge by the booksellers' advertisements in the papers, everybody nowadays writes novels and gets them into print. Yet the relations between writer and publisher, between editor and contributor, have still a mysterious fascination for the general public. People like to hear how this great author made his first bow to the reading world, or how that one made a 'plum' (as our forebears would have called it) out of some work at which half-a-dozen members of 'the trade' had turned up a disdainful nose or wagged a dubious head. Publishing, one imagines, must be a profession compared to which an unknown gold-mine in Timbuctoo ranks as a 'gilt-edged' investment. If you make a hit, it is probably a very big one; but the misses! It is always best, however, to look upon the bright side of things, if possible; and in the volume on John Blackwood which his daughter, Mrs Gerald Porter, has just brought out (William Blackwood & Sons:

Edinburgh and London, 1898), and which, in the meantime, completes the 'Annals of the House,' it is not the gloomy aspect of the business which rises to view. Here we see a man, with an hereditary genius for publishing, enjoying the confidence and respect of the most eminent literary characters of his time, and conducting an undertaking of no little magnitude with conspicuous tact, shrewdness, and success.

No one, perhaps, could have handled George Eliot as he did. At the very beginning of their connection, before the new writer's sex and identity had been disclosed, he had been warned by Mr Lewes what a sensitive creature he had to deal with. 'He is so easily discouraged, so diffident of himself, that, not being prompted by necessity to write, he will close the series in the belief that his writing is not relished.' It is plain to see how her genius expanded under the sunshine of Mr Blackwood's encouragement. One feels in reading the publisher's letters to her how genuine and sincere his praise

was. There is a manly, earnest tone about his eulogy which must have been exquisitely gratifying to a nature that never got over an almost morbid craving for the sympathy and appreciation of others. Not that George Eliot undervalued the more palpable rewards of her efforts. Those who have read her biography may recall the keen business instinct she displayed, and how she was perpetually apprehensive lest her latest book should not be pushed with sufficient vigour. 'I certainly care a great deal for the money,' she confesses in a letter to her publisher, 'as I suppose all anxious minds do that love independence and have been brought up to think debt and begging the two deepest dishonours short of crime.' She had assuredly nothing to complain of in Mr Blackwood's transactions with her. He was ever liberal and considerate; and when, tempted by the offer of an exceptionally large sum of money, she deserted George Street for the nonce and carried *Romola* to another market, he wrote her a letter which for good sense and good feeling would be difficult to match. 'Rest assured,' he says, 'that I feel fully satisfied of the extreme reluctance with which you would decide upon leaving your old friend for any other publishers, however great the pecuniary consideration might be; and it would destroy my pleasure in business if I knew any friend was publishing with me when he could, or thought he could, do better for himself by going elsewhere.' It is impossible to doubt the sincerity of a sentiment which, proceeding from another pen, might have seemed unreal and affected.

He enjoyed, as we have hinted, the friendship of almost all the literary giants of his generation. With Thackeray he was on the most intimate terms, and 'Thack.' was his guest when, having abandoned his Jeameses for good, he came to Edinburgh to lecture on the Georges. Lytton, a writer of unquestionable genius, though his reputation has suffered eclipse, was a close ally, and formed a valuable connecting-link with the world of politics. Professor Aytoun was an even closer associate. He lived not far from Blackwood, and many was the cigar smoked and many the glass of toddy drunk by the two in company while the author of the *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers* struck out some brilliantly humorous idea for the next number of 'Maga.' With Samuel Warren, who must have had many better qualities than he is often credited with, he maintained a friendship which had begun in the previous generation. Kinglake was another of the band, the prospect of a visit to whom was one of the inducements to undertake the yearly jaunt to London. In Laurence Lockhart he possessed a contributor whose lightness of touch may well make story-tellers envious, and a friend whose wit and humour were inexhaustible. Mrs Porter has done well to reprint at length his *Voice from the Rhineland*, one of the happiest pieces, in its own peculiar vein and metre, that have been produced since Goldsmith wrote

The Haunch of Venison. Another Laurence—'Larry' Oliphant—was one more of the sworn Blackwood men; while the three brothers Hamley formed a trio to which a parallel would not be easy to find. Edward was beyond doubt the ablest of the group. His *Recent Confessions of an English Opium Eater* is as brilliant an experiment in parody as can easily be recalled, and electrified De Quincey. Trollope and Charles Lever, again, were a couple of writers with whom Mr Blackwood came constantly into contact both in a business and a social capacity. The extracts from Lever's letters and the account of his life at Trieste are among the most interesting portions of the book. There are pathos and, alas! truth in a remark he makes *à propos* of 'Tony Butler': 'What you say of a real love-story is good; but I can't forget that Thackeray said no old man must prate about Love. . . . As to writing about Love from memory, it is like counting over the bank-notes of a bank long broken; they remind you of money, it is true, but they're only wastepaper after all.'

When we have added to the foregoing enumeration the names of Lord Neaves, Captain Speke (of Nile celebrity), and Mrs Oliphant, we feel that we have given tolerably ample proof of the proposition with which we set out. But it must not be supposed that Mr Blackwood was in any sense a bookworm or a recluse, though, naturally, the greater part of his correspondence was with literary men and women. He loved to mingle with the world, and he was never happier than when entertaining a congenial circle either at his Edinburgh house or at Strathtyrum, near St Andrews, where he spent those summers of which his daughter gives us so brilliant and sympathetic a sketch. The great resort of golfers was much less thronged twenty or thirty years since than it is now. There was no need of a relief-course, and it was possible to have one's game in comfort. Among all the golfers of a period which saw Mr Gilbert Mitchell Innes, Dr Argyll Robertson, and the late Mr Robert Clark at their very best, there was no better match-player than John Blackwood. He had no pretensions to being a first-class player; but, as Lord Moncreiff justly says, 'he knew exactly the limits of his own powers; and he played to win the match and not for his own glory.' His putting was notoriously deadly, despite a style the reverse of orthodox or graceful. It was probably one of the happiest moments of his life when he was elected captain of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club; and he seems to have performed the duties of that office with all due punctuality and seriousness. What he has to say of 'Old Tom' is admirable, and will go straight to the heart of every one who knows the many excellences which adorn that king among professionals. How Mr Blackwood contrived to combine incessant golf and unwearying hospitality with attention to the business of his firm is a mystery, or would be to most men. But he was blessed with the fatal gift of mingling duty with pleasure

—fatal, we mean, to ordinary mortals, who, in admiring awe, vainly seek to imitate its fortunate possessors. He would linger long over the morning cigar, chatting to his family and guests. Only with a strong effort could he shut himself up in his business-room. But, once settled there, he indulged in no dawdling or delay; and a large pile of packets for the post at lunch-time would testify to an industrious and well-spent forenoon.

There was no part of his work to which he was more attached than the editing of the family *Magazine*, which passed under his control at the age of twenty-eight. Like Douglas Cook of the *Saturday Review*, and unlike Dickens (one of the greatest of editors), Lockhart, and Reeve, he wrote nothing himself, but confined himself to inspiration, suggestion, and amendment. As an editor he took broad views. He was always afraid of becoming 'groovy,' and he was desirous that his periodical should embrace all subjects that interest mankind. There was no innovation on the practice of anonymity during his reign. He despised those rival miscellanies which consisted of an incoherent farrago of articles signed by political or social celebrities. He held very strongly that the suitability of any subject for his purposes depended entirely upon the handling of it; and he often wrote in that sense to people who sent in lists of subjects for proposed papers. He did

not like to buy a pig in a poke. He always preferred to see his way well into a serial story before starting it on its career. 'Waiting uncertain each month gives me rather more hot water than I like in my monthly toddy,' he wrote to Lever, who confessed that he wrote, as he lived, from hand to mouth. Mr Blackwood's correspondence gives one some conception of the ceaseless vigilance—the unremitting superintendence which he exercised over his army of writers. He knew exactly what he wanted, and he had the knack of getting exactly what he wanted out of his contributors. He was always delighted with them in proportion to the quickness with which they caught his hints and gave effect to his suggestions. Of such stuff are great editors made. Mrs Porter, who can tell a good story with uncommon point and spirit, mentions an old Scotch gardener who, on meeting a fellow-countryman who had entered the Church of England, complacently remarked: 'Ou, ay: gairdeners or meenisters, ony kind of heid-wark, they main aye come tae us.' When one thinks of the Murrays, the Blackwoods, the Macmillans, and many others, and when one remembers how the world of Fleet Street is peopled with Scots, one is driven to believe that, as regards some departments of the business of literature, the venerable worthy was not so very far wrong.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

By GUY BOOTHBY.

CHAPTER VI.



HE dinner that evening must be counted a distinct success. Browne was the first to arrive, and it was not wonderful that he should have been, considering that he had spent the whole of his day waiting for that moment. The owner of the restaurant received him personally.

'Well, Lallemand,' said Browne, with an anxiety that was almost ludicrous, 'how are your preparations? Is everything ready?'

'Certainly, monsieur,' Lallemand replied, spreading his hands apart. 'Everything is ready; Felix himself has done ze cooking, I have chosen ze wine, and your own gardener has arranged ze flowers. You have ze best men-servants in London to wait upon you. I have procured you four kinds of fruit that has never been seen in England before; and now I give you ze word of Lallemand zat you will have ze most perfect little dinner zat has ever been seen in ze city of London.'

'I am glad to hear it,' said Browne. 'I am exceedingly obliged to you for the trouble you have taken in the matter.'

'I beg you will not mention ze trouble, monsieur,' replied Lallemand politely. 'It is ze pleasure of my life to serve you.'

He had scarcely spoken before a cab drew up outside, and Jimmy Foote made his appearance, clad in immaculate evening-dress. He greeted Browne with a somewhat sheepish air, as if he were ashamed of himself for something, and did not quite know what that something was.

'Well, old man,' he said. 'Here I am, you see; up to time, I hope. How d'ye do, Lallemand?'

'I hope you are most well, Monsieur Foote,' replied Lallemand, with one of his inimitable bows.

'I am better than I shall be after your dinner,' Foote replied, with a smile. 'Human nature is weak. I am tempted, and I know that I shall succumb.'

Browne all this time was showing evident signs of impatience. He glanced repeatedly at his watch, and as seven o'clock drew near he imagined that every vehicle pulling up outside must contain the two ladies for whom he was waiting so eagerly. When at last they did arrive he hastened to the door to greet them. Madame Bernstein was the

first to alight, and Katherine Petrovitch followed her a moment later. She gave her hand to Browne, and as he took it such a thrill went through him that it was wonderful the young man did not collapse upon the pavement.

Having conducted them to the room in which they were to take off their wraps, Browne went in search of Foote, whom he found in the dining-room.

'Pull yourself together, old chap,' said Jimmy as he glanced at him; 'you are trembling like a leaf. What on earth is the matter with you? Take my advice and try a pick-me-up.'

'I wouldn't touch a drop for worlds,' said Browne, with righteous indignation. 'I wonder at your suggesting such a thing.'

Instead, he went to the table and moved a flower-vase which was an eighth of an inch from the centrepiece farther than its companion on the other side.

'This is as bad a case as I ever remember,' said Foote to himself; and at the same moment Katherine Petrovitch and Madame Bernstein entered the room. A somewhat painful surprise was in store for Browne. There could be no doubt about one thing: Madame Bernstein had dressed herself with due regard to the importance of the occasion. Her gown was of bright ruby velvet; her arms were entirely bare; and while her bodice was supported by the most slender of shoulder-straps, it was cut considerably lower than most people would have considered compatible with either her age or her somewhat portly personal appearance. Round her neck and studded in her hair she wore many diamonds, all so palpably false as to create no suspicion of any kind. Her companion's costume, on the other hand, was simplicity itself. She was attired in black, unrelieved by any touch of colour; a plain band of velvet encircled her throat, and Browne confessed to himself afterwards that he had never in his life seen anything more becoming. He presented Foote to the ladies with becoming ceremony; and when their places had been allotted them they sat down to dinner, madame on Browne's right, Katherine on his left.

Despite the knowledge that the dinner had been prepared by one of the most admirable *chefs* in the world, and the fact that Lallemand himself had given his assurance that everything was satisfactory, Browne was nevertheless considerably exercised in his mind lest something might go wrong. He might have spared himself the trouble, however, for the dinner was perfection itself. Only one thing troubled him, and that was that the person he was most anxious to please scarcely touched anything at all. But if she did not, Madame Bernstein made ample amends for her. She allowed no dish to pass her plate untasted; the connoisseur was apparent in her appreciation of the wines, while her praise of the cooking was volubility itself. From what he had seen of her, Browne

had been prepared to dislike her intensely; to his surprise, however, he discovered that she improved on acquaintance. Seemingly, she had been everywhere and had seen everything; in her youth she had known Garibaldi personally, had met Kossuth, and been brought into contact with many other European liberators. For this reason alone her conversation could scarcely have failed to prove interesting. Katherine, on the other hand, was strangely quiet.

The dinner at an end, the ladies withdrew to put on their cloaks; and while they were absent Browne ascertained that his carriage was at the door. When he had conducted them to it, they drove to Covent Garden. The box was on the prompt side of the house, and was the best that influence and money could secure. Madame Bernstein and Katherine Petrovitch took their places in the front, while Browne managed to manoeuvre his chair into such a position that he could speak to Katherine without the others overhearing what he said.

'You are fond of music, are you not?' he inquired as the orchestra took their places. He felt as he said it that he need not have asked the question; with such a face she could scarcely fail to be.

'I am devoted to it,' she answered, playing with the handle of her fan. 'Music and painting are my two greatest pleasures.'

She uttered a little sigh, which seemed to suggest to Browne that she had not very much pleasure in her life. At least that was the way in which he interpreted it.

Then the curtain went up, and Browne was forced to be silent. I think, if you were to ask him now which was the happiest evening of his life, he would answer, 'That on which I saw *Lohengrin* with Katherine Petrovitch.' If the way in which the time slipped by could be taken as a criterion, it must certainly have been so, for the evening seemed scarcely to have begun ere it was over and the National Anthem was being played. When the curtain descended the two young men escorted the ladies to the portico, where they waited while the carriage was being called. It was at this juncture that Jimmy proved himself of use. Feeling certain Browne would be anxious to have a few minutes alone with Katherine, he managed, with great diplomacy, to draw Madame Bernstein on one side, on the pretence of telling her an amusing story concerning a certain Continental military attaché with whom they were both acquainted.

'When do you think I shall see you again?' Browne asked the girl when they were alone together.

'I cannot say,' she replied, with a feeble attempt at a smile. 'I do not know what Madame Bernstein's arrangements are.'

'But surely Madame Bernstein does not control your actions?' he asked, I fear a little angrily;

for he did not like to think she was so dependent on the elder woman.

'No, she does not altogether control them, of course,' Katherine replied; 'but I always have so much to do for her that I do not feel justified in making any arrangements without first consulting her.'

'But you must surely have some leisure,' he continued. 'Perhaps you shop in the High Street, or walk in the Park or Kensington Gardens on fine mornings. Might I not chance to find you in one of those places?'

'I fear not,' she answered, shaking her head. 'If it is fine I have my own work to do.'

'And if it is wet?' asked Browne, feeling his heart sink within him as he realised that she was purposely placing obstacles in the way of their meeting. 'Surely you cannot paint when the days are as gloomy as they have been lately.'

'No,' she answered; 'that is impossible. But it gives me no more leisure than before; for in that case I have letters to write for Madame Bernstein, and she has an enormous amount of correspondence.'

Though Browne wondered what that correspondence was, he said nothing to her on the subject, nor had he any desire to thrust his presence upon the girl when he saw she was not anxious for it. It was plain to him that there was something behind it all—some reason to account for her pallor and her quietness that evening. What that reason was, however, he could not for the life of him understand.

They had arrived at this point when the carriage reached the door. Madame Bernstein and Foote accordingly approached them, and the quartette walked together towards the entrance.

'Thank you so much for your kindness to-night,' said Katherine, looking up at Browne.

'Please, don't thank me,' he replied. 'It is I who should thank you. I hope you have enjoyed yourself.'

'Very much indeed,' she answered. 'I could see *Lohengrin* a hundred times without growing in the least tired of it.'

As she said this they reached the carriage. Browne placed the ladies in it, and shook hands with them as he bade them good-night. He gave the footman his instructions, and presently the carriage rolled away, leaving the two young men standing on the pavement, looking after it. It was a beautiful starlight night, with a touch of frost in the air.

'Are we going to take a cab, or shall we walk?' said Foote.

'Let us walk, if you don't mind,' Browne replied. 'I feel as if I could enjoy a ten-mile tramp to-night after the heat of that theatre.'

'I'm afraid I do not,' Foote replied. 'My idea is the "Périgord" for a little supper, and then to bed. Browne, old man, I have been

through a good deal for you to-night. I like the young lady very much, but Madame Bernstein is—well, she is Madame Bernstein. I can say no more.'

'Never mind, old chap,' said Browne, patting his companion on the shoulder. 'You have the satisfaction of knowing that your martyrdom is appreciated; the time may come when you will want me to do the same thing for you. One good turn deserves another, you know.'

'When I want a turn of that description done for me I will be sure to let you know,' Foote continued; 'but if I have any sort of luck, it will be many years before I come to you with such a request. When I remember that, but for my folly in showing you that picture in Waterloo Place, we should by this time be on the other side of the Eddystone, *en route* for the Mediterranean and sunshine, I feel as if I could sit down and weep. However, it is *kismet*, I suppose?'

Browne offered no reply.

'Are you coming in?' said Foote as they reached the doorstep of the Périgord Club.

'No, thank you, old man,' said Browne. 'I think, if you will excuse me, I will be getting home.'

'Good-night, then,' said Foote; 'I shall probably see you in the morning.'

Having bidden him good-night, Browne proceeded on his way.

Next morning, as soon as breakfast was over, he betook himself to Kensington Gardens, where he wandered about for upwards of an hour, but he saw no sign of the girl for whom he was in search. Leaving the Gardens, he made his way to the High Street, with an equally futile result. Regardless of the time he was wasting, and everything else, he passed on in the direction of Addison Road. As disappointment still pursued him, he made up his mind to attempt a forlorn hope. Turning into the Melbury Road, he made for Holland Park Road. Reaching the studio, he rang the bell, and waited patiently for the door to be opened. When it was he found himself confronted with an elderly person, wearing a sack for an apron, and holding a bar of yellow soap in her hand.

'I have called to see Miss Petrovitch,' he said.

'She is not at home, sir,' the woman replied. 'She has not been here this morning. Can I give her any message?'

'I am afraid not,' Browne replied. 'I wanted to see her personally; but you might tell her that Mr Browne called.'

'Mr Browne,' she repeated. 'Very good, sir. You may be sure I will tell her.'

Browne thanked her, and, to make assurance doubly sure, slipped five shillings into her hand. Then, passing out of the garden, he made his way back to the High Street. He had not pro-

ceeded more than a hundred yards down that interesting thoroughfare, however, before he saw approaching him no less a person than Katherine herself.

They were scarcely a dozen paces apart when she recognised him.

'Good-morning, Miss Petrovitch,' he said, raising his hat. 'I have just called at your studio in the hope that I might see you. The woman told me that she did not know when you would return. I thought I might possibly meet you here; hence my reason for being in this neighbourhood.'

It was a poor enough excuse, but the only one he could think of at the moment.

'You wanted to see me?' she said in a tone of surprise.

'Are you angry with me for that?' he asked. 'I did not think you would be; but if you are I will go away again. By this time you should know that I have no desire save to make you happy.'

This was the first time he had spoken so plainly. Her face paled considerably.

'I did not know that you were so anxious to see me,' she said, 'or I would have made a point of being at home.'

All this time they had been standing on the spot where they had first met.

'Perhaps you will permit me to walk a little way with you?' said Browne, not a little afraid that she would refuse.

'I shall be very pleased,' she answered promptly.

Thereupon they walked back in the direction of the studio.

At the studio gate they stopped. She turned and faced him, and as she did so she held out

her hand; it was plain that she had arrived at a determination.

'Good-bye, Mr Browne,' she said, and as she said it Browne noticed that her voice trembled and her eyes filled with tears.

'Miss Petrovitch,' he began, 'you must forgive my rudeness; but I feel sure that you are not happy. Will you not trust me and let me help you? You know how gladly I would do so.'

'There is no way in which you can help me,' she answered, and then she bade him good-bye, and, with what Browne felt sure was a little sob, vanished into the studio. For some moments he stood waiting where he was, dumfounded at the suddenness of her exit, and hoping she might come out again; then, realising that she did not intend doing so, he turned on his heel and made his way back to the High Street, and so to Park Lane. His afternoon was a broken and restless one; he could not rid himself of the recollection of the girl's face, and he felt as sure that something was amiss as a man could well feel. But how was he to help her?

The clocks in the neighbourhood were striking eleven next morning as he alighted from his hansom and approached the door of the studio he knew so well. He rang the bell, but no answer rewarded him. He rang again, but with the same result.

Not being able to make any one hear, he returned to his cab and set off for the Warwick Road. Reaching the house, the number of which Katherine had given him, he ascended the steps and rang the bell. A maid-servant answered his summons, and he inquired for Miss Petrovitch.

'Miss Petrovitch?' said the girl, as if she were surprised. 'She is not here, sir. She and Madame Bernstein left for Paris this morning.'

ROSSLAND: A GREAT MOUNTAIN GOLD-CAMP.



HE much-advertised provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, and the Northwest Territories in the Dominion of Canada have for years been regarded as promising fields for the emigrant and the small capitalist; and the yearly increasing yield of grain from the great western plains testifies to the richness of the soil, and to the plodding perseverance of those who have 'gone upon the land,' and founded new homes remote from towns on the outside edge of civilisation.

It is not, however, the writer's purpose to dwell upon the resources and wealth of these well-known and much-written-about provinces, but to take the reader farther afield to a part of the Dominion which is destined ere long to attract the world's eye by the development of its immense mineral resources. It seems strange that British Columbia

should appear to thousands of intelligent people as a sort of *terra incognita*—a mere name on a map.

Here we have a province with an area of some 383,000 square miles within a fortnight's journey of Great Britain, a country which, as its resources and wealth become better known, will open up a sphere of industry for thousands of people. Although British Columbia contains large and fertile areas of land suitable for various branches of agriculture, yet it is unlikely that the province will become to any large extent an exporter of farm produce, as she has within her own boundaries an ever-increasing market for all the agricultural commodities which are likely to be produced for some time to come. It is mainly the mining industry which is destined to bring this portion of the dominion before the eyes of the outside world.

Of course it is well known that gold has been mined in British Columbia for very many years, many millions of dollars' worth of the precious metal having been extracted from the 'placer' gravels of her rivers and creeks; but it is only quite recently that modern mining and scientific methods have demonstrated beyond dispute the richness of the gold, silver, copper, and lead-bearing lodes which traverse nearly the whole province from north to south, and from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean.

Lode-mining in British Columbia largely owes its present prosperity to the enterprise of our American cousins. A few years ago Southern British Columbia was less known and as little heard of as Central Africa; but the great mining states of Idaho, Colorado, and Montana each contributed its quota of pioneer prospectors, who, in the face of incredible hardships and difficulties, crossed the international boundary-line, and by their adventurous researches in the lonely mountain forests laid the foundations of an industry which is rapidly raising the country from the oblivion of the unknown to the front rank of the world's wealth-producers. Although the whole province is dotted with busy mining-camps, yet it is in the southern portion that the most rapid developments are taking place. Most notably is this the case in the Trail Creek mining division of West Kootenay. Here we find a veritable beehive of activity. Perched upon the mountain-side, at an altitude of over three thousand feet above sea-level, is the town of Rossland. Less than four years ago this place was practically non-existent; it has now a population of about seven thousand inhabitants, with wide, well-graded streets, schools, churches, good hotels, an opera-house, water and sewerage systems, newspapers, and in fact every equipment of a modern go-ahead city.

The whole town is lighted by electricity, which is transmitted from the generating station at Bonnington Falls, on the Kootenay River, a distance of about twenty-eight miles. This plant is, I believe, the second largest of its kind in the world, and is owned by the West Kootenay Electric Light and Power Company. The company, in addition to supplying light, also supplies power to many of the mines, smelters, and reduction-works in the district. Mining towns all the world over are noted for their rapid growth; many of them, however, have but a mushroom existence. Such, however, is evidently not to be the fate of Rossland, as the city is the legitimate offspring of enterprise, wedded to the proved value and permanency of several of the surrounding mines. The fact that Rossland is the terminal point of two separate railway systems also indicates that the city has come to stay. The Canadian Pacific Railway now runs its cars right into the town, and the other line connects with the great American trunk lines at Spokane in Washington Territory.

In a paper which the writer contributed to *Chambers's Journal* last year ('The Golden Kootenays in 1888'), a few figures were given showing the output of some of the mines in this part of British Columbia. Since the appearance of that article the output has largely increased, and is likely to continue increasing. The principal values are in gold, with a good percentage of copper; and the richness of such mines as the 'Le Roi,' the 'War Eagle,' and the 'Centre Star' are stimulating the development of scores of other meritorious mines, many of which will ere long take a place in the front rank of gold-producers. Many more mines could now commence shipping at a handsome profit, but the directors very wisely prefer waiting to develop their properties till they reach the stage that will yield the highest profit at the lowest working cost.

In the hard diorite rock of the Trail Creek district this is necessarily a slow and expensive task; but results will prove the wisdom of this course by the facilities gained for the rapid output of large bodies of ore. Many of the mines are largely owned by American and Canadian companies; and doubtless it is greatly owing to the success which has rewarded their efforts that the attention of English capital has been turned in this direction. There are many English companies now working mines in British Columbia, and one company in particular (The British American Corporation) is mining on a very extensive scale in the Trail Creek district. This company, which has a considerable capital behind it, has acquired some of the best mining properties in this district, and is spending large sums in their development. The company has retained the services of such well-known mining men as Mr Carlyle, late Provincial Mineralogist, and Mr M'Donald, the late Inspector of Mines; while the local director and the financial manager are both mining men of wide experience in many parts of the world.

This company has built a splendid suite of offices for the clerical staff, also assay offices with all modern appliances for testing ores. One of the mines (the 'Columbia and Kootenay') under the superintendence of Mr M'Donald shows immense bodies of gold-bearing ore; and I hear that it is the intention of the company to float it as a subsidiary concern.

In view of the immense amount of gold-carrying ore which is now proved to contain paying values, and the increasing number of mines approaching the dividend-paying stage, it is safe to predict that capital in the shape of money and brain and muscle will, at no distant date, place the mining industry of British Columbia upon a firm and enduring basis. From all parts of Eastern Canada and the United States come men of all sorts and conditions, and in most cases they not only 'spy out' but succeed in acquiring some of the fatness of the land.

In many cases a man can earn more in a day in British Columbia than he could in Great Britain or 'back East' in a week. No doubt many of my readers will say, 'What would be the use of my going to a mining country like British Columbia?' Certainly it requires experience to be a good miner; but the miners' *wants* open up innumerable avenues of profit for the small capitalist, in general storekeeping and many branches of business and trade. There is evidently money in circulation in a district where female domestics and hotel servants are paid at the rate of £60 and £70 per year, including board. The writer, who has sojourned in many parts of the world, has rarely encountered a country where opportunity, under careful cultivation, gives such a promise of an early crop of the fruits of enterprise or labour. In the uplands of British Columbia, though the snow lies deep in the winter, the cold is little felt. There are none of the blizzards and snow-drifts here which sweep the prairies to the east of the

Rockies; the snow comes straight down, and lies where it falls until the spring. A few warm sunny days lay the earth bare, and soon the mountains and valleys don their summer attire of multi-coloured flowers and profuse vegetation. Though the weather is sometimes hot in summer, it is not the enervating heat of the South African veldt or of the western plains of Australia. Altogether, the climate is very healthy, and no special winter outfit is required beyond plenty of warm underclothing and substantial footwear.

If any reader of this article should be seeking an outlet for his energies outside the Motherland, or who may be furnished with the means and desire to invest his time and money in some country beyond the seas, then, in the light of experience gained in many of the world's highways and by-ways, the writer would suggest that such an one could turn his thoughts in a more unprofitable direction than towards British Columbia.

THE LITTLE CURATE.

By J. J. BELL.



HE curate and Miss Edmiston were walking down the main street of the village engaged in conversation, which, being that of a recently affianced pair, need not here be repeated.

Miss Edmiston carried herself with an air of pretty dignity, made none the less apparent by the fact that she was fully two inches taller than her lover, the Rev. John St John. He was a thin, wiry little man, dark-haired and pale-complexioned, and was much troubled in his daily work with a certain unconquerable shyness. That he should have won the heart of handsome Nancy Edmiston was a matter for surprise and discussion among the residents in Broxbourne.

'Such a very uninteresting young man,' said the maiden ladies over their afternoon tea.

'So ridiculously retiring! How did he ever come to propose?' remarked the mothers whose daughters assisted in giving women an overwhelming and not altogether united majority in Broxbourne society.

The men, on the other hand, voted St John a good sort; and his parishioners, in their rough ways, owned to his many qualities.

'You're a dear little girl, Nancy,' the curate was stammering, looking up at his beloved, when they were both stopped short on the narrow pavement. A burly workman was engaged in chastising a small boy with a weapon in the shape of a stout leather belt. The child screamed, and the father, presumably, cursed.

'Stop!' cried the curate.

The angry man merely scowled and raised the strap for another blow. St John laid a detaining hand on the fellow's arm, the temerity of which caused the latter such surprise that he loosened his grip for a moment, and the youngster fled howling up an alley.

'What the'—spluttered the bully, dancing round the curate, who seemed to shrink nearer his sweetheart.

'Let us go, dear,' he said. He had grown white and was trembling.

At this juncture two of the workman's cronies appeared at the door of the ale-house opposite, and, seeing how matters stood, crossed the road, and with rough hands and soothing curses conducted their furious friend from the scene.

'Horrible!' sighed the curate as the lovers continued their walk.

Miss Edmiston's head was held a trifle higher. 'If I were a man,' she said, 'I would have thrashed him—I would indeed!'

'You think I should have punished him, then?' said the curate mildly; 'he was a much larger man than I, you know.'

Nancy was silent. She was vaguely but sorely disappointed in her lover. He was not exactly the hero she had dreamed of. How white and shaky he had turned!

'You surely did not expect me to take part in a street row, Nancy,' he said presently, somehow suspecting her thoughts. He knew her romantic ideas. But she made no reply.

'So you think I acted in a cowardly fashion?' he questioned after a chill pause.

'I don't think your cloth is any excuse, anyhow,' she blurted out suddenly and cruelly; the next instant she was filled with shame and regret. Before she could speak again, however, the curate had lifted his hat and was crossing the street. An icy 'Good-bye' was all he had vouchsafed her.

Mr St John was returning from paying a visit of condolence some distance out of the village, and he had taken the short-cut across the moor. It was a clear summer afternoon, a week since his parting with Nancy. A parting in earnest it had been, for the days had gone by without meeting or communication between them. The curate was a sad young man, though the anger in his heart still burned fiercely. To have been called a coward by the woman he loved was a thing not lightly to be forgotten. His recent visit, too, had been particularly trying. In his soul he felt that his words of comfort had been unreal; that, for all he had striven, he had failed in his mission to the bereaved mother. So he trudged across the moor with slow step and bent head, giving no heed to the summer beauties around him.

He was about half-way home when his sombre meditations were suddenly interrupted. A man rose from the heather, where he had been lying, and stood in the path, barring the curate's progress.

'Now, Mister Parson,' he said, with menace in his thick voice and bloated face.

'Good-afternoon, my man,' returned St John, recognising the brute of a week ago, and turning as red as a turkey-cock.

'I'll "good-afternoon" ye, Mister Parson! No! Ye don't pass till I'm done wi' ye,' cried the man, who had been drinking heavily, though he was too seasoned to show any unsteadiness in gait.

The curate drew back. 'What do you want?' he asked. He was painfully white now.

'What do I want?' repeated the bully, following up the question with a volley of oaths that made the little man shudder. 'I'll tell ye what I want. I want yer apology'—he fumbled with the word—'apology for interferin' 'tween a father an' his kid. But I licked him more'n ever for yer blasted interferin'.'

'You infernal coward!' exclaimed St John.

His opponent gasped.

'Let me pass,' said the curate.

'No, ye don't,' cried the other, recovering from his astonishment at hearing a strong word from a parson.

St John gazed hurriedly about him. The path wound across the moor, through the green and purple of the heather, cutting a low hedge here and there, and losing itself at last in the haze. They were alone.

The bully grinned. 'I've got ye now.'

'You have indeed,' said St John, peeling off his black coat and throwing it on the heather. His soft felt hat followed. Then he slipped the links from his cuffs and rolled up his shirt-sleeves, while his enemy gaped at the proceedings.

'Now I'm ready,' said the curate gently.

'Are ye goin' to fight?' burst out the other, looking at him as Goliath might have looked at David. 'Come on, ye'—

But the foul word never passed his lips, being stopped by a carefully-planted blow from a small but singularly hard fist. The little curate was filled with a wild, unholy joy. He had not felt like this since his college days. He thanked Providence for his friends the Indian-clubs and dumb-bells, which had kept him in trim these past three years. The blood sang in his veins as he circled round Goliath, guarding the giant's brutal smashes, and getting in a stroke when occasion offered. It was not long ere the big man found himself hopelessly outmatched; his wind was gone, his jaw was swollen, and one eye was useless. He made a final effort and slung out a terrific blow at David. Partly parried, it caught him on the shoulder, felling him to the earth. Now, surely, the victory was with the Philistine. But no. The fallen man recoiled to his feet like a young sapling, and the next that Goliath knew was, ten minutes later, when he opened his available eye and found that his enemy was bending over him, wiping the stains from his face with a fine linen handkerchief.

'Feel better?' said the curate.

'Well, I'm'—

'Hush, man; it's not worth swearing about,' interposed his nurse. 'Now, get up.'

He held out his hand and assisted the wreck to its feet.

'You'd better call at the chemist's and get patched up. Here's money.'

The vanquished one took the silver and gazed stupidly at the giver, who was making his toilet.

'Please, go away, and don't thrash your boy any more,' said St John persuasively.

Goliath made a few steps, then retraced them, holding out a grimy paw. 'Mister Parson, I'm—I'm'—

'Don't say another word. Good-bye;' and the curate shook hands with him.

The big man turned away. Presently he halted once more. 'I'm ——!' he said. It had to come. Then he shambled homewards.

St John adjusted his collar, gave his shoulder a rub, and donned his coat and hat. As he started towards the village a girl came swiftly to meet him.

'O John, John, you are splendid!' she gasped as she reached him. 'I watched you from the hedge yonder.'

'I am exceedingly sorry, Miss Edmiston,' said

the curate coldly, raising his hat and making to pass on.

Nancy started as though he had struck her; her flush of enthusiasm paled out. In her excitement she had forgotten that event of a week ago, but the cutting tone of his voice reminded her.

She bowed her head, and he went on his way. He had gone about fifty yards when she called his name. Her voice just reached him, but something in it told him that he had not suffered alone. . . .

He turned about and hastened to her.

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW.

By VICTOR PITKETHLEY.



ABOUT three miles from the slumberous old town of Wells, in Norfolk, lies the village of Stiffkey, locally pronounced 'Stewkey.'

Mine host of the pleasant inn in Wells, at which I was staying, told me such strange tales about this place and its inhabitants that I was presently overcome by a burning desire to visit it. Thereupon the worthy landlord seemed quite conscience-stricken at the result of his own garrulity, and endeavoured to dissuade me from the enterprise.

'It's true they're a rum lot,' he explained apologetically—'a very rum lot. But I don't think, when you've seen it, you will thank me for sending you there. But there'—breaking off suddenly—'I don't know. I don't understand them. They have nothin' to do with us, nor us with them. They don't seem natural folk to me.'

In pursuit of information one meets with more of this curious, half-reticent know-nothingness, real or assumed. People seem to dislike talking about the place, and an intention to visit it is mildly marvelled at. What, one wonders, can be the explanation of this all but universal shyness concerning Stiffkey and all appertaining to it? Is it the residence of some bloodthirsty descendants of the smugglers of old, who kept watch and ward over the desolate mud-flats for the keg-laden luggers that softly grounded on the beach, afterwards secreting their haul in the marshes that stretch away to the sky-line hereabouts? Or is this village—never spoken of save with peculiar look and significant shoulder-shrug—some stronghold of the progeny of the ancient Danes, who scorn to mix with the peaceful, prosaic farm-hand or fisherman, holding themselves strictly aloof behind the barren barrier of scrubby sandhills that fringe the lonely sea? One can obtain no answer to these questions, and from sheer curiosity is finally impelled to set out along a narrow, never-ending lane, which is pointed out as the road to 'Stewkey.' 'It's a long lane that has no turning,' saith the old proverb, and the absolute veracity of this well-worn adage is forcibly impressed upon the explorer as he trudges along the furrowed, grass-grown track. The season is late autumn, and the first breath of impending winter is sobbing over

the marshes, while storm-wrack flits across the lowering sky. Stumbling over the stones and anathematising the County Council, one plods on, half sorry to have undertaken the trip, and wondering for how many more miles this interminable straight line of a lane will continue. And there is never a house, nor an inn, nor even a tree to break the eternal monotony of rutty road. At last, after what seems ages, the track drags its weary length upwards, and from its summit one catches a first view of Stiffkey. The village lies embosomed in bare-topped hills, and is bordered by thick-growing, sombre copses, the trees of which are just beginning to show their branches through the fast-falling leaves. Beyond these are rolling meadows, still exhibiting the mellow tints of autumn; while past the village there winds down a tiny river to the sea, which is seen close at hand, a study in misty grays and browns. The hamlet, warm with the time-softened tints of red tiles and brickwork, lies higgledy-piggledy among the darkening trees, the houses facing towards the various points of the compass, in the pleasing if insanitary fashion beloved of the old rural builders. A small church thrusts up its tower from the rear, and behind this is to be caught a glimpse of a stately-looking farmhouse. This, by its carved doors, now worm-eaten and rotting, and its mullioned windows, which look forth on the wallowings of odorous pigs and the squabbles of disconsolate fowls, betrays that it was not originally intended for a farmhouse. It is, in fact, Stiffkey Hall, built by Sir Nicholas Bacon, who held the office of Lord Privy Seal to the Virgin Queen, Elizabeth, and was premier baronet of England. This gentleman was the son of a rich agriculturist of Bury St Edmunds; but he soon rose above his father's sphere, and amassed so much money that he took to house-building as a sort of hobby. There are one or two old mansions in different parts of the country in the erection of which he had a finger; but his purse seems to have become exhausted soon after he commenced on his Stiffkey dwelling, for he never finished it, so that, instead of the old Hall being now the residence of some patriarchal squire, looking after the villagers with kindly benevolence, it is only a tumble-down farmhouse.

As one turns from an inspection of the Hall,

one is conscious of a change in the aspect of things. There is a brooding darkness over the hamlet which was not noticeable from the summit of the road. The warm tints fade out of the damp, moss-grown brickwork, the woods seem eerie and dark, and there is no sound save the dreary sighing of the chilly wind, the far-away heave of the gray sea, and the harsh scream of a bird above. The ordinary sounds of village life are entirely absent. Where are the inhabitants, or is the place deserted? Presently, however, one sees a group of sullen-looking men lounging round the door of an ale-house. One lifts his head to stare, but the others take no notice whatever of the curious glances they are favoured with. For truly they are queer folk. Every man, without exception, is red-haired, and the cast of their features is singularly unlike the usual Norfolk type. There is something shifty in the small, beady eyes, something fox-like in the long narrow faces and small pinched features.

Grovelling in the kennels, sprawling in the weedy gardens, and sitting on the doorsteps of the untidy houses are dozens of children, red-headed like their lounging fathers. Slowly one grasps the curious fact that the village is inhabited by a race of bright-haired Rufuses. Everybody is possessed of ruddy locks, from scarlet to dull brick-red, in curls and ringlets and long straight wisps. The explanation of this phenomenon, unique of its kind, is readily forthcoming when one has probed a little deeper into the ways of this primitive community. Intermarriage is the universal rule here, and is responsible for the half-witted children who swarm round the doorposts, the puny frames of the men, and the terrible evils that hang round the valley like a brooding curse. No 'Stewkey' man ever seeks a wife outside his own valley—probably because no bright-eyed lass in all the country-side would listen to his suit for one moment; nor do the girls of the place ever go forth to seek a husband among the 'foreigners' who dwell at the end of the long lane. Consequently all the bad points of the big family have been perpetuated and accentuated in the course of long years of intermarriage, and this hapless village presents as pitiable an object-lesson of the evils of the system as could be imagined.

We have seen the men and the sprawling children, whom a few old crones are making a sorry pretence of looking after; but where are the girls and the women, who should now be busy about their household duties? Where, indeed! Early in the chilly morning the girls and women might have been seen, with their skirts tucked up about their bare, scarred legs, and with long rakes over their shoulder, slowly picking their way down to the oily-looking sea that flings itself lazily on to the pebbles under the sickly light of an autumn dawn. Here they work till the tide turns, shovel-

ling the hard-won cockles into the sacks on their bent backs, apparently heedless of the biting cold of the wavelets. Then, staggering under their heavy burdens, from which percolate tiny streams of water that soak through their ragged clothes, they plod wearily back to the village again. Every able-bodied woman and girl goes away thus, day in and day out, to the 'main,' while the men loaf about and the old crones mind the babies. The children, when they can be coerced, are given such instruction as they can assimilate in the Board school; but they are unpromising pupils, taking them all round, with the hereditary taint of the family upon them—physical and mental depravity.

In one cottage, perhaps a shade more tumble-down than the rest, sits a hag who might very well pass muster as one of the witch-sisters in *Macbeth*. Around her are grouped any number of cradles, and in these are the babies of the hamlet, left to the tender mercies of this helpless old soul while their mothers are winning a bare subsistence from the treacherous sea, which every now and then claims one of the cocklers for its own. Fourpence a peck is as much as the dealers at Wisbech or Lynn will give for the cockles; and the hardest day's work, under the most favourable circumstances, will not produce more than a bushel of 'bluestones.' Sometimes by day, sometimes by night, according to the tides, the gangs of hard-featured, bare-legged women, in their bifurcated garments, scour the pools and hollows of the beach, reaping a scanty harvest of molluscs, and inevitably succumbing, sooner or later, to the rheumatism that is the lot of all these poor cocklers. Meanwhile the men idle about the fields, or drink and quarrel among themselves, invariably returning home for their meals, however, and to obtain from their Amazon bread-winners the money they have received from the dealers who come daily for the cockles.

As one dives deeper into the history of this lonely valley the shadow seems to darken and deepen. The morals of the Stewkeyites, as might be expected, are far from good; they seem to have little of anything that can be called religion, and their whole souls are wrapped up in the prices they will obtain for their cockles on the morrow.

Night is drawing near. The clouds are darkening, and a sharp shower sets the few leaves in the encompassing woods rustling loudly. The wind is rising in a shrill note of complaint, and the sea changes from slaty-gray to black. Slowly down the rough track, assisting their steps with their rakes, go the gang of women, bound for the beach, which the retiring sea—now touched with running ridges of white foam, upon which the rising moon casts its uncertain light—has left wet and pool-studded. A light gleams from the window of the ale-house, wherein the 'men' of

Stiffkey are enjoying their pipes and grog, while the women-folk trudge knee-deep through the chilly water, pushing their rakes along the bottom.

If the impression we have received be not strangely erroneous, surely the village is under the shadow of hereditary degeneration—mental, moral, and physical—of lost manhood, of poverty, of Death.

SOUTH AMERICAN INDIAN THERAPEUTICS.

BY A JAMAICAN JOURNALIST.



THE traveller in South American wilds has to face many dangers that, whilst interesting for their very novelty, are for the most part devoid of that element of adventure which to the average explorer is the very salt of travel. In this sense his experiences may be regarded as monotonous. But, on the other hand, apart from the question of material gain, which is the usual objective, those who go forth in canoes or afoot into the primeval wildernesses find many compensations. If, instead of the lurking lion's spring, the ponderous pachyderm's charge, or the flying dart of the dodging bushman, with the excitement incident thereto, one encounters nothing more obtrusively formidable than the harmless Howling Monkey, the buzz of the mosquito, or the flashing curl of the scared serpent; yet even these are full of interest to those who seek it. And at times the experience comes unsought and in a form that is none too welcome owing to the danger that follows in its trail.

Of all the dangers incident to travel in those far-away southern lands, none are more imminent than those to be apprehended from penetrating the malarial regions or encounters with the poisonous reptiles that abound in the forests. But, strangely enough, there are none more easily neutralised, and indeed even avoided, if one only knows how to go about it. For it is a fact that has been not infrequently noted by more or less responsible explorers, but which yet remains to be utilised by modern seekers after the great secret truths of Nature, that whilst these latter are exhausting the known resources of science to find antidotes for tropical malarial and snake poisons, so far without avail or even forecast of success, the simple Indian *peimans* or doctors of South America know and freely practise not only sure cures for the most virulent fevers or snake poisons, but also inoculations that give immunity against them.

The antidotes are all herbal, and in reality of the most simple nature, although their administration is invariably accompanied with an infinite deal of grotesque mummary. No less high an authority than Sir Clements Markham has testified to the efficacy of these Indian cures for tropical fevers and other diseases; and he also gives an interesting description of the careful training of the 'medicine men' in the medicinal properties of

plants, their university being the forest and their diploma a wand painted after the manner of a barber's pole. I have myself had a fairly intimate experience of some of these curious people and their really wonderful powers, to which I am specially able to testify. My experience, too, has been within the 'sphere of influence' of Great Britain in Guiana, and it seems that some effort might well be made to obtain these valuable secrets for the British Pharmacopœia.

I propose here to relate my own personal experience; but it may be well to add that I have met white men who had much the same story to tell from other points ranging from Guatemala in Central America to the Amazonian lowlands of Ecuador and Peru. So far as I am able to judge, however, perhaps the most successful 'medicine men' in tropical America are to be found among the San Blas Indians, possibly because theirs is the most deadly fever-breeding region of them all.

My time had come. The bucket of my health had gone once too often to the well-heads of malaria, where the swampy creeks that lead to Guiana's gold regions meander through dismal forests, and it lay shattered. Whether I had inhaled the poison, or received it through the tiny puncture of a mosquito's proboscis, mattered little. That was a detail not worthy of consideration. The fact on which all attention focussed was that there I lay, prostrated in my hammock, ravaged by an all-consuming fever, and with death knocking at the door—that is, figuratively, for the *benab* (wall-less hut) that sheltered me was innocent of doors.

Medical aid, supposing it to be of any use, was not to be had within a fortnight's journey, and in that time I should be lying at the root of the mighty mora-tree that, in mockery of protection, spread its towering canopy over a hundred feet high above our camp. We did not lack for quinine, but my faith in that drug had long ago vanished before the inexorable face of experience. If in trained hands, and in well-equipped hospitals, it had on more occasions than I cared to remember just then proved a 'drug' in more senses than one, what hope in its efficacy could I muster up who had no one to administer it properly, and where all the surrounding conditions were distinctly unfavourable?

But although delirious at intervals, I 'kept my head' otherwise, fortunately, and determined to make a hard fight of it. Within a few miles of

our camp was an Indian settlement. I had had some doings with them, and won the goodwill of the headman. I sent one of the Indian hangers-on to him and asked that he would secure me the services of a *peiman*. The messenger left at daylight in the morning, and I was pretty bad then. It was midnight before he returned with my friend the old chief and the tribal 'medicine man,' who, it afterwards appeared, had made some difficulty about attending a white man. By that time I was past knowing anything of my surroundings, and in all human probability would never have recovered consciousness—in this world. My companions told me afterwards that I had already developed all the well-known symptoms of febrile collapse.

The *peiman*, however, having finally consented to treat me, had come fully prepared. He intimated that even he considered it a bad case, but went to work on me, administering internal remedies by means of roughly-devised but obviously effective subcutaneous and other injections. Then followed the inevitable process of mummery, which my companions were not permitted to witness, the *benab* being walled in for the nonce by blankets. One prominent feature was the rattling of dry gourds, which was kept up, they told me, for fully two hours incessantly, and at such a rate that one would have thought there were a dozen people inside the hut instead of the solitary *peiman* and his helpless patient.

When, at about three o'clock in the morning, the *peiman* issued forth and my companions were allowed a sight of me, they found me *sleeping* quite naturally, and bathed in a profuse perspiration, or rather sweat, which was already moistening the outer folds of the double blanket in which the old 'medicine man' had wrapped me from head to foot.

At eight o'clock I awoke, when a draught was administered. But of that awakening I have no recollection. I then slept straight on for twenty-four hours, the *peiman* from time to time administering subcutaneous injections. When I finally awoke there was not the slightest trace of fever left, although, as a matter of course, my weakness was great. From that time on improvement was rapid—far more rapid than one would have dared to hope for under ordinary conditions; and in three days I was able to be about, feeling quite my old self inside of a week, being then fit to undertake the long and arduous journey down to Demerara, which I made 'without turning a hair,' as the saying is.

And now comes what may be considered as the most remarkable part of this experience—albeit I myself have no doubt whatever that I was to all practical intents and purposes wrested literally from the grip of death, having reached a stage from which no medical practitioner could have rescued a patient. The *peiman* was more than pleased with the reward that I tendered him, and

before leaving our camp he intimated to me, through the headman, that if I cared to go over with him to the native settlement he would give me an inoculation which would be a sure preventive against all sorts of 'bush' (malarial?) fevers, no matter how exposed I might be to them, for at least a hundred moons—that is, about twelve years. If ever I did contract any such malady within that time, whilst the 'medicine' lasted, it would at any rate be of the mildest type.

It is scarcely to be wondered at that, in view of what I had seen and experienced of the old 'medicine man's' capabilities, it did not even occur to me then to doubt his power to inoculate against malaria just as effectually as our own physicians can against smallpox. And who would refuse even an off-chance of immunity against a danger to which one was incessantly exposed?

The inoculation was very simple. It consisted of stabbing gently into the left wrist with a bunch of exceedingly fine needles plucked from a hard spiny leaf, the needles being first passed through a flame, and then dipped into a black liquid of the consistency of honey. The spots punctured commenced to itch almost immediately, and in a few minutes the sensation was almost intolerable. Then a warmth spread up the arm, the pulse began to beat rapidly, the head to throb and pain rather disagreeably, and the membranes of throat and mouth became dry and hard. In half-an-hour I had developed all the well-marked symptoms of malarial fever.

At this stage the *peiman* gave a grunt of satisfaction and smiled all over his hideous face—for he was, truly, the most abnormally ugly human being I have ever seen, even for a South American Indian. He then gave me a gourd filled with a thick, slimy, and pungent mixture, intimating that I must drink it. The thing smelled vilely enough, but with a heroic effort I got down a gulp of it. Its noxiousness was unutterable, and only the earnest assurance of the headman, that if I did not drink it the fever would surely kill me, induced me to swallow the stuff.

A deep sleep of a couple of hours' duration followed. When consciousness returned I was feeling as well as I ever felt in my life, only that there were four small but keenly smarting blisters on my left wrist. These the *peiman* anointed with some sticky stuff, and then bandaged—and the operation was over.

Now comes the sequel. Was I fever immune? On the basis of the good old argument that one swallow does not make a summer, I should hesitate to make any such unqualified claim as that. I can only say that my after experience went far—indeed, the whole way—toward justifying the pretensions of the *peiman*. Soon after this adventure my business took me away from that part of the continent, but led me to an even worse region—the low-lying and swampy coast lands of the Caribbean and Pacific shores of Darien

and Panama. Thereabouts I underwent quite a considerable amount of exposure, especially on one particular trip, when we got capsized in a squall on a creek, got to shore, and spent the night under a clump of trees which afforded but scant protection from the pitiless rain that poured down all night. Of four white men in the party three got fever, and two died within twenty-four hours. The third survived, but his health was permanently broken, and he soon after went home to the United States. For my part, I came through that crucial test with nothing worse than a bad fresh cold.

This occurred within eighteen months of the inoculation. Subsequently I spent some six years about the Isthmus of Panama, and at that hottest hot-bed of fever, Colon, and never experienced a day's fever—not for lack of opportunity to contract it, certainly. Moreover, I was on several occasions in immediate contact with yellow and other infectious fevers, and did not contract them.

Medical men to whom I mentioned the matter pooch-pooched the idea of immunity, and warned me that it was a peculiarity of the worst forms of what is known as 'Chagres fever' not to attack the victim until he is out of its influence. Then the disease, germinating rapidly in another climate, seizes its victim and almost invariably ends fatally. It is better, far better, they told me, to have Chagres fever at home than abroad.

I left the Isthmus of Panama just ten years after the inoculation, and went over to Jamaica. I had not been there long before, sure enough, Chagres fever laid hold of me; and it hung on, more or less persistently, for nine months. My general health had been pretty badly run down by ten years' continuous work in a tropical climate; but at no time did the fever get the better of me, or even develop alarming symptoms, and finally it disappeared altogether.

Whilst not presuming to furnish data on which any positive opinion may be based, it does appear that these facts indicate the probability that the pretensions of the Indian 'medicine men' are something more than fanciful, that their power to cure and even ward off the endemic diseases of their lands has some more substantial foundation than the mere 'efficacy of faith' of their home patients, and that altogether the matter is one well worthy of the fullest expert investigation.

As a last word in this connection, it may not be uninteresting to quote the following extract from a minute that was recently published in the official *Gazette* of Jamaica, above the signature of His Excellency Sir Henry Blake, during a somewhat alarming appearance of yellow fever in that colony:

'In *The Land of Bolivar*, by Spence, published in 1878, vol. i. p. 110, is the following note: "A specific is said to have been discovered for yellow fever by the vice-consul of Her Britannic Majesty

at the city of Bolivar," writes the Consul General at Caracas. "An old woman named Margarita Orfile has discovered an efficacious remedy for the yellow fever and black vomit which has completely cured several persons after the medical men had declared they could only live for a few hours. This remedy is the juice of the vervain plant (*Verbena officinalis*), which is taken in small doses three times a day. Injections of the same juice are also administered every two hours, and the intestines are completely relieved of their contents. All the medical men here have adopted the use of this remedy, and consequently very few, if any, persons now die of these terrible diseases referred to. The leaves of the female plant only are used.

"A person now living at Moneague Hotel spent some time in Panama, where six years ago he was cured of an attack of yellow fever by a doctor who had spent fifteen years with the Indians, and obtained the remedy from them. Having been informed that he knew the remedy, which was a secret carefully guarded by the doctor, whose success ensured for him a very large practice, Lady Blake questioned him, and was informed by him that the cure was the juice of the vervain with white flowers, taken three times daily, while for three nights running a hot bath in which was steeped a quantity of the vervain with blue flower and of Guinea hen-weed (*Petiveria alliacea*) was taken, and a hot drink of limes and water administered, which produced profuse perspiration. The decoction was prepared by washing the roots clean, then pounding the whole plant, including the root, in a mortar, and boiling for half-an-hour in a small quantity of water. This information was afterwards repeated to me. The secret was disclosed by the doctor's dispenser, who was a Jamaican and a friend of our informant. It is evident that this is the same remedy as that mentioned by Spence in 1878."

DEATH IN LIFE.

So fair, so rare, and yet so soon to die!
Love's cup untasted, brimming full and high,
Life's music silenced all so suddenly.

White statue, with the hair of living gold,
Death is the same Grand Sculptor as of old!
His touch makes *marble*—passionless and cold.

The eyes *he* closes ope not night nor day—
The ears *he* seals hear naught that earth can say—
The lips *he* kisses never shall betray!

O prattler of the open heart and brow,
Sphinx-like, inscrutable thou liest now—
Doomed evermore to keep a silepce-vow!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

REMINISCENCES.

By Lieutenant-Colonel Sir R. LAMBERT PLAYFAIR, K.C.M.G.

II. PATRIARCHAL JUSTICE AT ADEN—PERIM.

IMENTIONED in a former article the manner in which I was suddenly transferred from being a second lieutenant of artillery to the almost irresponsible position of governor of an important and somewhat turbulent colony. In those days, and probably it is the same now, the Resident had enough to do with his military command and a general superintendence over every department; all matters of detail, and especially the administration of justice, were left to his assistant. I had at first no European help whatever in the numerous departments of the administration. Subsequently, however, a second assistant was appointed—Mr Hormuzd Rassam, who became well known afterwards through his captivity in Abyssinia. At the time of his appointment he was already distinguished by his services to Assyrian archaeology; it is to him that we owe many precious antiquities in the British Museum, such as the Deluge Tablets and the Bronze Gates of Shalmaneser II. The discovery of Spharvaim was about his latest achievement.

I shall never forget the appalling amount of responsibility thrust upon me without any previous preparation. I knew absolutely nothing of law or criminal procedure. The Indian Penal Code was not then in existence, and our justice was administered in what we used to call 'The Patriarchal Department.' Almost the first criminal case I had to investigate was the barbarous murder of a Hindu boy. When the details came to my notice I consulted my chief, Colonel Outram, who gave me the wholesome advice, often, perhaps, given by others in similar circumstances, 'Study the case carefully; give your decision unhesitatingly, but never state your reasons. Your decision will generally be right; your reasons will almost invariably be wrong.' The result of this advice was that in all the many years during which I

administered justice at Aden not a single sentence of mine was ever made the subject of appeal.

The case to which I have alluded is a curious instance of the unreliable nature of mere circumstantial evidence. The body of a Hindu boy was found in the ravine which Arabs from the interior used as a market-place. Both his hands and feet were cut off and were lying beside him, evidently for the sake of the silver bangles and anklets which Indian children habitually wear. He was the son of a Hindu woman of very indifferent character. Near her house was that of a mason named Govind, who was very intimate with the mother, and much attached to the boy. On the previous evening the latter had committed some little naughtiness, and his mother threatened to punish him. The child ran away, saying, 'If you are going to beat me I will take my supper with Govind.' He was seen to enter Govind's house about eight o'clock, but nothing more was known of him till his dead body was found. My suspicion was naturally directed to Govind; he was fond of the boy, it is true, but he was a man of bad character, and so impecunious that the value of the bangles would have been an object of consideration to him. On examining the ground, I noticed a line of spots of blood from the body to Govind's house; in the house was a mat stained with blood, but this was susceptible of explanation. The evidence appeared so strong that I brought him to trial for murder, but yet so defective that I felt bound to acquit him.

A short time afterwards I was taking my usual morning ride about the town. I saw an Arab carrying two small sharks from the beach to the fish-market; their heads were cut off, and their tails attached to a bar of wood which he supported by the middle on his shoulder. At every movement of his body a drop of blood fell on the ground. The line thus formed passed over the

place where the boy's body had been found; it continued to Govind's door, and thence to the fish-market. I had failed to notice any blood on either side of the line between the two places, and it is quite possible that the first series of spots might also have been caused by a fisherman. If I had hanged the accused I should certainly have had a *mauvais quart d'heure* afterwards.

The charge of the jail interested me almost more than any other part of my duties; it was the cause of the Reservoirs being discovered, as I have already shown. Architecturally it had not much to boast of, being simply a rectangular enclosure of rude stone walls, containing a few sheds of Zanzibar rafters, as they were called—poles of mangrove-wood—placed so close together as to prevent a man passing through, but admitting light and air in every direction. Protection against cold was not a matter that we had to take into consideration in that climate. The roofs were of reed and thatch, the floors of mud, with a varnish of cow-dung. From a sanitary point of view they were perfect. I do not think that there was a jail in British India with such a low death-rate; but we had to depend much more on the vigilance of the police than on the strength of the walls for the security of the prisoners. These consisted not only of culprits sentenced at Aden; there were between sixty and seventy state prisoners, sent to undergo long periods of imprisonment for acts of rebellion committed in India. They all had chains on their ankles; but it depended on their own conduct whether these were light or heavy. When I first took charge of this primitive establishment, the prisoners were employed exclusively on outdoor labour on the roads, and every man was permitted, on his return from a short day's task, to amuse himself by cooking his own dinner, and to spend a great part of his spare time in the cook-rooms. Being a new broom, I naturally determined to sweep this time-honoured custom away. One day, without any previous notice, I paraded the prisoners and instituted a thorough search of their persons, bedding, and kitchens. The result was as I had anticipated. I found that almost every prisoner had a knife, a razor, or a pair of scissors in his possession, besides small sums of money, apparatus for gambling, and hoards of every conceivable species of rubbish: of these I seized and destroyed several cart-loads. I ordered that for the future they should be divided into messes of twenty, and appointed an old worn-out political prisoner as cook to each, due regard being had to their legitimate prejudices of race and caste. This created quite a revolution; the operation of cooking had been their most cherished distraction, and they preferred rather to starve than to abandon it. As there was no religious question involved, I fixed on the 1st of January, then near at hand, for the new system to come into operation; they positively refused to receive their

rations, and from that day till the 9th not an ounce of food was received by prisoners of Indian nationality, who constituted the great majority of the whole. It was not till I had made them understand, very clearly and practically, that corporal punishment would follow disobedience of prison discipline that the mutiny was quelled. Subsequently the jail became to a great extent self-supporting: printing, both in English and Arabic, bookbinding, and other industrial arts were introduced; and only those men who could not possibly be employed within the walls were sent out to the public works.

Our great triumph was when Her Majesty assumed the direct government of India from the East India Company. The Royal Proclamation to the chiefs and princes of India was translated into all Oriental languages; it was sent to us, and admirably rendered by Mr Rassam, the second assistant, into Arabic, and beautifully printed in that language at the jail press.

Although the construction of the jail was so slight, escapes were almost unknown. I only remember one; but that was so curious as to be worth narrating. A Somali managed to escape on two separate occasions, immediately after having been sentenced to long periods of imprisonment for house-breaking. Some time after his last escape I had occasion to visit the Somali country, about a day's ride south of Berbera. I encamped in a large, fertile valley, where were vast herds of camels and 'hills of sheep.' Almost the first person I met was my friend the escaped burglar. He welcomed me in the most cordial manner, constituting himself my personal attendant; he slept across the door of my tent, brought me beakers of camel's milk, organised dances for my amusement, and treated me generally as if I had been his benefactor. It was curious to see the conduct of this savage. He thoroughly understood that I had no personal animus against him; he had been brought up to consider his neighbours' goods as his lawful prey; but he recognised my right to prevent him and punish him if I could. He had circumvented me twice, and there was really no cause why he should harbour ill-feeling towards me. On my departure I shook him warmly by the hand, and gave him a liberal present and an urgent invitation to return to Aden, assuring him of the hospitality of the British Government for at least twenty years. He laughingly replied that he had had sufficient experience of British civilisation, and preferred his own pastoral and nomad life for the future.

By this time Outram had left Aden, as he was required for more important duties in India. His successor was Brigadier, afterwards Sir, William Marcus Coghlan, with whom I continued on the most affectionate terms during all the years we remained together at Aden. He retired into private life about the same time that I went to Zanzibar, and took up his residence at Ramsgate.

I cannot refrain from quoting one of his last letters to me :

The postman has brought me no letter which has gratified me more than yours of the 7th November. I am delighted to follow your wanderings, and to hear how well you are getting on. Not that I ever doubted that you would succeed anywhere, and at anything to which you apply yourself. I have a very pleasant recollection of our association at Aden; we got on so well because we had confidence in each other. Often as I have attempted to express my sense of obligation, I never perfectly succeeded; but I did what I could, and I watch your career with satisfaction. . . . I received lately a letter from Sir Charles Wood, in which he told me that Her Majesty the Queen had 'graciously approved of my appointment as K.C.B., in recognition of my long and distinguished service, especially as Governor of Aden.' . . . This is satisfactory to me, to my family, and to my friends. I am sure you will be pleased. I cannot forget how much I am indebted to you for my success, and of course also for this honour.

Sir William Coghlan died at Ramsgate in November 1885, full of years and honour.

There is one of my reminiscences which I cannot pass by. Some years ago I published in the *Asiatic Review* an article called 'The True Story of the Occupation of Perim.' As there is no knowing how soon the importance of this position may be realised, I may be allowed to return to the subject.

There is no act of our administration to which I look back with greater satisfaction than this. Perim is a mere rock, it is true, but one which possesses the singular value of being so distinctly in its right place that we cannot contemplate with equanimity the possibility of its being in any other hands than our own. The question is often asked, 'Where is Perim—the beautiful island of Perim; and how did it become Britain's key to the Red Sea?' Every one knows that it is in the Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb, and is fully convinced that the ridiculous story in the *Lays of Ind* is an accurate account of the manner in which it came into our possession. The amusing ballad 'Perfile Albion' recounts how a French frigate called at Aden on its way to the Red Sea. The officers were cordially entertained by the Governor (Coghlan); and when their hearts were warmed by good fare and generous wine, the captain dropped a hint that he was going to touch at Perim for purely scientific purposes. The Governor winked to his *aide* (myself), who immediately stole away, and, while the captain was still at the festive board, got into a man-of-war which happened to be in the harbour, and thus anticipated the gallant Frenchman, who did not leave Aden till the following morning.

And now, gentle reader, 'tis time that you knew
What horror had burst on Le Capitaine's view.
On a ridge on the island, which highest appeared,
A pretty tall flagstaff was solidly reared—
So tall 'twould have certainly shamed all the trees
Had there been any there; and afloat on the breeze
Streamed the swelling expanse of the glorious old flag
Which English affection and slang call 'The Rag;'

While beneath, hat in hand, were a group of Jack-tars,
Engaged evidently in shouting hurrahs;
And astride on a rock, 'neath an umbrella's shade,
Like the spright of the scene, our acquaintance the
Aide.

Thus Perim was won
And thus Frenchmen were done;
And if a bit shabby,
'Twas very good fun.

All this, of course, is purely imaginary; but no doubt there is a grain of truth in all the fiction current about Perim. Ever since the scramble for Africa and other unoccupied spots on the earth's surface took place, French agents, official and unofficial, were always travelling about the East in search of strategical positions and coaling-stations. But, at the time of which I write, their reports and recommendations rarely got beyond the *cartons* of the ministers to whom they were addressed; the favourable opportunity was always neglected, and sometimes we stepped in and acted while they were considering the advisability of action. The consequence is, that while we have a continuous chain of stations between England and the remotest part of our Eastern possessions, France has only one place, Jiboutil, between Algeria and Tonkin, where her vessels could coal in time of war.

In 1856-57 a French consular agent, Monsieur Henri Lambert, spent much of his time in visiting the various ports on the Arabian and African coasts near Aden, and there was strong reason to suppose that his object was to occupy or to recommend the occupation of Perim. The magnificent work of Monsieur de Lesseps had not yet been commenced; and Englishmen generally were incredulous of its being brought to a successful termination; but there was no such doubt in France, and Monsieur Lambert did not conceal his opinion that his government would probably occupy Perim so as to command the entrance to the Red Sea in the event of the Canal being constructed.

This no doubt stimulated our activity in the matter. Brigadier Coghlan strongly urged the immediate occupation of the island for many reasons, one being that steam communication between England and India had so greatly increased that it became necessary to facilitate as much as possible the dangerous navigation of the Red Sea. It is difficult now to realise how much steam navigation was then in its infancy. We had on the station a vessel of the Indian navy, the *Lady Canning*, the copper boilers of which, once in the *Hugh Lindsay*, were the first that had ever entered the Red Sea!

The Straits of Bab-el-Mandeb presented the most serious obstacle to navigation, and it was considered that a light on Perim would greatly facilitate the passage of steamers. Perim was, in fact, an integral part of Her Majesty's dominions. During the war between England and

France at the close of last century it was found necessary to occupy it as one of the measures in reply to Napoleon's expedition to Egypt, and a force of four hundred men was despatched thither under Colonel Murray in 1799. The island was taken possession of, in the name of the East India Company, with the usual formalities. The court of directors fully concurred in Lord Elphinstone's recommendation for its reoccupation, and I was sent to take possession of it once more in the name of the East India Company, but on this occasion without formalities or ceremonies of any kind.

The 'fortifications' of Perim have often been described in detail; the fact is that there was never the slightest intention of building any. The island cannot, of itself, be a bar to vessels passing the Straits. The smaller strait, indeed, it might command, as the width between the island and the mainland of Arabia is only a mile and a half; but the distance from it to the African coast is eleven miles, and this passage, therefore, is beyond the reach of artillery. The great value of Perim, however, is its deep and capacious harbour. In time of war one or two

vessels at anchor there, with banked fires, could prevent an enemy from entering or leaving the Red Sea without giving them battle. The nations of Europe may say or do what they please regarding the Suez Canal; Perim is Britain's key to the Red Sea. It was pointed out when Perim was first occupied that, should the Suez Canal really be completed, the harbour of Aden would no longer suffice to contain all the vessels that would pass down the Red Sea, and that there would not be sufficient accommodation on shore for commercial purposes or for the stowage of coal; therefore our mercantile interests would require the relief that Perim might be expected to afford. This provision has been fully realised. A company has been formed at Liverpool for the purpose of utilising the great natural advantages of Perim, and the actual formation of the coaling-station there took place in 1883. Thus Government has secured, without any cost to the State, a station where the largest ironclads can replenish their stock of coal and provisions, and which may one day be of immense value to our navy and to our nation if—which God forbid—we should ever find ourselves engaged in war with a European nation.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER VII.

MISS PETROVITCH and Madame Bernstein left for Paris this morning,' said the maid who opened the door to Browne at Warwick Road; and the latter, when he heard it, felt his heart sink like lead. He could scarcely believe his ill-fortune. Only a moment before he had been comforting himself with the thought that he would soon be standing face to face with Katherine, ready to ask her a question which should decide the happiness of his life. Now his world seemed suddenly to have turned as black as midnight. Why had she left England so suddenly? What had taken her away? Could it have been something in connection with that mysterious business of Madame Bernstein's of which he had heard so much of late? Then another idea struck him. Perhaps it was the knowledge that she was leaving that had occasioned her unhappiness on the previous afternoon. The maid who had opened the door to him, and whose information had caused him such disappointment, was a typical specimen of the London boarding-house servant, and yet there was sufficient of the woman still left in her to enable her to see that the news had proved a crushing blow to the man standing before her. Her heart was touched with a feeling of compassion that was not often there.

'Can you tell me at what hour they left?'

Browne inquired. 'I was hoping to have seen Miss Petrovitch this morning.'

'I can tell you what the time was exactly,' the girl replied. 'It was on the stroke of nine when they got into the cab.'

'Are you quite certain upon that point?' he asked.

'Quite certain, sir,' she answered. 'I know it was nine o'clock because I had just carried in the first floor's breakfast; and a precious noise, sir, he always makes if it is not on the table punctual to the minute. There were some letters for Madame Bernstein by the post, which the other girl took up to her bedroom. As soon as she read them she sent down for Mrs Jimson and called for her bill. "I leave for Paris in an hour's time, Mrs Jimson," says she, sort of short-like, for I heard her myself; "so make me out my bill and let me have it quickly."'

'And did Miss Petrovitch appear at all surprised or put out at having to leave London at such short notice?' Browne asked, not without a little trepidation.

'Well, sir, that was exactly what I was agoing to tell you,' the girl replied, dropping her voice a little, and glancing back over her shoulder into the house, as if she were afraid she was being watched. 'She did seem precious put out about it; at least so the other girl says. Jane tells me she feels certain Miss Petrovitch had been crying,

her eyes were that red, and when she went into the room she and madame were at it hammer and tongs.'

'I suppose they left no message for any one who might chance to call?' Browne inquired, refusing to comment on what the girl had just told him.

'Not as I know of, sir,' the young woman replied. 'But if you will just wait a minute I'll go in and ask Mrs Jimson. She will be sure to know.'

Browne contained his patience as best he could for some five or six minutes. Then the girl returned and shook her head.

'There's no message of any sort, sir,' she said; 'at least not as Mrs Jimson knows of.'

'Thank you,' said Browne simply. 'I am much obliged to you.'

As he said it he slipped half-a-sovereign into the girl's hand. The bribe completed the effect the touch of romance, combined with his pleasing personality, to say nothing of his smart cab drawn up beside the pavement, had already produced. Not only would she have told him all she knew, but, had she dared, she would have gone so far as to have expressed her sympathy with him.

Browne was about to descend the steps, when another idea occurred to him, and he turned to the girl again.

'You do not happen to be aware of their address in Paris, I suppose?' he inquired. 'I have a particular reason for asking the question.'

'Hush, sir!' she whispered. 'If you really want to know it, I believe I can find out for you. Madame Bernstein wrote it down for Mrs Jimson, so that she could send on any letters that came for her. I know where Mrs Jimson put the piece of paper, and if you'll just wait a minute longer, I'll see if I can't find it for you and copy it out. I won't be a minute longer than I can help.'

Feeling very much as if he were guilty of a dishonourable action, Browne allowed her to depart upon her errand. This time she was somewhat longer away, but when she returned she carried, concealed in her hand, a small slip of paper. He took it from her, and once more thanking her for her kindness, returned to his cab.

'Home, Williams,' he cried to his coachman, 'and as quickly as possible. I have no time to spare.'

As the vehicle sped along in the direction of the High Street, Browne unfolded and glanced at the paper the girl had given him. Upon it, written in a clumsy hand, was the address he wanted, and which he would have fought the world to obtain.

'Madame Bernstein,' so it ran, '35 Rue Jacquarie, Paris.'

'Very good,' said Browne to himself triumphantly. 'Now I know where to find them. Let me see! They were to leave London in an hour from nine o'clock; that means that they started from Victoria and are travelling *via* Newhaven and

Dieppe. Now, there's a train from Charing Cross, *via* Dover and Calais, at eleven. If I can catch that I shall be in Paris in an hour and a half after them.'

He consulted his watch anxiously, to find that he had barely an hour in which to pack his bag and to get to the station. However, if it could be done he was determined to do it; accordingly he bade his man drive faster. Reaching Park Lane, he rang for his valet, and when that somewhat stolid individual put in an appearance, bade him pack a few necessities and be ready to start for the Continent at once. Being a well-drilled servant, and accustomed, by long usage, to his master's rapid flittings from place to place, the man offered no comment, but merely saying, 'Very good, sir,' departed to carry out his instructions.

Two minutes to eleven found Browne standing upon the platform at Charing Cross Station. It was not until he was comfortably installed in the carriage and the train was rolling out of the station that the full meaning of what he was doing struck him. Why was he leaving England? Why, to follow this girl. And why? Why, for one very good reason—*because he loved her!* But why *should* he have loved her, when, with his wealth, he could have married the daughter of almost any peer in England; when, had he so desired, he could have chosen his wife from among the most beautiful or most talented women in Europe? Katherine Petrovitch, attractive and charming as she was, was neither as beautiful, as rich, nor as clever as a hundred he had met. And yet she was the one woman in the world he desired for his wife.

So concerned was he about her that, when they reached Dover, his first thought was to examine the sea in order to convince himself that she had had a good crossing. He boarded the steamer, the lines were cast off, and presently the vessel's head was pointing for the Continent. Little by little the English coast dropped behind them and the shores of France loomed larger. Never before had the coast struck him as being so beautiful. He entered the train at Calais with a fresh satisfaction as he remembered that every revolution of the wheels was bringing him closer to the woman he loved. The lights were lit in the cafés and upon the boulevards when he reached Paris and was driven through the crowded streets in the direction of the hotel he usually affected.

Familiar as he was with the city, it seemed altogether different to him to-night. The loungers in the courtyard of the hotel, the bustling waiters, the very chamber-maids, served to remind him that, while in the flesh he was still the same John Grantham Browne, in the spirit he was an altogether separate and distinct individual from the man they had previously known. On reaching his own room he opened the window, leant out, and looked upon Paris by night. The voice of the great city spoke to him, and greeted him as if with the

sweetest music. Once more he was sharing the same city with Katherine Petrovitch, breathing the same air, and hearing the same language.

Shutting the window at last, he washed off the stains of travel, changed his attire, and descended to the dining-hall.

Having no desire to lose time, he resolved to institute inquiries at once about the Rue Jacquarie, and to seek, and if possible to obtain, an interview with Katherine before she could possibly depart from Paris again. How was he to know that Madame Bernstein's plans might not necessitate another removal to Rome, Berlin, or St Petersburg?—in which case he might very easily lose sight of her altogether. He had never trusted madame, and since her departure from England he was even less disposed to do so than before. There was something about her that he did not altogether appreciate. He had told himself that he did not like her the first day he had met her at Merok, and he was even more convinced of the fact now. What the link was between the two women he could not think, and he was almost afraid to attempt to solve the mystery.

Dinner at an end, he rose and went to his room to put on a cloak. In love though he was, he had still sufficient of his father's prudence left to be careful of his health.

Descending to the courtyard once more, he called a fiacre, and when the man had driven up, inquired whether he knew where the Rue Jacquarie was. The man looked at him with some show of surprise.

'Oui, m'sieu,' he replied, 'I know the Rue Jacquarie, of course; but'—

'Never mind any buts,' Browne replied as he jumped into the cab. 'I have business in the Rue Jacquarie, so drive me there at once.'

'To what number?' the man inquired, in a tone that implied that he was not over-anxious for the job.

'Never mind the number,' said Browne; 'drive me to the corner and set me down there.'

The man whipped up his horse, and they started *viâ* the Rue Tronchet. Turning into the Rue St Honoré, and thence into the Place de la Madeleine, they proceeded in the direction of Montmartre. For some time Browne endeavoured to keep tally of the route. Eventually, however, he was obliged to relinquish the attempt in despair. From one street they passed into another, and to Browne it seemed that every one was alike. At last the driver stopped his horse.

'This is the Rue Jacquarie,' he said, pointing with his whip down a long and somewhat dingy thoroughfare.

Browne bade him wait for him, and then proceeded down the street on foot in search of No. 35. After the magnificent quarter of the city in which he had installed himself, the Rue Jacquarie seemed mean and contemptible in the extreme. The houses were small and dingy, and it was plain that they were occupied by people who were not the possessors of any conspicuous degree of wealth. He walked the whole length of the street in search of No. 35, and, not finding it, returned upon the other side. At last he discovered the house he wanted. He thereupon crossed the road, and standing on the opposite pavement, regarded it steadfastly.

Lights shone from three of the windows, and Browne's pulses beat more quickly as he reflected that it was just possible one of them might emanate from Katherine's room.

It was now close upon ten o'clock, and if all had gone well with them the girl should now have been in Paris some three hours. It was extremely unlikely that after such a journey she would have gone out, so that he had every reason for feeling certain she must be in the house before him. In spite of the thin rain that was falling, he stood and watched the building for some minutes. Once a woman's shadow passed across a blind upon the second floor, and Browne felt his heart leap as he saw it. A few moments later a man and a woman passed the concierge. They paused upon the doorstep to wish some one within 'good-night;,' then, descending the steps, they set off in the same direction in which Browne himself had come. Before doing so, however, they turned and looked up and down the street, as if they were afraid they might be observed. Seeing Browne watching the house, they hastened their steps, and presently disappeared down a side thoroughfare. For an ordinary observer this little event might have had little or no significance; but to Browne, in whose mind indefinable suspicions were already shaping themselves, it seemed more than a little disquieting. That they had noticed him, and that they were alarmed by the knowledge that he was watching the house, was as plain as the lights in the windows opposite. But why they should have been so frightened was what puzzled him. What was going on in the house, or rather what had they been doing that they should fear being overlooked? He asked himself these questions as he paced down the street in the direction of his cab. But he could not answer them to his satisfaction.

'Drive me to the Amphitryon Club,' he said, as he took his place in the vehicle once more; and then continued to himself, 'I'd give something to understand what it all means.'



SEBASTOPOL TO-DAY.

By ALFRED KINNEAR.



THE official visit which the Czar Nicholas II. has recently paid to the chief Russian stronghold in the Black Sea, and the fanfare of rejoicings over the renaissance which it celebrated, must have awakened some stirring memories. A brief sketch of the Sevastopol, or Sebastopol, of to-day, drawn also from a recent visit, may not be without interest. To the vast majority of Englishmen the comparatively restricted territory known as the Crimea is a *terra incognita*; yet to hundreds, and, indeed, thousands of the survivors of the middle fifties the great historic campaign must ever awaken sensitive memories of a long and heroic struggle. But while beyond the reach of the average British traveller, and known in a vague way to others, the region in which high military reputations found their cradle and others their grave has been brought by the resources of steam, then nearly in its infancy, almost to our doors. In that campaign—the final scene of all in the pomp and majesty of England's stately line of battleships—London was removed by many days from Sebastopol, and the road was beset by manifold dangers and delays. To-day the traveller in almost as many hours, and with a minimum of delay or peril and a maximum of comfort, may traverse the road.

Travellers—Russian as well as English—staying at Sebastopol, or detained over Sunday, have a pleasant way of taking a droschky-drive out to the heights of Balaklava or into the famous 'Valley of Death' between luncheon and dinner. The drive is over high rolling ground swept by the breeze anon from the sea and now from the stately Chersonese. It is for both nations classic ground. To the Russians of Odessa and the north it is the Riviera of the Black Sea. Yet rising high above its fine spring and autumn climate, and its manifold natural attractions, is the memory of that death-struggle—that Crimean Waterloo—which no Russian soldier can ever forget or wholly forgive. As one steams round the bluff red cliffs of Balaklava Bay, to quote James Grant, the Russian officers on board the Black Sea mail-boat will gather to the side and talk in low tones of the famous war and the destruction by the hand of Heaven of the great English armada.

The British officer, for an expenditure of eighty kopeks, may ride over the great entrenchments, and in four hours cover a region which it cost England millions of money, and years of time and almost countless lives, to circumvent. It is when one takes this drive and looks over the relatively limited field of the campaign that the real tenacity and genius of the Russian defences come upon us.

Sebastopol, again, that epic in military defence—

what a gem of the Orient, as we see it in the calm of peace!—Sebastopol as seen from the sea in the flush of a fine spring or autumn morning, and again when the westerling sun bathes the white buildings and the cream-hued forts in a golden glow, looks supremely lovely. It is a scene of broken beauty, of white dome and green slopes, rising from a sea of deepest blue. Two new forts have taken the place of those that gave our admirals so much trouble and baffled the ingenuity of our gunners and submarine miners. Two hotels, of the modern 'grand' family kind, overlook the entrance to the harbour, while away and high to the left is where the great Malakoff stood.

A weird yet, to the English visitor, a deeply interesting feature of the street which flanks the harbour to the right, and contains the British Consulate, is the remains of ruined buildings apparently once of considerable size and prominence. This road was the old highway to Balaklava. It cut between the Redan and the Little Redan, and then, curving, passed through the entrenchments and amid the English lines. It was at the head of this street—straight, broad, and steep—that sharp fighting occurred. It was down this rough, ill-paved, battle-seamed, siege-torn thoroughfare that the retreating Russians hurried and the allied forces followed to seize the prize that had been won at last, and so dearly. It is up this street to-day that merry travelling parties now drive to the scene of battle. Although well-nigh half-a-century has passed since the war, the effects of the bombardment are still seen along the line we have traced. In fact, very little of that street could have been left standing when the city fell. One sees, at every step almost, deep yawning gaps where great houses, war factories, or private stores once stood. Some of these buildings must have been of great size, if not of opulent splendour; and the visitor marvels at such wreckage in the midst of palaces. The explanation is perhaps to be found in the supposition that the owners either were killed in their homes or that they fled, or never had the means of restoring their demolished property. Further, it will be remembered that the Treaty of Paris practically provided against the restoration of the city. At any rate there is the wreck in the midst of the renaissance, historical if not living testimony to the vigour of British artillery or the fire-dealing power of our mortars. Some of the buildings succumbed to our cannon; some were fired by our shell.

Even in the glory of restoration the surviving ruins remind one of bits of old Jerusalem or of Damascus. One of the most striking remains, to my mind, is to be found in the outer posts of what I should take to have been a restau-

rant or *café-chantant*; for upon one of the pillars, quite legible under a thin smearing of whitewash, which it has preserved while not wholly effacing, is a small placard or playbill bearing the date '1854,' and announcing an entertainment while Britain's artillery was thundering at the gates of the beleaguered city. But this is a touch of cynicism which every great siege produces. Sebastopol remained until 1870 practically as the bombardment had left it. Then, when France, one of the Powers signatory to the Treaty of Paris, had been crushed by the war with Germany, the Czar Alexander tore up the treaty, laid the foundations of the Black Sea Fleet; he and his successor gradually rebuilt Sebastopol, restored the arsenal, added a great shipbuilding establishment; and that is why Russia rejoices to-day. This is why Fort Constantine looks like the creation of yesterday, while the still remaining ruins here and there testify to the disasters of the Crimean war.

To my mind the defence of Sebastopol was much finer than the assault; and in the museum, most reverently maintained by the Russian Government, we obtain glimpses both of the character of the assault and the stubborn nature of the defence. Even now one may distinguish the great clamps that held the iron cables thrown across the harbour. The museum is full of relics of the great struggle—Russian, British, French, and Turkish.

One may trace the course of the campaign in a fine ground-plan in relief; and any one wandering about the entrenchments has only to scratch the surface of the earth with a walking-stick to bring up bullets, round-shot, fragments of shell, broken sabres and pistols and helmets, and remains of uniforms, with human bones. Comparatively recently a Scotch gentleman added to the museum the plumed bonnet of one of the 'Forty-Twas.' When picked up the bonnet contained the head of one who had been a giant, for the trunk of a Highlander, six feet to an inch, lay ten or twelve yards away. The head had been taken off by a shell, cut as clean from the neck as if severed with an axe. It was one of the relics of the Alma—of that magnificent charge of the Highland Brigade, which will live if for nothing else but Colin Campbell's impetuous order: 'The wounded will lie where they fall.' There was no time for halts or individual efforts in the cause of mercy.

The Russian authorities in Sebastopol, now a great naval dockyard 'up to date,' while jealous of their secrets, are courteous enough to strangers, who are permitted to see a good deal. The city has an interest especially for English travellers on its historical account; but as a thing of beauty, quite apart from its potentialities, it is a gem in a very exquisite example of Nature's setting.

MR BRAITHWAITE'S PERPLEXITY.

CHAPTER II.



IT was about a month afterwards. Mr Braithwaite was leaving home. Every year he took a fortnight's holiday in London by himself. It was during Convocation, and it was generally supposed that he was attending the meetings and assisting at ecclesiastical matters of that kind. During his absence a *locum tenens* took the Sunday duty, and Mrs Braithwaite, a host in herself, administered the parish with untiring zeal.

The Rector was not sorry that the day of his departure had arrived. The house had been a good deal upset lately, and once when he had been away for the day he found a dressmaker had had possession of the study; and there was a litter of frocks and other paraphernalia of the kind upon some of the chairs.

For Maggie was engaged to be married. It was a most satisfactory match—a young squire of the neighbourhood who had loved her from a child. His parents were dead, and he had an unimpeachable rent-roll. A nice fellow in every way. No one had anything to say of him but praise. He was a churchwarden, and subscribed to everything with a free hand. He looked after

his tenants. He hunted a little. He shot a good deal.

But the chief thing in its favour was Mrs Braithwaite's frame of mind. There was a respite from battling with the misdeeds of others such as had not been for many years. The parish was well-behaved. No one neglected his duties. With the servants there was no fault to find. Even the animals felt the difference. The dogs ventured once or twice into the drawing-room, and the cat crept on to the new velvet-pile arm-chair.

The trousseau was rather too obtrusive, no doubt, and the arrangements for the wedding were a little fatiguing towards the end. But not once had the Rector been taken to task for visiting the wrong sick baby, or asking after the husband of the young woman who had never had a husband of any kind. He felt particularly cheerful; and then, too, during the last month he had made great strides. Not with Kitty, to be sure. He never had got on with her. She generally eyed him distrustfully from a distance, and if he came upon her in the garden, she was still inclined to run the other way.

But Maggie had been charmingly forthcoming.

Acting up to her new rôle, she had asked his opinion on different matters, and had come into the library to talk to him from time to time. Once or twice she had thrust her pretty little arm within his as he strolled down his favourite walk in the garden, between the sweet-peas and the purple clematis which flanked the path in festoons on either side. He felt more than ever regretful that he had not made use of his opportunities before.

And now he should not see her again till just before the wedding.

He had packed his portmanteau, and the carriage was coming round to take him to the station in half-an-hour. He sighed a little to himself as he arranged some papers in a drawer and put away a few things he did not care to leave about.

He had left the door open, but his back was turned to it, and he did not notice for a moment that some one had come in. Then, suddenly looking up, he saw that it was Maggie. He noticed that she was pale, and there was an appearance about her eyes as if she had shed tears not long ago.

'I wish you weren't going away, father,' she said as she came and stood by the writing-table beside him. As she spoke she fidgeted the letter-clip up and down.

The Rector looked surprised. He was not accustomed to regret at his departure. It was generally welcomed by the servants for a suspension of late dinner, and by Mrs Braithwaite for house-cleaning and purposes of that kind.

'I think it is one's duty to take a change,' said the Rector a little apologetically. 'I didn't think my absence would be regretted by anybody.'

'Well, you see, father, when you come back it will be just before the wedding—and it all feels—so—so'— Her voice shook and the tears stood in her eyes.

Her father stopped sorting the papers in his hand. 'I don't understand,' he said in a bewildered sort of way. He sat down in his chair.

'I don't know how to—explain,' said Maggie piteously as she put a small embroidered handkerchief to her eyes.

He looked at her for a moment in silence. 'You mean to say—you are not happy?' he asked at length.

The girl flushed. Then suddenly she flung herself down upon the ground and laid her pretty, fair head against his knee.

'No—I don't want to marry anybody—not anybody at all. I don't want to— Oh father, can't you understand?'

'This is very serious,' said the Rector as he grimly stroked her hair. He looked at the clock. There were only a few minutes more before it would be time for him to start. He wished she

had chosen a little earlier in the day. After making his arrangements and fixing his train nothing had ever stopped him before.

What should he do?

'You are a little upset. It is a great step in one's life, I know,' he said at last. 'But you will have a very good husband. I would not have consented'— he faltered a moment before her gaze—'no, I would not have consented,' he repeated firmly, 'if I had not been sure of that.'

'I know he's good; but he—I don't think I really—I don't really love him. Does it matter, do you think?'

She looked at him questioningly through a mist of tears.

The Rector fidgeted with his keys. He foresaw a prospect of agitating days and sleepless nights before which his spirit quailed. The secret joys before him, the great orchid show, and the wonderful new tulips gleamed luringly ahead. He would miss all this if he stayed.

'Does it matter marrying—when one only just likes a person—just enough to—to kiss them sometimes—if one has to,' went on his daughter inexorably.

The Rector rose from his chair. He kept his eyes steadfastly away from the clock. As he turned them in the opposite direction they fell upon the portrait of his dead wife. She looked at him from out of the long-past years.

He stopped. He came and stood in front of the girl, and laid his hand upon her shoulder.

'Yes, it does matter,' he said slowly. 'It matters everything in the world. It must be broken off.'

He could hear the sound of the carriage-wheels coming round. His portmanteau was being carried downstairs. . . . He went to the door.

'Mason,' he said to the servant outside, 'tell Davis I have put off going away to-day. Tell him to take the carriage round.'

'Oh father, you mustn't stay for me!' cried the girl; 'you have never missed going on the same day before.'

'Because I've neglected my duties for seventeen years it is no reason for going on doing so,' said the Rector a little testily. Even a martyrdom has its irritating moments.

'Dear child,' he went on quite quietly, 'some day you will know what real love means. Till then, wait. Nothing makes up for the lack of it; it is at best a covered-up misery without.'

'But mother—what will she say? I daren't tell mother. Father, couldn't we run away?'

The Rector smiled grimly. In his heart of hearts there was nothing he would like better than to run away. As his thoughts flew back down the vista of his past life, he saw himself, in a sense, continually running away. There were other kinds than the merely physical performance.

'Don't worry yourself, dear; leave it to me,' he said at last. 'I will talk to your mother about it.'

'She will be very—angry,' said the girl. She was knotting her handkerchief nervously in her fingers.

'I know,' said the Rector firmly. 'Dear child,' he went on after a pause, 'I am beginning to perceive I might have been a different father to you, if I had had more courage and been less selfish over my'— He paused a moment and then went on: 'Anyhow, I can begin now. I will manage it for you. I will tell your mother to-night when she returns from the flower-show.'

'Will you write to—to—Charlie?' said the girl hesitatingly.

The Rector looked at her in silence for a moment. 'I think that will be your part,' he said; 'the only right course is to write and explain to him yourself.'

'Oh dear! it is all so dreadful. What shall I do?'

The Rector pulled himself together. He made her sit down. He talked for another half-hour, and had the satisfaction of perceiving that when she left him she was in a more composed frame of mind. When it was all over he sank into his low reading-chair and shut his eyes. He felt as if he had gone through some severe

and unaccustomed physical task. Nor was it over. There was a horrible dread at his heart of work still to be done. The facing of Mrs Braithwaite loomed alarmingly near. He remembered the few occasions, in the past, on which he had done so, and felt that they had taken years off his life.

And yet it must be done.

At last the carriage-wheels were heard; and, feeling too nervous to await her approach, he forestalled the parlour-maid and went to the hall door to let her in.

He noticed by her face that something was amiss. He had learned to read her face. Though she looked surprised to see him, there was evidently something on her mind which excluded an interest in any other matter.

'Herbert,' she said, the spring of the *vis-à-vis* going up in a little bound as she alighted— 'Herbert, you still here? Well, never mind; I've something important to tell you; so come into the library, and shut the door.'

He followed her down the passage, noting particularly the solid, set look of her capacious shoulders, upon which the little lace fichu which she wore over her best Sunday silk appeared apologetically inadequate.

INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION AT HOME AND ABROAD.



WITHIN recent years industrial education has come to demand much attention in this country. It is now admitted that more than a mere elementary education, such as is to be had in the primary schools, is required to fit the average youth for the battle of life. But, besides this, there is another consideration, which many regard as of vastly more importance than the first: it is that, if Great Britain is not to be gradually but surely ousted from the world's markets by her foreign rivals, for one thing her artisans must be taught to take an intelligent interest in their work, and must be able to direct their energies to perfecting it. The movement in the direction of industrial—but more especially technical—education had its beginnings before the latter consideration received much attention, in the establishment of a few technical schools, mostly in London.

General interest was only aroused to the importance of the subject in 1881, when a royal commission appointed to consider it brought out the fact that this country was far behind the Continent and the United States in this respect. The Government seriously took the matter in hand. In that year was passed the Technical Instruction Act, and in the following year the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise Duties) Act. The first act defined technical education as (1) instruction in

science and art applicable to industries; (2) the application of special branches of science and art to specific industries; and (3) other kinds of instruction which may be approved by the Science and Art Department, and are stated by the local authorities to be required by the circumstances of their district. By the same act county councils, town councils, or other local authorities were permitted to levy a rate not exceeding one penny in the pound for the purposes of technical education. By the Local Taxation Act a tax on spirits was raised for the benefit of local authorities, giving them permission to use the whole or part of it for the same purpose.

Meanwhile technical education had been making rapid progress in London, and in 1884 the Central Institution at South Kensington was opened, having been built and equipped at a cost of £100,000. The education given at the Institution is, however, of a higher grade than the usual technical instruction. Students are qualified to become mechanical, civil, and electrical engineers, superintendents and managers in various kinds of industries, and technical teachers. Besides this and numerous other institutions more or less fully equipped for the teaching of technical, industrial, and manual subjects, there are the institutions known as Polytechnics. Up to 1891 there were only the Regent Street Polytechnic and the People's Palace; now there are eleven. At these

places instruction in almost every branch of technology, science, and art, and in industrial and manual subjects, is given, from the most elementary to the highest stages.

In other parts of the country the development of technical education has been almost as equally rapid as in London. Besides special colleges in the chief cities, there is hardly a town or other centre of population in which facilities are not given for technical instruction of some kind.

In addition to the money raised under the two acts already mentioned, funds for the support of technical education are drawn from the rates levied under the Public Libraries Act, from endowments, fees, &c. The estimated total expenditure of public money on technical education in the United Kingdom for the year 1895-6 was £793,507.

Technical instruction is carried on in both day and evening schools. In day schools, for pupils who desire to give their whole time to study, every kind of technical, commercial, and sometimes industrial or manual instruction is given. Some of the pupils at these schools study up to the age of eighteen before taking to practical work. Most of those who do this, however, intend to follow such occupations as mechanical or electrical engineering, chemical or textile manufactures, or agriculture, where the processes involved demand a comparatively wide knowledge of science. Much of the advanced work of such pupils is done in fully equipped laboratories and workshops, such as all colleges have. In the evening classes, mainly for those who work during the day, facilities are given for the study of science and art as applied to their daily work, and for the acquisition of a commercial education.

The kind of technical or industrial education in any particular district depends very much upon the industries there predominant. In the cotton districts of Lancashire and Cheshire, for instance, among other things the principles of cotton-weaving and spinning are taught; in dairy counties such as Cambridge, Berks, &c., dairy-work, bee-keeping, horticulture, &c.; and in such iron districts as Warwickshire and Staffordshire, mechanical engineering, iron and steel manufacture, &c.

In regard to industrial or manual training, it stands to reason that the best place in which a young man ought to learn his trade is the workshop (and some masters are prejudiced enough to look with a jaundiced eye on youths hot from the 'schools'). 'But while this is so, it is also recognised that there are many questions of materials, design, principles, and methods which it is nowadays quite impossible for a beginner to be instructed in during business hours, and which can be both more economically and more efficiently taken in hand by an organisation especially charged with such work.'

In looking at the state of industrial education abroad, our attention is naturally turned in the

first instance to Germany, which within the last few years has done so much to imperil our trade supremacy. It is said that it was the World's Fair at Philadelphia in 1876 which awakened Germany to the importance of industrial, as distinct from technical, education. The German Commissioner, Professor Reuleaux, telegraphed to Prince Bismarck that 'our goods are cheap but wretched.' Inquiries were instituted by the various German states into the causes of the industrial inferiority. They found that requisite technical knowledge was wanting among the labourers, a knowledge which could only be acquired in suitable schools, and that every industry relies upon the technical knowledge and ability accumulated by years of skilled labour for its success in the world's markets; hence that special excellence in any branch of industry is a result both of technical schooling and acquired skill. The result was that a large number of industrial schools were at once started on a systematic plan, and German industry was not long in feeling the effect. These institutions are of three kinds: elementary industrial schools, which prepare the mass of the people; secondary industrial schools, for the teaching of foremen and designers; and higher institutions or colleges, which prepare those destined for industrial leaders. Previous to 1876 there were schools of each kind already in existence; but the various states now fostered industrial education by subsidising the schools established for that purpose.

These industrial schools are both day and evening schools. As the employment of children under sixteen years of age is prohibited in factories and workshops, many communities have made attendance compulsory between the ages of fourteen and sixteen, and some of the states have made this possible by law. The state leaves to each community the choosing of the particular subjects to be taught, these being suited to the needs of the locality—agricultural or industrial, as the case may be. The secondary industrial schools are in the large industrial centres of the empire. They are chiefly schools of design, in which three-fourths of the time devoted to study is given to drawing and mathematics. Few of these schools have workshops; but the students, being mostly apprentices or journeymen artisans, can make models in their shops after designs made at school. The masters encourage this, for they often benefit by new ideas or inventions thus introduced. The whole system of industrial education is under the control of the Minister of Commerce and Industry.

No country, perhaps, has carried industrial education to more perfection than Switzerland, and there is no country in Europe which can boast of more industrial and trade schools in proportion to the population. Swiss industrial education, however, does not altogether depend upon schools. A system was experimentally started a few years

ago which had worked very well in Baden. This was the subsidising of selected master-workmen for training apprentices according to prescribed rules and regulations. The period of trial expires in this present year, and if it has proved successful, the Federal Government will grant the means to carry out the plan on a much more extended scale. The examination of apprentices is a great feature in the Swiss system. In some of the cantons the examination is obligatory, in others it is optional. About 1200 candidates are examined annually, but this number will increase as soon as obligatory examination is adopted in every canton. Switzerland is moving indirectly towards compulsory instruction for all those designing to follow industrial pursuits.

Of the higher industrial institutions of Switzerland, those of Zurich and Berne are the most noted. The school at Berne aims to teach a young man a trade; to enable those who have learned a trade in some workshop to complete their technical education, and so prepare themselves for higher positions than that of artisans; to check the immigration of skilled workmen from other countries; and to elevate the trades in general. Instruction is gratuitous. Funds are furnished, partly by the community, partly by the Federal and Cantonal Governments, and partly by the sale of the products of the shops. The graduates are examined under the rules in force for apprentices. The conviction seems to be growing in Switzerland, as it has grown in Baden, that it is better to subsidise the masters for the training of apprentices than to extend the system of trade-schools.

In Austria it is only comparatively recently that active steps have been taken to bring industrial education up to the level of neighbouring countries. As a national institution, it may be said to be in its experimental stage. Both the systems of subsidising masters and of establishing trade-schools are being tried. So successful have these so far shown themselves that it is proposed to introduce the Swiss system of examination of apprentices.

In France elementary instruction in agriculture is compulsory in rural schools; hence it is taught from the earliest school age—namely, seven. Instruction is given both by means of text-books and by simple experiments and observation. The Minister of Public Instruction says: 'The end to be attained by elementary instruction in agriculture is to give the greatest number of children in rural districts the knowledge indispensable for reading a book on modern agriculture, or attending an agricultural meeting with profit; to impress them with the love of country life and the desire not to change it for the city or manufactures; and to inculcate the truth that the agricultural profession, the most independent of all, is more remunerative than many others for industrious, intelligent, and well-instructed fol-

lowers.' For those who wish to follow agriculture as a profession there is, of course, secondary instruction.

Denmark owes its prosperity almost wholly to the perfection of its agricultural or dairy industry. Naturally, therefore, this branch of industry receives most attention. The necessary instruction is given at what are called rural high-schools. In these schools men—peasants of from eighteen to thirty years of age—spend five months of winter, and women three months of summer, 'receiving an education which leans chiefly to the human side, and gives but a secondary place to the scientific and technical side, the object being to develop the heart, mind, and will.' The leading agriculturists of Denmark hold that, apart from the advanced study of agriculture in the university stage, the spread of improved methods of farming is due more to the 'highly developed common-sense' of the Danish farmers as brought out by their rural high-school education than by any technical training in the schools.

In the United States the movement for manual instruction was inaugurated in 1865 by the starting of the Institute of Technology in Boston. In all the principal cities of the Union there are now one or more special industrial institutions, schools, or colleges. To take New York alone, there are among its institutions the New York Trade School, where instruction is given in trades exclusively; the Working-man's School, where manual training according to the latest trade methods is a special feature; the Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, the object of which is to promote manual and industrial education, as well as cultivation in literature, science, and art; and the Teachers' College, for the manual training of teachers, among other things. The Jews have two institutions in New York—the Hebrew Technical Institute and the Baron de Hirsch Trade-School, the latter for assisting Russian and Roumanian Jews to gain a knowledge of some trade and a sufficient knowledge of the English language. Most of these institutions in the great cities are either self-supporting or are supported by endowments. In 1862, colleges for the benefit of agriculture and the mechanic arts were, by act of Congress, and by further act in 1890, endowed with public lands and the proceeds arising from their sale. These two sources of revenue, amounting to about 1,500,000 dollars, do not represent the whole income; other sources are fees, state grants, &c. The total income amounts to about 5,250,000 dollars. Although previous to 1862 agricultural colleges existed in some of the states, after their endowment they rapidly increased, and now there are about fifty. While agriculture is taught in most of them, the branches of industry peculiar to each state are not neglected. In addition to these there are fourteen industrial colleges and institutes for coloured pupils; these are mostly

in the southern states. It is, however, admitted that Germany is ahead of the Republic in the matter of industrial education, and that much more requires to be done.

Great Britain does not, in regard to industrial education, compare favourably with some of the European states. Many of our schools, excellent though they be, are, strictly speaking, not industrial schools at all, or only partially so. All give instruction in science and art as applied to industries—a great number of them nothing else. Others give this instruction along with instruction in commercial subjects; others again, but they are comparatively few, combine these two branches with a more or less amount of purely industrial and manual training. The great majority of the schools are, or aim at being, secondary industrial schools; they are, in other words, technical schools. Elementary industrial education is practically neglected. The one is as important as the other. This is fully

recognised in Germany, the country above all others from which we have most to fear. There technical or secondary industrial education follows, in natural sequence, elementary industrial education, according to a sound and common-sense system, under the control of a responsible minister. We cannot be said to have a system. Local authorities are under no control except in so far that the industrial and manual subjects ('other kinds of instruction') which they may elect to teach must be approved by the Science and Art Department.

It may be hoped that the trend towards technical instruction will be aided by the proposals recently issued in a circular from the Education Department, in which recognition is asked for a distinct class of science schools, to which a grant will be given conditionally on their giving a special three years' course of instruction in experimental science, drawing, history and English literature, and means of instruction.

THE STORY OF A GREAT BULLION ROBBERY.



AT first sight the robbery of gold or silver bullion would seem one of the most hazardous of all forms of theft. The great weight and clumsiness of the 'swag,' the number of people usually employed in guarding it, and, not least, the difficulty of disposing of it when stolen render the adventure peculiarly dangerous. Perhaps, however, the very magnitude of the task, the risks attending it, and the bold and skilful combinations necessary to circumvent them possess attractions of their own to the minds of the more Napoleonic class of criminals. Certain it is that bullion is a frequent object of attack, and sometimes the thieves have managed to get clear away with their booty without leaving any clue. The impudent robbery of silver ingots in broad daylight in a London street a few years ago is no doubt still fresh in the public mind. In this case the thieves were tracked and caught. The affair presented some features unique in the history of crime, and no doubt if the police told the whole story, which did not come out at the trial of Sarti and his confederates, it would appear more surprising still. But it may be doubted whether this case equalled in romantic interest the great bullion robbery on the South-Eastern Railway over forty years ago, when gold to the value of £12,000 was stolen from the night mail on its way from London to Folkestone.

On May 15, 1855, the night mail for Folkestone and Dover left London Bridge Station with a large quantity of gold in the guard's van. The specie belonged to three firms—Messrs Abell & Co., Messrs Spielmann, and Messrs Butt—and its in-

tended destination was Paris. Every care was taken to prevent theft. The gold was contained in three boxes, each of which was bound with iron bars and had been sealed and weighed before the start. These again were placed in two iron safes fastened by Chubb locks. The safes were in ordinary use for the conveyance of bullion. Two keys were required to open each, but the same pair did for both the safes. Three sets of duplicate keys were in the possession of the railway company, one being kept in London, and another at Folkestone; the third was in the charge of the captains of the South-Eastern Railway boats. On this eventful night the safes were taken out of the train at Folkestone in the ordinary way (nothing unusual being noticed) and placed on board the boat for Boulogne. On arrival at the port the boxes were taken out and weighed. It was subsequently found that the weight here differed from the weight in London. At Paris they were weighed again, and the weight corresponded with that of Boulogne. When the boxes were opened it was discovered that £12,000 worth of gold had been abstracted and a quantity of shot substituted to make up weight. The police were at once communicated with, and made exhaustive investigations. It was obvious from the comparison of the weights at the different stoppages that the robbery must have been committed before the bullion reached Boulogne, and the impossibility of touching it while on board the boat rendered it practically certain that the gold was stolen from the train between London and Folkestone. Beyond this, however, the police could discover nothing. The thieves had decamped with £12,000, leaving not a trace behind.

The affair was soon forgotten by the majority of people, but in September 1856 public interest was revived in a singular manner. A man named Edward Agar had been convicted in October 1855 of uttering a forged cheque, and had been sentenced to transportation for life. He was at this time undergoing the preliminary imprisonment at Portland, and he now came forward and made a remarkable confession to the authorities. He declared that the bullion robbery sixteen months before was committed by himself and three accomplices—namely, William Pierce, formerly a ticket-printer in the employment of the South-Eastern Railway Company; James Burgess, guard; and George Tester, clerk in the office of the traffic superintendent of the company. The three men were arrested, and on the 13th of January 1857 their trial opened at the Old Bailey before Mr Baron Martin.

The principal witness against them was the informer, Agar. His reason for turning queen's evidence in this unexpected way was a desire to be revenged upon Pierce for the latter's conduct to a woman whom Agar had left under his care. Before his arrest Agar was living with a young woman named Fanny Kay, who had borne him a child, and of whom, despite occasional quarrels, he was passionately fond. When he was sentenced to transportation he entrusted to Pierce a sum of £3000, which he had acquired somehow before the bullion robbery, to be devoted to the maintenance of Fanny Kay and his child. But after a short time Pierce appropriated the money himself, and turned the unfortunate woman adrift. This came to the ears of Agar in Portland, and, having nothing to lose himself, he determined to repay his quondam friend's treachery by informing against him.

In the indictment Pierce was described as a grocer, imperfectly educated, and aged forty. He had been dismissed from his place as ticket-printer to the railway company in 1850. Burgess, who was aged thirty-five, and had been in the company's service as guard for thirteen years, was described as 'well educated;' and Tester, who was only twenty-six, was accorded the same description. Agar was aged forty-one, and on his own confession had made his living by crime for nearly twenty years.

The informer told his remarkable story with much coolness and obvious sincerity. He had become acquainted with Pierce about five years before, when the latter was clerk at a betting-office in King Street, Covent Garden. One day Pierce told him that it was the custom to convey gold bullion in a safe by the night train from London Bridge Station to Folkestone, and proposed that they should attempt a robbery on a large scale. Agar, however, declined, thinking the scheme impracticable. He went to America for some time, and on his return accidentally met Pierce in King Street. Pierce then asked him if

he had thought any more about the robbery. Agar replied that he believed it would be impossible to carry the thing out unless they could obtain an impression of the keys used for the safe. The two men had repeated meetings, and at last Agar told Pierce that if he could obtain the impressions he would have no objection to undertake the completion of the scheme. Pierce said he thought he could get the impressions, and explained that Burgess and Tester would be their only confederates. Burgess was already known to Agar; Tester he only knew by sight. That young man was then stationmaster at Margate, and Agar went down to see him by arrangement with Pierce, who wrote asking Tester to show the expert thief an impression of the cash-box key to see if it would be any criterion to go by in making the keys for the bullion safes. But despite the most laudable desire to advance in the profession of crime, Pierce proved himself only a novice in this affair of the keys; and Agar was obliged to tell Tester that the impression he had to show was not of the slightest use. Tester, who also seems to have had a natural taste for knavery, thereupon declared that it was a great pity Pierce had not mentioned the matter to him before, because when he (Tester) was clerk at the Folkestone Station he had the keys in his possession.

Agar returned to London without success, but in consequence of Tester's last remark it was determined that Pierce and he should go down to Folkestone and reconnoitre. They took lodgings, Agar going by the name of Adams, and gave out that they were there for the sake of the sea-bathing. This was quite twelve months before the robbery actually came off. They went down to the station and the pier regularly every day to observe the arrival of the trains and the delivery of luggage to the boats, thus making themselves acquainted with the habits of the officials. But their constant watching aroused the suspicion of the police. Pierce, whom they had particularly noticed, was obliged to go back to London, but Agar stayed behind for a few days. Then Tester introduced him to a young man named Sharman, who sometimes had charge of the keys at Folkestone, and Agar set about corrupting him; but, as the informer said in court, Sharman 'being a very sedate young man,' he could not get much information from this source. He therefore returned to town somewhat disheartened, and advised that the matter should be allowed to rest for some time.

Pierce, however, still clung to the scheme indomitably; and at last fortune smiled upon their enterprise. Tester, who had by this time been promoted to a clerkship in the office of the traffic superintendent, wrote to Pierce one day stating that one of the keys of the bullion safe was lost, and the safe had to be sent to Messrs Chubb to be refitted. Tester himself was con-

ducting the correspondence in the matter, and it was not difficult for him to get the key into his possession for a short time to take an impression of it in wax. But Agar refused to entrust such an important operation to an amateur, and so Tester was obliged to meet him and Pierce at a beer-shop in Tooley Street, bringing the key with him. Agar, under pretence that he wanted to wash his hands, went into a bedroom and took the impression with all the care and skill of an adept. Tester then managed to put the key into its place in the superintendent's office without attracting the least suspicion.

Thus, after months of waiting and disappointment, the first step in the conspiracy was achieved. But they still required an impression of the second key, and this proved a graver difficulty than any they had yet experienced. Agar, who was plentifully provided with money, having in his possession £3000, handed over to Pierce two or three hundred sovereigns, which the latter then forwarded to him by rail at Folkestone. The bogus consignment was made out to Agar under the name of Archer. That ingenious gentleman of course turned up for his gold on the arrival of the tidal train, and observed that Chapman, the official in charge, took the second key of the safe out of a cupboard in his office.

A bold stroke was then decided upon. In their previous reconnaissance at Folkestone, Pierce and Agar had noticed that on the arrival of the Boulogne boat Chapman and the other officials generally went to the pier to make arrangements connected with the transport of luggage, *leaving the office untenanted*. So one day the worthy pair again arrived at the seaside town and waited for the arrival of the boat. They then saw Chapman and a man named Ledger leave the office and make for the pier. Pierce boldly went inside, while Agar remained at the door. Pierce opened the cupboard without difficulty and took the key to his confederate, who, standing the while on the threshold, rapidly took an impression of it in wax. Pierce then replaced it in the cupboard; and, closing the door of the office, the thieves coolly walked away without attracting attention.

Now came the task of filing the keys. Agar bought several blank keys and filed them to the required shape in Pierce's house, Walnut Tree Walk, Lambeth—with such care that the operation took fully two months. Even then perfection had not been reached, and Agar actually travelled down to Folkestone with Burgess, the guard, seven or eight times in order to try the keys on the bullion safes. On each occasion they fitted more nearly, and at last the day arrived when they turned the locks with absolute ease.

The hour for making the great attempt was now close at hand. But first it was necessary to arrange for the safe conveyance of the gold after it had

been stolen. They calculated that the largest amount they could carry would be about £12,000 worth, and they spent several days in preparing courier-bags for holding the bullion. Then, as they would have to substitute something for the precious metal, to bring the boxes as far as possible up to the original weight, Pierce and Agar bought a quantity of shot. This they put up in a number of small bags, some of which were placed in the courier-bags and the rest in a large carpet-bag. A special bag of black leather was made for Tester, who was to get out of the train at Reigate, and there take some of the gold and convey it to London, so as to relieve the arch-conspirators of part of their burden. These preparations were made at Agar's house, Cambridge Villas, Shepherd's Bush; and when they were complete the bags were conveyed by cart to a house in Crown Terrace, Hampstead Road, to which Pierce had in the meantime shifted his quarters.

All was now ready for the enterprise, and the gang only waited for a night when a sufficient quantity of bullion was being despatched to make the robbery worth their while. But as they could not find this out till the last moment, they had to go to the London Bridge Station for several nights before a proper chance arrived. Pierce and Agar would drive in a cab to St Thomas's Street, near the station, some time before the train started. Pierce, who was disguised in a black wig and false whiskers, wore a big cloak, under which he carried some of the bags. Agar also had a cloak. He took it off, however, and went up to the station to meet Tester, who told him whether any gold was going down that night. As already stated, this programme was rehearsed for five or six nights before the great opportunity occurred.

At last, on the night of the eventful 15th, as Agar was hanging around the station, the guard, Burgess, came out and wiped his face. This was the appointed signal to indicate that bullion was going down with the train. Burgess went back to his duties. Agar summoned Pierce hastily, and getting two first-class tickets for Dover, gave one to his confederate. Pierce thereupon got into a carriage. But Agar waited about, and choosing his opportunity, managed to jump into the guard's van unobserved. Burgess then carefully covered him with an apron. Tester was in another part of the train.

After the train had started Agar threw off his covering and proceeded swiftly with the work of removing the bullion, which on this night was contained in two safes. He opened one with the keys and took out a wooden box. This he carefully prised open with his tools and took out four bars of gold. One bar he placed in Tester's bag, and gave it to Burgess to be handed out at Reigate. The other three he placed in the carpet-bag. Then he put shot into the box in place of the gold. The train by this time had reached Reigate, and

Agar went under cover again. Tester got out and received the black bag from Burgess, and once more the train sped on its way. Agar got up and opened the second box, which was in the same safe, and took therefrom a quantity of American gold pieces, again substituting shot for the metal abstracted. He then fastened down both boxes, and sealed them down as they were when they started. He locked the safe and opened the other. This contained only one box, which he found filled with small bars of gold. He took as many of these as he thought he had sufficient shot to replace, and then fastened the box up again and locked the safe.

Both the safes were removed by the railway officials at Folkestone, without suspicion, and placed on the Boulogne boat. Agar and Pierce, however, went right on to Dover. Arrived there, Agar walked at once to the harbour and threw the keys and the rest of his tools into the sea. Then the successful thieves went to a hotel, giving out that they had come to Dover from somewhere in the adjacent district, and that they were going up to London by the 2 A.M. train. Before they started they managed to take the gold out of the carpet-bag and place it in the courier-bags attached to their persons, and when they got back to London they left the carpet-bag behind in the waiting-room.

The gold was taken to Pierce's house, where they were joined by Tester with his share of the spoil. Pierce sold the American coins to money-changers, getting in return as much as £400. Then they removed the bullion to Agar's house at Cambridge Villas, and, extemporising a furnace in one of the upper rooms, they melted the whole of it and ran it into ingots. Agar then began cautiously to sell it, receiving about £3 an ounce. An interesting fact came out in his evidence—namely, that the first person to whom he sold some of the bullion was James Saward, better known as 'Jim the Penman.' This Saward was a remarkable character. He was a barrister of the Inner Temple, and Agar himself said he had seen him pleading in Westminster Hall. Saward appeared at the bar of the Old Bailey in the following March, charged with the commission of an astounding series of skilful forgeries in the City—which were actually beginning to affect the security of the entire mercantile community—and was sentenced to transportation for life.

Other means of disposing of the gold, however, were also found, and one day Burgess and Tester visited Cambridge Villas to share in the first division of the spoil, each of the conspirators receiving from £600 to £700. But before Agar could dispose of any more of the gold he was arrested on the charge of uttering the forged cheque, and was sent to prison. He understood that the rest of the gold, which was unsold, was buried by Pierce in a hole in his pantry under

the front steps of a house at Kilburn to which he had removed from Hampstead Road. The newspaper reports of the day do not say whether this treasure was ever recovered.

In telling his strange narrative Agar made manifest the animosity he bore towards Pierce; but the details he gave were so clear and convincing, and were corroborated so strongly by the evidence of independent witnesses, that, though the prisoners were defended by some of the ablest counsel of the day, the jury without hesitation brought in a verdict of guilty. Burgess and Tester, who were charged with stealing the property of their employers, were sentenced to fourteen years' transportation. Unfortunately the arch-conspirator and worst rascal of the gang managed to get off more lightly. Not being in the employment of the railway company at the time, he could only be proceeded against for simple larceny. For this he got the maximum penalty—two years' imprisonment with hard labour, the first three months to be passed in solitary confinement. But in sentencing him the judge denounced his conduct to Fanny Kay in the most scathing terms, and ordered the £3000 which he had appropriated to be restored to the woman. As for Agar, he had been made to understand from the first that his confession would bring him no remission of the sentence which had already been passed upon him, and therefore he went back once more to the hulks.

AN INDIAN LULLABY.

Pocahontas, Powhatan's dearest Jewell and Daughter, in that darke nighte came through the irksome woodes . . . and brought them so much Provision that saved many of their Lives. . . . The Loue of Pocahontas so revived their dead spirits, that all men's Fear was abandoned.

Thus from numbe Death our goode God sent reliefe. The sweet Assuager of all other grieffe.—*Generall Historie of Virginia*, CAPT. JOHN SMITH, *Sometime Governor*.

Rest ! rest ! rest !

The south wind sighs in the pine-tree's crest,
The dewdrop sleeps in the rose's breast,
The curtains of Night are over the west—
The beautiful west.

Ye have won your way from the fiery east ;
From danger and toil ye stand released.
Yield ye now to the charm possessed
By the dwellers within the dreamy west—
The beautiful west.

Sleep ! sleep ! sleep !
See ! to our feet the moonbeams creep ;
By the waves of that silver tide caressed,
We shall float through the gates of the mystic west—
The beautiful west.

ANTONIA KENNEDY-LAURIE DICKSON.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

KNIGHTS OF THE BRUSH.

By T. H. S. ESCOTT, Author of *Personal Forces of the Period*, &c.



IX miles of very awkward walking it is (or in the later seventies was) from the little inn at Sligachan to the famous Loch Coruisk in the Isle of Skye. Parenthetically one may observe that, as Macaulay invests the valley of Glencoe with a gloom not specially characteristic of the actual spot, so did the eye of Sir Walter Scott see in this sheet of Hebridean water a closer resemblance than the prosaic eye would detect to the Avernian lake. Coruisk is indeed desolate enough from its situation, but not absolutely awe-inspiring. Seated by these waters at the date mentioned was an artist whom, during part of his walk, the present writer had accompanied. I had lagged behind; by the time the loch was reached, Vicat Cole had not only unpacked his artist's materials, but had nearly completed his sketch. With a puzzled rather than an appreciative look, a shock-headed Highland shepherd-boy was, as I approached, watching the painter's progress for some time in stony silence. At last the urchin found his voice with: 'Ay! But it's nothing to compare with MacWhirter.' He had seen, like every one in that part of the world, if not the original, a copy of John MacWhirter's very powerful landscape. The lad knew that artist, though a native of distant Midlothian, to be a compatriot. He inferred from the appearance of the later painter that he was but a Sassenach tourist with colours and brush. Local opinion elsewhere was more favourable to the rendering of the Skye lake by the well-known painter of Surrey landscapes. A few days later we were in Portree together. One after another the art-loving among the inhabitants called at our inn to see the presentation by an English brush of that Hebridean spot, which—to every Scotsman scarcely less a national idol than Sir Walter himself—John MacWhirter had already immortalised.

After the Skye days I again met Vicat Cole in
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the Arts Club in London, to which at that time we both belonged. Never, surely, were goodlier representatives of the painter's craft collected within the same space than in those days inside that pleasant and pretty house at the corner of Hanover Square. Vicat Cole himself was a remarkably well-looking man, powerfully and symmetrically built. His tawny beard was a welcome and familiar feature at most artistic and literary gatherings of that period. I have not entered the club for several years; its internal fittings and arrangements may have changed since I saw them. Those who would know what they were then like cannot do better than look up the social sketches of art-life in London by John Leech or George du Maurier in back-numbers of *Punch*; for the scene wherein the brethren of the brush are drawn is without exception this pleasant haunt. Gone are nearly all of that group; the most impressive of them always seemed the late Field Talfourd. With his white locks surrounding a most noble countenance, seated in his arm-chair in the smoking-drawing-room, with its comfortably unclublike furniture, Field Talfourd appeared the king as well as, by seniority he probably was, the father of the place. During his later years his brush often lay idle; in his day he had painted the portraits of most social personages. While thus professionally engaged he had stayed at every house worth visiting in the kingdom, and had known every person of note; beyond any artist the present writer has ever met he excelled in the gift of pleasant conversational reminiscences. Talfourd, indeed, many years earlier, had been seen by the present writer. Together with George Cattermole, he visited at town and country houses where in early youth it was my lot often to be. Cattermole was then, or had lately been, engaged on his fine illustrations to 'The Waverley Novels.' Still overflowing with interest in that task, this great artist and kindly man would delight his young

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friends by the hour together with giving them in his own words the chief points of the stories his drawings embellished; still full of the spots he had visited, described by Sir Walter, he would accompany this talk with recollections of his own itinerary.

Set in the framework of the Arts Club building is a memory bringing several great men together under its roof. Sir Edwin Landseer was then still living, not, I think, very long since having completed his Trafalgar Square lions. He had, whether as guest or member, found his way into the club, to sit at dinner nearly opposite the table whereat a great artist with the pen was then dining. Charles Dickens the younger was a regular *habitué* of the place. On the occasion now mentioned he had brought with him to dinner his famous father; the other occupant of the table being the old family and personal friend of Dickens, also an artist of knightly bearing, the present Marcus Stone, R.A. Later in the evening the painters already mentioned, the nobly picturesque Field Talfourd, Cole, Landseer of the leonine face, and Stone himself, were seated together. It was a notable little company; it visibly impressed the observing imagination of the novelist, who seemed almost disposed to make an obeisance before the venerable presence of his old friend the great animal-painter, as with some admiring murmur on his lips he placed his arm in his son's, and so passed out of the club.

The period of social and commercial prosperity for the painter, the most characteristic growth of Victorian times, was, in those far-off days, only beginning. Few were the men who made a large and regular income by their pencil or brush; remarkable, as one looks back upon it, seem the amount and quality of artistic genius then available but precariously recognised. Thus, during the later sixties, improvements then comparatively recent in the engraver's art coincided with the development of much undoubted genius among black-and-white artists, never fully appreciated at the time, now mostly forgotten, but still of interest to record. Book or magazine illustration, as it is understood to-day, seemed then in its infancy; it was undoubtedly helped forward in its way by Tom Hood the younger. This busy *littérateur* inherited not only some of his father's humour, but also his keen eye for artistic effects with pen and pencil. As periodical editor, the younger Hood gathered round him and introduced to the public several artists of merit and mark, though their names were writ in water. A young Irishman of most sweet and gentle disposition, as well as of most delicate fancy, Paul Gray, delighted his friends with a vein of humour and philosophic irony in his talk that, under happier circumstances, would have won him London fame as a conversationalist. The early death caused by weak lungs prevented his rare powers as a car-

toonist from ever reaching maturity. Frederick Walker was allowed more time by Fate for making his name known. But in respect of the delicate sense of beauty suffusing all their pictures, as well as tinged with irony, expressing itself in their casual talk, the two men, in spite of many differences, naturally suggest each other.

At the date now referred to there first visibly began that improvement in the worldly fortunes of art which, with some vicissitudes, but upon the whole steadily and progressively, has continued to the present day. Gradually the art-teachers exchanged their dingy little houses in Bloomsbury for semi-detached villas in breezy St John's Wood or still more spacious premises in courtly Kensington. But within the present writer's recollection, in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, there was pointed out a deserted tenement as the original home of 'Gandish, R.A.', to whom 'Colonel Newcome' took 'Clive.' Gandish in the flesh was, or during the forties had been, Henry Sass, the first teacher of John Everett Millais. Probably of that identity no doubt exists. But another well-known art-teacher, Leigh, lived about the same time in Newman Street. His son, a very clever writer of society verse, whom I knew well, clung to the belief that his father and not Sass might have been the original of him who Thackeray immortalised. Talking once to me on the personal forces which have made the career of the modern artist, Millais, I remember, gave a foremost place to the black-and-white work of John Leech and of other pencils in *Once a Week*, first started as a rival to *Household Words*. Absolutely the first rank was assigned by Millais to D. G. Rossetti. That artist I had only just met. But I can recall, as it were yesterday, the most brilliant and original conversation which I ever heard between that master and two of his disciples—the consummate draughtsman, colourist, and variously gifted Frederic Sandys, one of my oldest friends in literary or artistic London, and the poet Algernon Charles Swinburne. It was a meeting much to be remembered, for each one of these able men talked at his ease, therefore at his best. The conversation might be described as a luminous and original running commentary on various phases, episodes, and masters of the brush or pen since painting and writing became arts. Probably no man of our day ever possessed so gifted and devoted a band of friends and disciples as Dante Gabriel Rossetti. His personal influence seemed so magnetic and diffusive as to transform his friends and pupils into his mouth-pieces. Not perhaps consciously, but still, as they would have been the first to admit, the central thoughts which inspired their conversation and their life came originally from him of whom they often spoke as 'the master.' Before Rossetti died he saw that the material fortunes

of the art to which he had given so much of intellectual prestige and social vogue were permanently secured.

Of that success the houses of Leighton and Millais in South Kensington were the picturesque and triumphant embodiments. Both men were in their way perfect hosts; but their methods of hospitality were as different as their persons and their views of life. In his appearance, habit, distinction of manner, and splendour of talk, Leighton ever seemed an Italian noble of rare stateliness and culture, born out of his place and time. Disraeli's sketch, therefore, of him as 'Gaston Phœbus' in *Lothair* is scarcely a caricature. Leighton had not, I think, anything unreal or artificial about him. But the man was so completely merged in the artist, and the artist lived so entirely, not only in his art, but with the great Italian masters of other days, as almost unconsciously to pitch his casual talk in a key too high for the ordinary society of his own day. In 'Sir Piercie Shafton' this was called euphuism; in Frederick Leighton it was the unpremeditated desire of the great artist in colours to show himself equally an artist in words. That he might avoid the trivial or the commonplace in thought, he deliberately employed a phraseology which, by a sort of self-action, did not lend itself to be the medium of mere trivialities. Nothing could be more graceful or more honourable to both these great and noble-minded men than the temper of respect for commanding genius, combined with the regard and personal affection which, in their social intercourse, did not, indeed, cause Millais to stand on ceremony with Leighton, but did tinge the manner of the one towards the other with something of the manly homage that the great and kindly artist who succeeded Leighton at the Royal Academy could not have withheld from the man he admired and loved. 'Unspoiled by fame' was the expression applied to Millais by his brothers of the brush; it passed into a proverb, and exactly described the man at each successive stage of his career. To the last he was the same Jack Millais, with his old briar-root pipe and well-worn shooting-coat for choice. His work seldom permitted him to dine out; when he did so dine, it was always for choice with a friend at the 'Garriick' or some crony of other days who, having gone through long storm and stress like Millais himself, had now reached the haven of home comfort. 'A dear, good fellow' was the description given by his successor of the earlier president. But to Leighton state occasions and social or civic pageants were as congenial as Millais found the homelier intercourse of everyday friendship. The goodness and benignity of the two men were the same; it was their artistic temper which differently coloured the social demeanour of each. The only time the present writer can remember to have seen Millais' good-nature ruffled was when, after a chorus of

compliments to Leighton's universal accomplishments, an acquaintance of both artists drawled out, 'Yes, wonderful man; paints, too, I believe.' The words were uttered in no unkindly tone; to the elder artist they had an uncharitable sound. He commented on them, as the spirit moved him, with something of kindly warning against the cheap and mean vice of detraction, socially known as 'crabbing.'

Millais's opportunities during the seventies made him a sort of Paris of the studio. Many faces famed for beauty had first become known to the world from his pictures; after this, on the eve of every London season he found himself beset by the family or friends of promising *débutantes* with requests that he would give some of his time and skill to producing a portrait of the young lady by himself for the forthcoming Academy Exhibition. When the subject warranted his special attention, the artist sometimes saw his way to grant the request. When otherwise, the chivalrous kindness and most delicate consideration of the artist so shaped the words of refusal as to convey a general impression only less pleasant to carry away in memory than an actual assent.

Among artists who from their fine presence and generous character—such as those already enumerated—claim for them, in no conventional sense, the title 'knights of the brush,' Philip H. Calderon should have a place. Something of the courtly grace of Spanish chivalry was recalled by the manly ease of his manner and movement; he seemed, also, to possess another and more purely intellectual attribute of the Southern races—a prophetic quickness to discern coming possibilities. That common property, indeed, of the Celtic stock, generally denied to the Teuton, frequently showed itself in Calderon's conversation. Some years ago he extended a holiday trip across the Atlantic to those fruitful and picturesque regions which in later years were to be the theatre of war between the United States and Spain. There was no sign at the moment to make such a contingency seem near. Soon after his return, I think at the Arts Club, conversationally reviewing his holiday experiences, this great Anglo-Spanish artist, with a tone of sadness, soliloquised: 'And to think that spots so fair must sooner or later be given over to war.' The tone in which words to this effect were murmured almost reminded one of the story told by Herodotus of that Asiatic officer whom the historian met before the Greek repulse of the Persian invasion, who saw it all coming, and grieved most at his inability to avert the havoc he foresaw as the Nemesis of the ill-starred aggression by his own country. 'The bitterest woe of all is it, when one foreknows much, to have power to control nothing'—the phrase so often on the lips and in the thoughts of Arnold of

Rugby and his pupil Stanley. To-day the social life of English art, at least in London, differs from the life of letters in that the former has preserved very much of its primitive simplicity, and that

the studio sketches and personages of Thackeray—for example, J. J. Ridley—are not, as all who knew the late kindly and simple Charles Earle will admit, quite out of date.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER VIII.



OW the Amphitryon Club is situated in the Avenue de l'Opéra, as all the world knows, and is one of the most exclusive and distinguished clubs in Europe. Browne had been a member for many years, and during his stays in Paris was usually to be found there.

It was a fine building, in which everything was done in the most sumptuous and luxurious fashion. You might lunch there on bread and cheese or a Porter-house steak; but the bread, the cheese, and the steak, while unpretentious in themselves, would be the very best obtainable of their kind. What led him there on that particular evening Browne did not quite know. It was Destiny! Blind Fate had him in hand, and was luring him on to what was to be the most momentous half-hour of his life. He knew he was pretty certain of finding some one there with whom he was acquainted; but he was certainly not prepared for the surprise which greeted him when he pushed open the swing-doors and passed into the smoking-room. Seated in a chair by the fire, and looking into it in the meditative fashion of a man who has dined well and feels disinclined for much exertion, was no less a person than Maas.

'Mon cher ami,' he cried, springing to his feet and holding out his hand, 'this is a delightful surprise. I had no notion you were in Paris.'

'I only arrived this evening,' Browne replied. 'But I might return the compliment, for I thought you were in St Petersburg.'

'No such thing,' said Maas, shaking his head. 'Petersburg at this time of the year does not agree with my constitution. To be able to appreciate it one must have Slav blood in one's veins, which I am discourteous enough to be glad to say I have not. But what brings you to the gay city? Is it business or pleasure? But there, I need not ask. I should have remembered that business does not enter into your life.'

'A false conclusion on your part,' said Browne as he lit a cigar. 'For a man who has nothing to do, I have less leisure than many people who declare they are overworked.'

'By the way,' Maas continued, 'they tell me we have to congratulate you at last.'

'Upon what?' Browne inquired. 'What have I done now that the world should desire to wish me well?'

'I refer to your approaching marriage,' said

Maas. 'Deauville was in here the other day, *en route* to Cannes, and he told us that it was stated in a London paper that you were about to be married. I told him I felt sure he must be mistaken. If you had been I should probably have known it.'

'It's not true,' said Browne angrily. 'Deauville should know better than to attach any credence to such a story.'

'Exactly what I told him,' said Maas, with his usual imperturbability. 'I said that at his age he should know better than to believe every silly rumour he sees in the press. I assured him that you were worth a good many married men yet.'

As he said this Maas watched Browne's face carefully. What he saw there must have satisfied him on certain points upon which he was anxious for information, for he smiled a trifle sardonically, and immediately changed the conversation by inquiring what Browne intended doing that night.

'Going home to bed,' said Browne promptly. 'I have had a long day's travelling, and I've a lot to do to-morrow. I think, if you'll excuse me, old chap, I'll wish you good-night now.'

'Good-night,' said Maas, taking his hand. 'When shall I see you again? By the way, I hope, if it's any convenience to you, you'll let me put my rooms at your disposal. But there, I forgot you have your own magnificent palace to go to. To offer you hospitality would be superfluous.'

'You talk of my house as if I should be likely to go there,' said Browne scornfully. 'You know as well as I do that I never enter the doors. What should I do in a caravanserai like that? No; I am staying at the usual place in the Place Vendôme. Now, good-night once more.'

'Good-night,' said Maas, and Browne accordingly left the room. When the swing-doors had closed behind him Maas went back to his chair and lit another cigarette.

'Our friend Browne is bent upon making a fool of himself,' he said to his cigarette; 'and, what is worse, he will put me to a lot of trouble and inconvenience. At this stage of the proceedings, however, it would be worse than useless to endeavour to check him. He has got the bit between his teeth, and would bolt right out if I were to try to bring him to a standstill. The only thing that can be done, as far as I can see, is to sit still and watch the comedy, and to step in like the god out of the machine when all is ready.'

Having thus expressed himself, he lit another cigarette, and went off in search of the supper Browne had declined.

Browne's first night in Paris was destined to prove a restless one. Whether it was the journey or his visit to the Rue Jacquarie that was responsible for it I cannot say; one thing, however, is quite certain: do what he would, he could not sleep. He tried all the proverbial recipes in vain. He walked about his room, drank a glass of cold water, tried to picture sheep jumping over a hedge; but in vain. Do what he would, the drowsy god would not listen to his appeal. Indeed, the first beams of the morning sun were stealing into his room before his eyelids closed. When his man came in to dress him he felt as drowsy as if he had not closed his eyes all night. He was not going to lie in bed, however. During breakfast he debated with himself what he should do with regard to the Rue Jacquarie. Should he loiter about the streets in the hope of intercepting Katherine when she went abroad? Or should he take the bull by the horns and march boldly up to the house and ask for an interview? Anxious as he was to see her, he had no desire to thrust his presence upon her if it was not wanted. He knew that she would be the first to resent that, and yet he felt he *must* see her, happen what might. As soon as breakfast was finished he put on his hat and set out for a stroll. The clouds of the previous night had departed, the sky was blue, and the breeze fresh and invigorating. Many a bright eye and captivating glance was thrown at the healthy, stalwart young Englishman, who carried himself as if fatigue were a thing unknown to him. Then, suddenly, he found himself face to face with Katherine Petrovitch!

He lifted his hat mechanically, but for a moment he stood rooted to the spot with surprise, not knowing what to say or do. Great as was his astonishment, however, hers was infinitely greater. She stood before him, her colour coming and going, and with a frightened look in her eyes.

'Mr Browne, what does this mean?' she asked, with a little catch of the breath. 'You are the last person I expected to see in Paris.'

'I was called over here on important business,' he replied, with unblushing mendacity; and as he said it he watched her face, and found it more troubled than he had ever yet seen it. 'But why, even if we are surprised to see each other, should we remain standing here?' he continued, for want of something better to say. 'May I not walk a short distance with you?'

'If you wish it,' she replied, but with no great display of graciousness. It was very plain that she did not attach very much credence to his excuse, and it was equally certain that she was inclined to resent it. Nothing was said on the latter point, however, and they strolled along the pavement together, he wondering how he could

best set himself right with her, and she combating a feeling of impending calamity, and at the same time trying to convince herself that she was extremely angry with him, not only for meeting her, but for being in Paris at all. It was not until they reached the Rue des Tuileries that Browne spoke.

'May we not go into the Gardens?' he asked a little nervously. 'I always think that the children one sees there are the sweetest in Europe.'

'If you wish,' Katherine replied coldly. 'I shall not be able to stay very long, however, as Madame Bernstein will be expecting me.'

Browne felt inclined to anathematise Madame Bernstein, as he had done several times before; but he wisely kept his thoughts to himself. They accordingly crossed the road and entered the Gardens by the Broad Walk. Passing the Omphale by Eude and the statue of Æneas bearing Anchises through the flames of Troy, they entered one of the small groves on the right, and seated themselves upon two chairs they found there. An awkward silence followed, during which Katherine looked away in the direction they had come, while Browne, his elbows on his knees, dug viciously into the path with the point of his umbrella, as if he would probe his way down to the nether regions before he would let her get an inkling of his embarrassment. Three children with their attendant *bonnes* passed them while they were so occupied, and one small toddler of four or five stopped and regarded the silent couple before him. Katherine smiled at the child's chubby, earnest face, and Browne took this as a sign that the ice was breaking, though not so quickly as he could have wished.

'I am afraid you are angry with me,' he said, after the child had passed on his way again and they were left to each other's company. 'How have I been unfortunate enough to offend you?'

'I do not know that you have offended me at all,' the girl replied, still looking away from him. 'After all your kindness to me, I should be very ungrateful if I were to treat you so.'

'But there can be no doubt you *are* offended,' Browne replied. 'I could see from the expression on your face, when I met you on the boulevard just now, that you were annoyed with me for being there.'

'I must confess I was surprised,' she answered; 'still, I certainly did not wish you to think I was annoyed.'

Browne thereupon took fresh heart, and resolved upon a bold plunge. 'But you were not pleased?' he said, and as he said it he watched her to see what effect his words produced. She still kept her face turned away. 'Don't you think it was a little unkind of you to leave London so suddenly without either saying good-bye or giving the least warning of your inten-

tions?' he continued, his spirits rising with every word he uttered.

'I was not certain that we were to leave so soon,' the girl replied. 'It was not until yesterday morning that we found it would be necessary for us to set off at once. But how did you know that we had left?'

Browne fell into the trap unheedingly.

'Because I called at your lodgings an hour after you had left, in the hope of seeing you,' he answered promptly. 'The servant who opened the door to me informed me that you and Madame Bernstein had departed for Paris. You may imagine my surprise.'

'But if you were there within an hour of our leaving, what train did you catch?' she inquired, with a simplicity that could scarcely have failed to entrap him.

'The eleven o'clock express from Charing Cross and Dover and Calais,' he replied.

'You admit, then, that your important business in Paris was to follow us?' she answered, and as she said it Browne realised what a mistake he had made. She rose without another word, and made as if she would leave the Gardens. Browne also sprang to his feet, and laid his hand upon her arm as if to detain her.

'Again I fear I have offended you,' he said; 'but, believe me, I had not the least intention of doing so. I think at least you should know me well enough for that.'

'But you should not have followed me at all,' she said, her womanly wit showing her that if she wished to escape she must beg the question and attack the side issue. 'It was not kind of you.'

'Not kind?' he cried. 'But why should it not be? I cannot see that I have done anything wrong; and, even if I have, will you not be merciful?'

Large tears had risen in her eyes; her manner was firm nevertheless. It seemed to Browne later on, when he recalled all that had happened on that memorable morning, as if two emotions, pride and love, were struggling in her breast for the mastery.

'Will you not forgive me?' he asked, more humbly than he had probably ever spoken to a human being in his life before.

'If you will promise not to repeat the offence,' she replied, with a feeble attempt at a smile. 'Remember, if I do forgive you, I shall expect you to adhere to your word.'

'You do not know how hard it is for me to promise,' said Browne; 'but since you wish it, I will do as you desire. I promise you I will not follow you again.'

'I thank you,' she answered, and held out her hand. 'I must go now, or madame will be wondering what has become of me. Good-bye, Mr Browne.'

'But do you mean that I am never to see you again?' he inquired in consternation.

'For the moment that is a question I cannot answer,' she replied. 'I have told you before that my time is not my own; nor do I know how long we shall remain in Paris.'

'But if I am to promise this, will you not promise me something in return?' he asked, with a tremble in his voice that he could not control.

'What is it you wish me to promise?' she inquired suspiciously. 'You must tell me first.'

'It is that you will not leave Paris without first informing me,' he answered. 'I will not ask you to tell me where you are going, or ask for an interview. All I desire is that you should let me know that you are leaving the city.'

She was silent for a moment.

'If you will give me your address, I will promise to write and let you know,' she said at last.

'I thank you,' he answered. Then, refusing to allow him to accompany her any farther, she held out her hand and bade him good-bye. Having done so, she passed up the Broad Walk in the direction they had come, and presently was lost to his view.

'Well, I am a fool if ever there was one,' said Browne to himself when he was alone. 'If only I had kept a silent tongue in my head about that visit to the Warwick Road I should not be in the hole I am now. I've scored one point, however; she has promised to let me know when she leaves Paris. I will stay here until that time arrives on the chance of meeting her again, and then— Well, what matters what happens then? How sweet she is!'

The young man heaved a heavy sigh, and returned to his hotel by way of the Rue de Rivoli.

From that moment, and for upwards of a week, he neither saw nor heard anything further of her. Although he paraded the streets with untiring energy, and even went so far as to pay periodical visits on foot to the Rue Jacquarie, he was always disappointed. Then assistance came to him, and from a totally unexpected quarter.

Upon returning to his hotel, after one of his interminable peregrinations, he found upon the table in his sitting-room a note, written on pale-pink paper and so highly scented that he became aware of its presence there almost before he entered the room. Wondering from whom it could have come, for the writing was quite unknown to him, he opened it and scanned the contents. It was written in French, and, to his surprise, proved to be from Madame Bernstein.

'My dear Monsieur Browne,' it ran, 'if you could spare a friend a few moments of your valuable time, I should be so grateful if you could let me see you. The matter upon which I desire to consult you, as my letter would lead you to suppose, is an exceedingly important one. Should you chance to be disengaged to-morrow (Thursday) afternoon, I will remain in, in the hope of seeing you.—Always your friend, and never more than now,
SOPHIE BERNSTEIN.'

Browne read this curious epistle three times, and each time was farther from being able to understand it. 'What was this matter upon which Madame Bernstein desired to consult him? Could it have any connection with Katherine? If not, what else could it possibly be? And why did she call herself his friend and wind up with 'and never more than now'? It had one good point, however; it would in all probability furnish him with another opportunity of seeing the girl he loved. And yet there were twenty hours to be disposed of before he could possibly keep the appointment. Never in his life had time seemed so long.

Punctually to the minute he arrived at the door of the commonplace building in the Rue Jacquarie. The *conciierge* looked out from her cubby-hole at him, and inquired his business. In reply he asked the number of Madame Bernstein's rooms, and, having been informed, went upstairs in search of them. He had not very far

to go, however, for he encountered madame herself on the landing half-way up.

'Ah, monsieur!' she cried, holding out her hand with an impetuous gesture that was as theatrical as her usual behaviour, 'this is most kind of you to come to see me so promptly. I know that I am trespassing both upon your good nature and your time.'

'I hope you will not mention that,' said Browne politely. 'If I can be of any use to you, I think you know you may command me.'

'It is not for myself that I have asked you to come,' she answered. 'But do not let us talk here. Will you not accompany me to my rooms?'

She accordingly led the way up the next flight of stairs and along a corridor to a room that was half-drawing-room, half-boudoir. Madame carefully closed the door, and then bade him be seated. Browne took possession of an easy-chair, wondering what was going to happen next.

A CALIFORNIAN UNIVERSITY.

By MUNRO SOMERVILLE.



OF American universities little is known on this side of the Atlantic. Harvard, Yale, and Princeton are the most familiar, and these are all in the east. The Hudson River was once considered a line of academic division, to the west of which were barbarians engrossed in wheat-deals and hay-raising, and cultivating only a kind of university peculiar to themselves, which was run on strictly business principles, and in return for the dollars of the aspirants conferred degrees upon European gentlemen of literary talents whose merits had not been recognised by their *Alma Mater*. But those who entertain such ideas nowadays are at least a decade behind the times. In Western America there are state and privately endowed institutions which in equipment, wealth, and academic spirit are pressing close upon the older universities of the east, and even invite comparison with those of the Old Country. Of these the Leland Stanford University, in the state of California, is a type. This university owes its institution to the late Mr Stanford, a Californian who made a large fortune first in mining operations and then in railroads. He occupied responsible public positions, being a senator of the United States, President of the Central Pacific Railway, and Governor of California. To him and his wife was born an only son, Leland Stanford, upon whom all their hopes were centred. But at the age of eighteen Leland died of malaria in Italy. His parents resolved to give to the children of California the education which they had planned for their son. The estate and wealth which he would have inherited was

made over to the trustees of the projected university. The gift was of such magnitude as to attract attention even in a country where private generosity is on a large scale. It included an estate of eighty thousand acres and eight million dollars. Architects were engaged, trustees named, and a president appointed; and in 1891 the university opened with fifteen professors and three hundred students. Now it is entering upon its seventh session, with sixteen hundred students and eighty on the teaching staff. Litigation which followed the death of Mr Stanford has hindered the expansion of the university; but it will soon be able to carry out the plans of its founder.

A comparison with our Old Country universities naturally suggested itself to me, arriving at Stanford fresh from a Scottish university. Most radical of all is the difference in the requirements for entrance. At home we spent many an hour poring over the Calendar in the attempt to elucidate from the ordinances of my Lords the Commissioners the various subjects and groups of subjects necessary for the entrance examination. But at Stanford, as in the State University, the candidate for the parchment scrip finds no entrance examination barring the gates. The university and the secondary schools work into each other's hands. To produce evidence of a thorough high-school course, or its equivalent, is all that is necessary for matriculation. Once enrolled, the student has entire liberty in the subjects he selects for study during the four years which lead to graduation. If he chooses he may assay gold quartz in the mining school one hour, read Plato with the Professor of Greek next hour, and analyse manure in the agricultural

department at another hour. The degree which comes at the end of the four years is given for each subject separately, not, as with us, for a selected group offering little or no option. 'Bachelor of Arts in Hygiene,' 'Bachelor of Arts in Steam Engineering,' are examples of the titles with which graduates from Stanford enter upon life. This innovation is startling enough to one brought up in a Scottish university, which, despite the tinkering of commissioners, clings piously to the orthodox curriculum as laid down by its founders five centuries ago. But the special boast of Stanford is that, in virtue of its charter, it occupies a unique position as being 'untrammelled by the vested rights, the ultra-conservative influences, the despotism of the old protean curriculum which surround the older colleges and universities.' It is not surprising, therefore, to find that at Stanford there are no tuition fees, no gown and trencher, no Faculty, and no Senate. Each professor has authority over his own department, is independent of any of his colleagues, and is subject only to the President, who has control over the entire staff, and can make appointments or enforce dismissals.

Lowell's definition of a university as 'a place where nothing useful is taught' is certainly inapplicable to Stanford. The charter declares that 'the object of the university is to qualify students for personal success and direct usefulness in life.' The university makes no attempt to defend herself against the charge of being utilitarian, but accepts it as a compliment. The majority of the students are turning their attention to subjects which are likely to be of practical help to them in the future.

Another difference may be noted. In our universities at home, students often felt that the distance between the lecturer's desk and the benches was too great. Under ordinary circumstances a few minutes' conversation while enrolling or paying fees, and an invitation to a formal lunch or 'at home,' constituted all the personal contact between student and teacher. Of course there were professors who did manifest some personal interest in those for whom the university existed. Such men are gratefully remembered; but they were an exception. It is different here. Each student has a professor assigned to him, whose

duty it is to guide him in the selection of studies and advise him at all stages of his course when his assistance is asked. The professors have tickets on their doors intimating the regular hours when they are in their rooms for consultation by students. In the selection of professors, youth, when conjoined with talents, has the preference. A 'professor' at Stanford does not denote a spectacled fossil, whose sympathies with youth are dried up with age. They are for the most part young graduates, full of fresh vigour, and brought up under the same conditions and under the same difficulties as their pupils, with no false dignity hedging their office and limiting their usefulness.

The university buildings are at Palo Alto, 'the big tree,' scarcely fifty miles from San Francisco, on a level plain on the edge of the Santa Clara county of California, famed for its beauty and excellence of climate. The architecture is of the old Mission type, first introduced to California by the Mexican Spaniards. The long, low adobe buildings, with the wide colonnades and the open courts, have been successfully reproduced. Within the inner quadrangle are beds of tropical plants and flowers. There is an excellent museum, with treasures from all quarters—mummies from Egypt, vases from Cyprus, totems from Alaska, canoes from Greenland. But of pathetic interest is the collection of the toys and books of young Leland Stanford. A boy's favourite books seem to be very much the same in the New World as in the Old; and in Leland's library I saw such old friends as Jules Verne, Kingston, and Bret Harte. An oak cabinet contains the treasures which the boy had gathered when eight years old to form a collection of his own—the first beginning of the present museum.

A university furnished with such wealthy endowments and equipments, and conducted on such innovating principles, naturally excites attention, and in some quarters provokes criticism. Whether the departure from the old traditions will be ultimately beneficial to the true interests of culture and education some still doubt; but, judging from the results which the university has accomplished within the past few years, there seems little cause to fear for the future.

MR BRAITHWAITE'S PERPLEXITY.

CHAPTER III.



ENTERING the library Mrs Braithwaite sank into a chair, and getting out a pocket-handkerchief, wiped her brow. 'Herbert,' she said impressively, 'Maggie's engagement must be broken off. The most dreadful thing has happened. I never was more upset in my life.'

The Rector gasped. He could hardly believe his

ears. What was she saying—'Maggie's engagement must be broken off'?

'Broken off?' he repeated questioningly. 'What do you mean?'

'I mean what I say,' answered Mrs Braithwaite sharply. 'You needn't look at me like that—I'll explain to you as fast I can—and then of course you'll agree with me'—

'I thought you'—

'Yes, I dare say,' interrupted his wife a little irritably; 'but I've changed my mind—and reason enough, too. I can't tell you while you stand there fidgeting about. I wish you would sit down on that chair.'

The Rector did as he was told. He tried to compose his face so as not to express his joy. But it was not easy. A load seemed suddenly lifted from his shoulders. He felt like a prisoner with a reprieve. He felt like a released school-boy.

'Well,' said Mrs Braithwaite as she folded her handkerchief into a neat square upon her knee, 'this is how it happened. I had finished the tents and spoken to everybody—I think it's abominable that man Maple should get the prize for his peaches the second year. I was dreadfully hot and tired. People have no manners—the way I got pushed about in the vegetable tent was disgraceful; I intend to write about it to the managers. Well, I went into that summer-house behind the rockery to rest and get cool, and as I sat there, who should pass by but Charlie walking with a girl I've never seen before. And, would you believe it—only you never show the slightest interest in anything I tell you—his arm was round her waist—or her arm round his—I forget which—and they actually kissed each other three times! I am certain it was three times, for I counted; and it looked to me, as they turned the corner of the shrubbery, as if her head was on his shoulder. I could have fainted, only I don't do that sort of thing—thank Heaven!' Mrs Braithwaite came to a pause, and fanned herself with a half-sheet of the *Times*.

'Are you sure it was he?' said the Rector, endeavouring to put the consternation into his voice which he felt ought to be there.

'Of course I'm certain. I don't sit in a dream and see the wrong person—as some people do. There was no mistake about it; and as he has no sisters or near enough relations, it must have been something improper. I couldn't have believed it. I wouldn't let Maggie marry him for anything I know, in spite of all his money. No one can say I'm a worldly mother!'

'You mean to have it broken off?'

'Of course I do. How can you imagine anything else? But you never have taken the smallest interest in those poor girls.'

'Was she fond of him, do you think?' asked the Rector, feeling he must say something appropriate.

'Fond of him? Yes—no—well, quite as much as a nice-minded girl would be before marriage. But she won't be much longer when she knows.'

'It will be rather a shock to her, I fear,' said the Rector absently.

'She might have worse ones if she married him—if those are his ways,' cried Mrs Braithwaite with asperity. 'I own I'm vexed. It seemed so suitable in every way. But I know my duty,

and I shall stick to it.' She looked at him as if expecting a little opposition for once. He had been even more pleased than herself at the match.

The Rector noticed her expression.

'My dear—you know best. I leave it to you to—to manage,' he said hurriedly.

'I suppose you do, Herbert; you generally do leave things to me to manage.' She looked at him a little grimly, sitting in front of him broad and square. Then she got up from her chair, and undid her bonnet-strings in front of the looking-glass over the mantelpiece. She unpinned the lace fichu, and carefully took off and folded her brown kid gloves. Then, without glancing in his direction, she left the room.

The Rector breathed a great sigh of relief on finding himself alone. He felt almost young—as if he would like to throw his hat in the air, or run a race, or do something to let off his emotions.

He had all the satisfactory feeling of a virtuous act performed. For there had been no flinching this time. He had made up his mind and would have carried it through. That he had not been called upon at the last moment was not his fault. He could now resume his plans and go to London to-morrow or the day after. He would still be in time for the orchid show, and most of the other things he wanted to do.

Half-an-hour later, as he sat in a reverie over past events, he was disturbed by a knock at the door. With red eyes and flushed cheeks his daughter Maggie ran towards him. 'Would the duties of parentage, once taken up, ever rest?' flashed through his mind as he looked up at her.

'Father, mother has been telling me about—about—what she saw. I don't believe it was anything, really—at all. It was that cousin of his who lived with them as a child—she is only fifteen, though she looks quite grown up, seen from behind. I don't believe he kissed her—it was she did it to him—I'm certain. I saw her do it once, and he didn't like it at all—and—and—I don't think I want to break off—*really*—I've told mother so—and she's awfully angry. She says I've no proper feeling, and am a disgrace to her. Will you—will you—make it right with her—please, father? I'm very f-fond of him, really'— She threw herself down by his side and sobbed.

The Rector stared at her in silence. He could hardly think connectedly at all. He had already experienced one revulsion of feeling in the day; he hardly felt prepared for another.

'You have changed rather suddenly,' he said at last.

'No, I haven't. I haven't changed at all. I always was very—fond of him—really. You might have known, only you have never known anything about us at all—I mean about Kitty

and me. I know it must be rather difficult for you,' she added after a moment's pause, a touch of contrition in her tone.

'It is difficult,' said the Rector a little wearily. 'It is difficult and it is depressing. It appears I might just as well have not agitated myself on your account at all. It has all been quite wasted.'

He sighed and looked longingly at his garden. It struck him that the culture of flowers was left to him yet. Maggie hesitated for a moment. Then, suddenly, she flung her arms around his neck. It took him by surprise.

'Never mind, daddy dear,' she cried; 'it hasn't been wasted at all. It has made me—find out things—I never knew before. You see you really care about us, Kitty and me, a lot. I told Kitty so. I told her how you'd given up going to London, all for me. She *was* surprised. And I'm sure girls must be dreadful to understand. I'm sure I am—and Kitty's worse. We're made so queer. You see now about Charlie; as soon as I felt the "step" was going to prevent my marrying him, why, I wanted to—I felt—I'—

'I understand,' said her father, with a little laugh. 'It is very simple now you explain. I must begin to study human nature. I've avoided the subject hitherto. I'm afraid I've been too engrossed with the flowers.'

'Yes, you have, rather,' answered his daughter candidly. 'You see, there's Kitty will want advice, particularly when I'm gone. We never go to the "step" for advice, of course. But Kitty's different to me; she always knows her own mind.'

The Rector made a mental note of the fact. He sighed as he did so. He felt that to learn human nature would take a great deal of time.

'I'll help you all I know,' said Maggie cheerfully. 'I shan't be far off. I wish I'd known you cared about us before.'

'Do you think I'll ever learn?' said the Rector anxiously. He felt, somehow, in this particular branch of knowledge his little daughter was far ahead of him.

'Oh yes, I'm sure you will. You'll get on beautifully, and have time for the flowers and the parish too. You have to notice little things—to yourself—and feel interested. You talk to Kitty about the rabbits and the guinea-pig, and don't be always telling her her hands are dirty, like the "step," and you'll get on.'

The Rector gazed at her in astonished admiration. How had she learned all this?

'I'll try, my dear,' he said simply. 'Now I must go and tell your mother—what you have decided.' He got up as he spoke, and walked to the door.

'Are you really going to tell her?' said Maggie questioningly.

'Yes, I am going to tell her,' he answered, without looking round.

'And you'll make it all right, so she doesn't worry me?'

'Yes, I will make it all right for you, you needn't fear. I think myself some mistake has been made by your mother. You must remember she means to act for the best,' he added, with a sudden realisation of his duty to both sides.

'Oh yes, I know all that; we make allowance—we really do,' said Maggie in an indulgent tone. 'I must go and tell Kitty,' she continued. 'She'll have to believe it now—I mean that you are fond of us,' she added in explanation.

The Rector smiled a little sadly. Then he set his lips firmly together, and walked out of the room.

About half-an-hour later Mr Braithwaite emerged from the drawing-room. He walked absently, not heeding whither he went, though almost instinctively his footsteps led him into the garden.

He turned in the direction of the Madonna lilies, and walked up and down in front of them. Once or twice he stopped and touched a beautiful drooping blossom with his hand. Presently, hearing footsteps coming down the path, he turned round.

It was Maggie. She flew along the path, hatless, little curls of her fair hair flying in the breeze.

'Well?' she said anxiously, 'is it all right now? Did you make it all nice and smooth?'

'Yes; it's all right,' said the Rector slowly. 'But it's not through me. I had nothing to do with it. Perhaps it's as well,' he added, after a pause, as he tied up a drooping lily-head a little closer to its support.

'How do you mean?' cried the girl breathlessly.

'There was somebody else there; he had explained everything. I think he guessed what would happen, and so he hurried on here. It was done for a joke. They saw your mother in the summer-house, and thought—at least I believe it was Gwen who did it—she thought that she would shock her and have some fun. Your mother hasn't seen Gwen since she was a little thing, you know.'

'I thought it was Gwen,' cried Maggie. 'I don't mind Gwen; she's only a child, though she does do her hair up now. Was mother very angry?'

'I believe she had been—rather annoyed,' answered her father judiciously. 'But she was quite herself when I came into the room. Charlie had made his peace very successfully, I must own.'

'Is he with her now?' asked his daughter hastily.

'No; he went to the schoolroom to look for you, I believe.'

'Ah!' said Maggie thoughtfully. She walked slowly down the path in the direction of the house, her slight figure, in its white frock, enframed in the soft green of the arching filbert-trees. The Rector looked after her for a moment. Then he called her back.

'I—I should have done it, if I had had the chance—at least I think I should,' he said a little brokenly, turning his head away as he spoke.

'I know that!' cried the girl reassuringly. 'I shall always think of it just the same as if you had done it, and so will Kitty.'

She came up to him and rubbed her pretty fluffy head against his shoulder.

The Rector stroked her hair silently for a moment. Then she went.

'One must be friends with one's self, and not expect too much, I suppose, or be too much disappointed,' he said, with a little smile. And then he turned to the flowers.

THE END.

LUMPS OF LUCK.

By HERBERT PRESKIN.

IN the good old days of the fifties and sixties, when the sturdy emigrant, shouldering his promiscuous and generally quite useless belongings, stepped boldly ashore on Australian soil, he found himself in a land of infinite possibilities, and one in which there was but little chance of his forecasting correctly the lines along which he would have to seek his fortune. Previous training went for little in the matter, for as often as not he had to completely ignore it and make some totally fresh departure. In the meantime the gold-diggings opened up to him a common field of venture on which he would meet all sorts and conditions of men, actuated by the one desire, urged on by the same impulse—to wrest from Dame Nature her stores of golden wealth. Here he would become incorporated with the general digging population, at that time numbering its tens of thousands.

While on the diggings, to our emigrant, as well as to every member of this great army of workers, the main inducement, the sharp spur to action, was no doubt the chance—offered to him over and above the measure of conditions necessary for subsistence—of gaining one of those rich golden prizes, of making at least one happy dip into Dame Fortune's lucky-bag; and it is to one particular kind of those dazzling prizes that I would like to draw your attention in this article. I do not propose to deal with such chances as getting a golden claim, or even breaking into a so-called 'jeweller's shop' in a drive, or with anything that took any time to work out or clean up before you realised its value, but only with those prizes that dropped on a man like a thunderbolt, fell to him in a moment, as when with a single blow he drove his pick into, or with one scrape of the shovel laid bare, the beautiful face of a lovely shining nugget—a big one, of course, for choice; a great, fat nugget of rich, regal gold—what might fairly be called a solid yellow concrete 'Lump of Luck.' Neither shall I trouble myself about nuggets mixed to any very considerable extent with quartz or other substances, such as the rich quartz specimen lately

got in West Australia, but only deal with those where the gold so far preponderated that we may virtually consider them as composed of nothing but the glorious royal metal itself.

Of such great 'Lumps of Luck,' numbers were unearthed in the early days of the Australian diggings, particularly in Victoria, and nowhere else in the world, I believe, to the same extent. Of the greater part of them there are, unfortunately, no truthful records, no measurements, nor correct weights; neither can the history of their discovery be satisfactorily determined. They exist only in tradition; in many cases, as I know, in fairly reliable form, but still not available for my present purpose. The remainder may be divided into two classes: those that were carefully measured, weighed, and had drawings and models made of their appearance and shape; the other class, those whose weights, values, &c. are known, but have never had their likenesses taken. The former class, which includes some of the largest specimens, nearly all from the colony of Victoria, is that which I would like to introduce you to.

As regards modelled specimens, this could be easily done if you were able to take a stroll with me through the museum of the Sydney Department of Mines. In our Mining Museum there is a large glass case of accurately shaped and gilded life-size models of some of those delightful freaks of Nature.

Our first example is a representation of the emperor of all pure nuggets ever found, the champion 'Lump of Luck' of the world. This gorgeous treasure-trove, known as the 'Welcome Stranger Nugget,' was got on the 5th February 1869 by two men named John Deason and Richard Oates in fossicking the margin of a patch of alluvium near Dunolly, Victoria, almost on the surface of the ground. It was resting on a bed of stiff red clay, just above the bed-rock, barely covered with a loose gravelly loam. It was about twenty-one inches long, width not given, and ten inches thick, with a little quartz, iron oxide, and mullock in it, but the great body of it was solid gold; so I suppose neither John Deason nor Richard Oates felt much aggrieved

on the score of the foreign substances in this most 'Welcome Stranger.' It contained 2286 oz. of gold, or, after smelting, 2248 oz. of fine gold, and was valued at the Bank of England at £9534. Its gross weight as it came from the ground was about 208 lb. You will agree with me, I feel sure, that this was a very tidy morning's work for Messrs Deason and Oates.

Our next example shows the 'Welcome' nugget, which runs the champion very close for weight, and even beats it in the price it brought its lucky finders. It was got on Bakery Hill, Ballarat, by a party of twenty-four, at a depth of one hundred and eighty feet, on the 15th of June 1858, and measured twenty inches long, twelve inches wide, and seven inches thick. In it there were some 10 lb. of quartz, mullock, &c., and into the bargain 2217 oz. 16 dwt. of fine gold, or 184 lb. 9 oz. 16 dwt. troy.

It was bought 'on spec.' in Ballarat for £10,000, taken to Melbourne, and exhibited there for some weeks, bringing in large sums of money. It was then sold for £9325, taken to London, and smelted. It assayed 99.20, equal to 23 carats $3\frac{1}{2}$ carat grains of pure gold. With reference to finding this splendid 'Lump of Luck,' the authority I am quoting from casually remarks that 'the same party the week before found some smaller nuggets from 12 oz. to 40 oz. each.' There is something refreshingly vague and off-hand in this 'some;' perhaps it was a score or so; but in those golden days such little trifles, worth only, say, from £48 to £160 each, were hardly worth counting accurately.

After two such staggerers we can afford a breathing spell to give me the chance of saying that the authority to which I am principally beholden for information about these Victorian nuggets is an official work called *The Goldfields and Mineral Resources of Victoria*, by the late Robert Brough Smyth, F.G.S., then Victorian Secretary for Mines. In this work Mr Smyth reproduces and quotes Mr Birkmyre's list, limited in number to ninety-eight of the principal Victorian nuggets found up to about 1870, and aggregating 36,218 oz., giving an average of 369 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. each. Mr Birkmyre remarks that this number seems small, as no doubt it does; but explains this by referring to the 'great number found respecting which nothing definite is known.' Inverted commas will denote, therefore, quotations from Mr Smyth's work.

I must now pass from the first class to some celebrated nuggets of which unfortunately there are no models, such as 'The Blanche Barkly' nugget, found on the 27th August 1857, only thirteen feet from the surface. 'It was twenty-eight inches long and ten wide;' no thickness given. 'It weighed 1743 oz. 13 dwt., with two pounds of clay and oxide of iron in it. It was melted in London for a return of £6905, 12s. 9d. Before that it was exhibited in Melbourne and at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, where it excited great

interest; its lucky owners netting for a considerable time as much as £50 per week.'

A great nameless nugget was unearthed on the 31st of January 1853, at Canadian Gully, Ballarat, by a party of four, at a depth of sixty feet, weighing 1619 oz.; and immediately after, on the same day, they struck another of 76 oz. 'Two of this party had only been three months in the colony from England, and at once returned there with their prize in the steamer *Sarah Sands*. Both nuggets were melted in London for 1319 oz. 11 dwt. 12 grains fine gold, value £5532, 7s. 4d.' These two gentlemen must certainly have looked on their trip to Australia as a very rosy picnic indeed.

Then come two specimens got side by side in a rust-coloured matrix at Dunolly, Victoria, early in 1857, weighing together 2952 oz. When melted in Melbourne, however, they only gave 1363 oz. 18 dwt. gold, of the value of £5500.

The 'Lady Hotham' was found on the 5th of September 1854, at Canadian Gully, Ballarat, at one hundred and thirty-five feet. It weighed at first 1177 oz. 17 dwt.; but there was much quartz and sulphuret of iron in it, and it only turned out 735 oz. of gold. This painful disappointment was somewhat toned down by the same party taking 220 lb. weight of smaller nuggets out of the same hole, the total of the gold being worth £13,000.

Canadian Gully had evidently been on its mettle—no pun intended—for some time past; for, on the 20th of January 1853, it gave two miners a very pleasant surprise at a depth of sixty feet. Birkmyre's description is delicious; he says that 'the very first blow of the pick led the miner to suspect gold; with the second the pick stuck fast in the mass'—a trifle that only weighed 1117 oz. 11 dwt., and measured twenty inches by eight and a half inches. But this liberal gully had not done with them yet, possibly to make up for any injury the miner might have done to the point of his pick. 'Two days after, and within ten feet of the first one, his mate got another piece twelve inches long, six inches wide, and six and a half inches thick, weighing 1011 oz. 15 dwt., the value of the two being £7500. These men also got 100 oz. of smaller gold, and then sold the claim for eighty guineas.'

In the middle of 1855 a nugget unnamed was turned up in five feet of ground at Blackman's Lead, Maryborough, which weighed 1034 oz., was sold in Melbourne, and melted there for £3250. I have no further particulars about this 'Lump,' and can only hope that the men who poked it out didn't make a chronic habit of doing such things.

The last of this lot is 'The Heron' nugget, got on the 29th of March 1855. 'Two young men only three months in the colony'—three months out seems to have been a regular Mascotte time—'discovered a solid lump of gold weighing 1008 oz. at Old Golden Point, Fryer's Creek, Mount

Alexander.' They refused £4000 on the spot, and sold it afterwards in England for £4080.

Messrs Smyth and Birkmyre now come to nuggets of less than 1000 oz., which I will not describe, but turn back to those in the first class, of which we have models.

Next to the 'Welcome' in this class is the 'Precious,' which was brought to light only twelve feet from the surface in Catto's Paddock at the Berlin rush near Dunolly, Victoria, on the 5th of January 1871. It weighed 1717 oz., and its approximate value was £6868. This is all the information I can get about this 'Lump' from the museum ticket on the model.

In our two next specimens we get among the aristocracy. One represents the 'Viscount Canterbury,' and the other the 'Viscountess Canterbury.' As a lady and gentleman should do, they would not put the poor diggers to any unnecessary trouble, so the 'Viscount' showed up in John's Paddock, Berlin, off Dunolly, at a depth of only fifteen feet. The worthy nobleman weighed 1120 oz., and made his appearance on the 31st of May 1870. His approximate value was £4420. The 'Viscountess' was not long behind his lordship; she made her début in the same locality on the 3d of October following, from only six feet of ground. Very naturally she was not so heavy as her husband, turning the scale at 896 oz., of the approximate value of £3536.

Our next, 'The Kum Tow,' was, for a change, christened after some Chinese celebrity, a mandarin, surely, at least. His birthday was the 17th of April 1871, and his native place Catto's Paddock at the Berlin rush, where he was discovered peacefully reposing under twelve feet of soil. His weight was 795 oz., valued at £2871.

I have looked very carefully at our next, called 'The Platypus,' found at Robinson's Gully, Bendigo, in March 1861, without being able to trace in it the faintest resemblance to the *Ornithorhynchus paradoxus*, a water-mole. Possibly its finders had been suffering such a run of bad luck that, when they dropped on it at a depth of five feet only, its appearance seemed quite paradoxical to them. If this was the case, no doubt the £1508 its 377 oz. fetched came in very handy.

I think there can be little question as to the financial state of the person who dug up 'The Needful' from twelve feet of ground. He must have been hard up, credit stopped at the store, &c. So, when he got hold of this 'Lump' of the needful, he at once called his find 'The Needful' nugget. It came from Catto's Paddock, Berlin rush, on the 10th of May 1871, weighed 249 oz., worth about £984.

'The Beauty' was found in 1858 at Kangaroo Gully, Bendigo, and its name is very expressive of the opinion the lucky boys would have of it. It was got at nine feet. There were 242 oz. in it, worth about £968.

'The Crescent' had lain for many a year just two feet below the grass in John's Paddock, Berlin, before being brought to light on the 2d of April 1872. Whoever the finders were, I dare say they did not grumble much because it weighed only 179 oz. and returned them no more than £704.

One would take the finders of the 'Spondulix' to be of a sporting turn of mind. No doubt after they hauled their 'Spondulix,' as they called it, up from the great depth of eight feet they had a jolly good spree. This trifle came from Eureka Gully, Jordan's rush, in November 1872. It contained 155 oz. 10 dwt. of gold, worth approximately £520.

There are other Victorian models of smaller nuggets in the case; but we will be satisfied with those we have shown, and will now give New South Wales a turn. Unfortunately here there is a woeful lack of material; not that we did not find plenty of nuggets, but because, unlike Victoria, there were no properly organised Mining Department until of comparatively recent years, and no interest seems to have been shown in preserving either authentic records, descriptions, or drawings of the 'Lumps of Luck' that were without doubt won by our diggers in the earlier days.

We have only two models of New South Wales nuggets in the whole careful worth noticing. One represents a very beautiful piece of gold called 'The Maitland Bar Nugget.' It was found five feet below the surface at Maitland Bar near Hargraves. Its gross weight in decimals was 344.78 oz.

'The Maitland Bar Nugget' was valued at the Sydney Mint at £1236. There is no record of who discovered it or of the date when it was found. I believe, however, it was got either in 1881 or 1882.

Of the second, 'The Temora Nugget,' there are even fewer particulars. It is merely docketed as a nugget weighing 168 oz., found at Temora diggings. It must have been got since the beginning of 1880, when this field was first opened.

I must refer, however, to a few unmodelled New South Wales nuggets, for information about which I am indebted to a work by Professor Liversidge, of the Sydney University, on *The Minerals of New South Wales*. On 1st November 1858 a nugget was got at Burrandong at a depth of thirty-five feet, for which £5000 was offered on the spot and refused. It was hammered up to get a little quartz out of it, and afterwards melted in Sydney, when it was found to contain 1286 oz. of gold, valued at £4389, which was rather a let off for the man who offered the £5000. At Kiandra rush, in the Snowy Mountains, in 1860, many fine nuggets were found; the largest recorded one, weighing 400 oz., was got in October of that year.

There remains now one nugget, more properly a very rich specimen, without an account of

which any article on the present subject would be incomplete. Though I have taken it last, it was decidedly not least among our 'Lumps of Luck.' I refer to what is popularly known as 'Dr Kerr's Nugget,' the first large one ever found in Australia, and the one, I believe, that created by far the greatest excitement. It was discovered on the 1st of July 1851 by an educated aboriginal boy in the employment of Dr Kerr of Wallawa Station. This lad, while shepherding a flock of sheep, noticed something sparkling on the corner of a block of weathered quartz, and knocked a piece of it off with his tomahawk, which seemed all gold. He at once went back to the head-station and reported this to his master, Dr Kerr, making him at the same time a present of whatever might be found. Professor Liversidge in his book quotes the whole of the interesting account of its discovery, written by a special reporter of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, which appeared in that journal in its issue of 18th July 1851. I will follow this report from the moment when Dr Kerr heard the black boy's story, premising only that this report was written after the gold had been brought into Bathurst and was placed for inspection on a table in the bank.

'Quick as horseflesh could carry him, he' (Dr Kerr) 'was on the ground, and in a very short period the three blocks of quartz containing the hundred-weight of gold were released from their bed. . . . The largest of the blocks was about a foot in diameter, and weighed 75 lb. gross; out of this piece 60 lb. of pure gold was taken. Before separation it was beautifully encased in quartz. The other two were smaller. The auriferous mass weighed, as nearly as could be guessed, from two to three hundredweight. Not being able to move it conveniently, Dr Kerr broke the pieces into smaller fragments, and therein committed a great error; for, as specimens, the glittering blocks would have been invaluable. . . . The heaviest of the two larger pieces presented an appearance not unlike a honeycomb or sponge, and consisted of particles of a crystalline form, as did nearly all the gold. The second larger piece was smoother and the particles more condensed, and seemed as if it had been acted on by water. The remainder was broken into lumps of from two to three pounds, remarkably free from quartz or earthy matter. When heaped together on the table they presented a splendid appearance, and shone with an effulgence calculated to dazzle the brain of any man not armed with the coldness of stoicism.'

The place of this discovery was on the Meroo or Louisa Creek, fifty-three miles from Bathurst, near where the present township of Hargraves stands.

The actual gross weight of the three blocks was 1½ cwt., containing 106 lb. troy, or 1272 oz. of gold and about 1 cwt. of quartz.

That same year, and within twenty-four yards

of the same place, a nugget called 'The Brennan' was found, weighing 364½ oz., and sold in Sydney for £1156; and the following year, also close by, two more were got, one called 'The King of the Water-worn Nuggets,' weighing 157 oz., and the other 71 oz.

To round off my subject, and as a sort of finish to the above account of Dr Kerr's nugget, I must refer to another newspaper contribution. In this case I am indebted to a most interesting letter by Mr W. S. Dowel, a well-known authority on mining subjects, which appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 12th February last (1898). After some preliminary remarks, Mr Dowel writes: 'A brief sketch of the history of the early discoveries of gold may prove of interest, as to-day (12th February) we celebrate the forty-seventh anniversary of the discovery of gold in New South Wales by Edward Hammond Hargraves, John Lister, and the brothers William and James Tom.'

After discussing the reports of earlier so-called discoveries which led to nothing, Mr Dowel tells how Mr Hargraves, who was familiar with the western districts, went to the Californian diggings in 1849, was impressed with the similarity of the gold-bearing rocks and the alluvial there to those he had noticed in the colony, and returned to Sydney on 7th January 1851, bringing with him the secret of the prospecting dish and the cradle, which he was the first to teach our diggers the use of. On 10th February he arrived at Mrs Lister's inn at Guyong, about twenty-four miles from Bathurst, on the Wellington Road, and on 12th February, in company with Mrs Lister's son, proceeded to Lewis Ponds Creek, and at a waterhole known as Yorkey's Corner washed five dishes of dirt, from which was obtained as much gold as would lie on a threepenny-piece. Mr Hargraves then took a piece of newspaper—the old *Empire* newspaper—and wrote in pencil, 'Gold discovered in alluvial at Lewis Ponds Creek this 12th day of February 1851;' then he added, 'This is a memorable day in the history of New South Wales,' and signed it, 'Edward Hammond Hargraves.' This document Mr Hargraves gave to the then Colonial Secretary, and it is now with the records of the colony.

Mr Dowel then describes how Hargraves and James Tom explored some of the Macquarie River country, and after a few days got to Dubbo, to his friends, the Cruickshank family. Mr and Mrs Cruickshank went down to the river-bed with him to try some prospects. 'Mrs Cruickshank—whose son is now a member of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly—with a woman's curiosity, determined to wash a dish of dirt and see what luck would result; and, to their great astonishment, she obtained as much gold as would make a ring.'

After stating Hargraves' subsequent actions with

respect to his discovery, how he taught Tom to make the first Australian cradle, and then went to Sydney to report what he had found to Governor Sir Charles Fitzroy, Mr Dowel continues :

'On March 22, 1851, Hargraves being in Sydney, William Tom and John Lister went to work with the cradle'—the just-finished first cradle of the southern hemisphere—'near where Hargraves and Lister first obtained gold, and on the first day of working got 17 grains of gold. A few days afterwards Tom picked up a piece of gold in the bed of the creek in an indent of the rock, about one hundred yards from the junction of Summerhill Creek and Lewis Ponds Creek, now known as the Ophir. The value of the piece of gold was £2, 10s.' William Tom describes what took place on their washing with the cradle and finding nuggets of gold as follows : 'After we got the cradle fixed we began to wash away in good form. While I was working with the cradle John was picking up wash-dirt, and he said, "Look, William, here is a piece of gold," and it was exactly the weight of a new sovereign. We continued to wash for two days, and we got 2 oz. of pure gold. Then we proposed going down the creek. John and I were on our horses, the head of his horse being opposite mine. He said, "Here's a piece of gold." I will not say that I saw it before he got hold of it; but he said, "There is a stick through it," and he broke the stick off. However, this piece of gold weighed exactly 2 oz. Then we camped for the night, and a number of people were soon attracted to the spot where we had discovered the gold.'

This is the account, from the diary of one of the two men practically engaged in it, of the actual genesis of gold-digging in Australia—the genesis of the dish, of the cradle, and of the gold rush. Let Mr Dowel speak once more as to the value of this new industry : 'The importance of the gold discoveries in Australia cannot be overestimated when it is officially announced that

gold of the value of over £400,000,000 sterling has been obtained in Australia since Edward Hammond Hargraves, John Hardman Australia Lister, James Tom, and William Tom found gold at Lewis Ponds Creek, now known as the Ophir.'

After having waded thus far through this old-time rignmarole, you may probably be tempted to remark with a sniff, 'It's all very fine writing about nuggets and things that were got in the days of old. That's all over and done for long ago, and the fields are played out.' But, steady a bit, my carping critic. Are they quite played out? I say no. And my trusty old friend, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, comes once more to the rescue; for, on opening my morning copy of that estimable journal of the 2d of May 1898, I get the following telegram of the finding of a rich nugget :

A RICH NUGGET.—2d May 1898.—A nugget weighing 138 oz. was found on Saturday in the New Break o' Day mine, Rokewood, at a depth of sixty feet.


And the day following, the 3d of May, there came this other one :

3d May 1898.—James Seymour and W. Atkins, miners, found at Blue Gully, Trentham, on Saturday, a nugget weighing 142 oz., valued at £560. They had sunk only twenty feet when they came upon the nugget. A rush for claims in the locality has taken place.

So you see, my friend, there are still little bagatelles of 138 oz. and 142 oz. knocking around; in the latter case to be got in quite the old correct style—just pop down a twenty-foot hole, and there you are with £560. It's as easy and simple as sliding off a log.

If I should be the means of causing any one to get the *auri sacra fames* very badly and start off to seek his fortune with the pick and shovel, all the harm I wish him is that he may at his very earliest convenience tumble across a good thumping sample of what I have called 'Lumps of Luck.'

WAR RISKS.

AR RISKS are being effected at Lloyd's.' The ordinary reader has noticed this phrase in his newspaper frequently of late, and may be puzzled as to its exact significance.

Let him give the rein for a little to his imagination. Every hour of every day of the year millions on millions of British capital, invested in steamers, sailing-ships, and merchandise carried in them, is afloat on the seas between this country and her colonies and other countries. How would the interest represented by this enormous capital

fare in the event of war? Doubtless the Government would, for one thing, commission and subsidise many of the steamers in the principal fleets, and their owners would thus be recompensed; but what of the innumerable liners which connect our country with every corner of the globe, the tramp-steamers, the sailing-vessels, and the merchandise carried in them all? In the event of war breaking out, say, between Great Britain and France, would our Government compensate the shipowners for their loss should their vessels be captured or destroyed by the enemy?

If Britain were victorious—as of course we believe she would be—would the amount of property thus lost be included in our bill of indemnity against France, and then ultimately be repaid to the shipowner and merchant? Whatever the answer to this may be, shipowners and merchants have recognised that, even if their money were to be recovered for them in this way, it would not likely be during their lifetime, and therefore they prefer to protect themselves in a more direct way against this risk.

The marine insurance policy, known as 'Lloyd's' policy, is a document abounding in curious and quaint phraseology. The part which refers to the contingency of war reads as follows: '*Touching the Adventures and Perils which we the Assurers are contented to bear and do take upon us in this voyage, they are of the Seas, Men-of-War, Fire, Enemies, Pirates, Rovers, Thieves, Jettisons, Letters of Mark and Countermark, Surprisals, Takings at Sea, Arrests, Restraints, and Detainments of all Kings, Princes, and People, of what Nation, Condition, or Quality soever.*' This clause, if left alone, amply protects the property insured against war risk. But, unfortunately, it is the custom to attach a rider to the policy, called the 'capture' clause, which reads thus: '*Warranted free of capture, seizure, and detention, and the consequences thereof, or any attempt thereat, and also from all consequences of hostilities, piracy excepted.*' This latter clause completely annuls the former, and throws the war risk off the shoulders of the underwriter on to the assured.

Up till a comparatively recent period it was quite easy to get underwriters to delete the capture clause, and by so doing they accepted the war risk, and this without any extra premium. More recently, however, the leading marine insurance companies bound themselves by agreement only to delete the capture clause on condition that they had the option of reinstating it on giving fifteen days' notice to the parties insured of their intention to do so.

During the Spanish-American war enormous sums were insured by merchants and shipowners against war risk. It may be said that the risk of any of our vessels being interfered with during that war was not great, yet owners and merchants freely paid the small premium demanded to get the risk covered, especially those whose property was in the Atlantic at the time. But it was at the time of the 'Fashoda' incident that this matter of war risk became a burning question between underwriters and shipowners. The marine insurance companies in a body gave prompt notice to all whom it might concern that in future the 'warranted free of capture' clause would be inserted in all policies. This they were entitled to do in virtue of the agreement above referred to. In this action they were followed by 'Lloyd's' underwriters, and thus the war risk is at

present uncovered by policies issued either by Lloyd's or the companies.

This position will probably be maintained permanently by underwriters, on account of the growing jealousy of other nations at our colonial expansion and naval supremacy. The risk of our being entangled in a war sooner or later is regarded by them as so appreciable that they will no longer accept it, as formerly, without being paid for. To give an idea of how they looked on the situation during the recent scare about the chance of war with France, shipowners were asked to pay from two-and-sixpence per cent. up to fifteen shillings per cent. to cover this risk, according as the length of voyage was from a week up to twelve months. These rates, though apparently not exorbitant, really represent an enormous aggregate sum when the value of the whole shipping interest of this country is considered. If such rates have to be paid for this risk when war is still uncertain and may never occur, shipowners are asking themselves what rates may be required to cover the risk when war with this country has actually broken out.

The present situation has led to the idea of a 'War Risks Association' being formed on a national scale to indemnify its members should they at any time suffer loss through the actual event of war. Such an association would have the double merit of keeping its members covered against war risk should that event actually occur, and also save for their own pockets the large amounts paid to cover this risk during war scares, which seem likely to become more and not less frequent in time to come.

WINTER EVENING AT STEWART ISLAND, NEW ZEALAND.

THE winter sun drops low, the winter night
Comes softly down upon the wooded hills,
Which all the year are green; above, the light
Of sunset glows, and sky and water fills
With pink and crimson, save where sea meets shore,
And all the glory fades—in shadow dies.
Like great white birds the fishing-boats creep o'er
The sleeping bay, that as a mirror lies
So calm, so still; and as they onward creep
A light shines, sudden, from the little shed
Where each boat lands what harvest she can reap
In the rough straits; the steady light glows red,
And trembles on the waters dark below.
The dusk grows deeper, and the fisher turns
His little craft to anchor; one doth go
Out towards the point; on board a red fire burns
Like a red star, until the screening land
Hides it from sight; and as the crimson hue
Fades from the frosty sky and from the bay,
And all grows dim, there flashes into view
The warning lighthouse signal far away.
Speaking of dangers on that rocky strand.
And winter stars shine coldly o'er the deep
As night draws close with silence, and with sleep.

CLARA SINGER FOYSTER.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

LIMITATIONS.

Youth is chiefly conscious of life's possibilities; Age, of its limitations.



HE enthusiasm of youth—how soon we learn to marvel at it; to smile at the memory of that golden hour when all the world lay sparkling before us; when cloudy skies opened bright windows into infinitude; when all the air was full of pleasant stir and murmur, of hands that beckoned, of voices that called! Life was long, the cup of immortality already at the lips; all things seemed possible to the brave young heart. When the ideal was so glorious, who could doubt the splendour of the reality? Who could guess that the triumph of achievement should pale before the glow of the conflict?—that of all the fair faces we were destined to meet none should ever seem as fair as that of our early hope? Yet so it is, though the knowledge comes but slowly; to some, indeed, beloved of gods and men, it comes not at all.

Not carelessly nor lightly do we part with our illusions. One by one they fade, they falter, they fail; and we pass on our way with clearer vision and colder heart. One by one the roses wither in our fingers, the golden apples turn to ashes, the siren voices grow tremulous and mute. We see our limitations. Recognising for the first time our own inherent weakness, we estimate—more justly, as we think—the strength of the barriers which use and wont have set up against us, and shake our heads sadly over youthful optimism and Utopian schemes. Once, blindfold, we rushed at a monster, to prove him, perchance, but a stuffed figure after all. Now we look, we balance, we hesitate, we yield.

Yet life without illusions—how bare it is, how cold! An earth without an atmosphere, stripped of all the cloudy pageant that daily feasts our eyes! Only those, indeed, who have gazed for weeks into the molten depths of a hot and cloudless sky, when the heavens seemed as brass seven times heated, and all life drooped beneath the pitiless

glare of day, can realise the longing then awakened for the golden mists of morning, the red bars of sunset, or for the fair white flocks of fleecy vapour 'shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind.' And the knowledge that we owe these splendours to a little water or a few grains of dust—does it affect our appreciation of them? Nay, our teachers talk to deaf ears. The cloud-land above us is still a fairy realm of infinite resource; and where they only perceive a 'foul and pestilent congregation of vapours,' we watch for white processions, hear Olympian thunders, or see 'aërial navies grappling in the blue.'

It is true that life grows more complex as we grow older. The world, once so sharply divided into good and evil, light and darkness, becomes the theatre where a thousand inconsistencies play their parts; where the wise man wears motley, while the fool has a reverend air; where the loudest laughter is he who is most used to the buffets of Fortune, and the heaviest sighs are oftentimes breathed by those whom Plenty has well-nigh surfeited with her favours. We change in much, but in nothing more than in the nature and magnitude of the claims we make upon the future. If we are worldly-wise, we moderate our expectations with each succeeding year, and look back with a tinge of wonder, not unmingled with amusement, at the boundless expectations of earlier days. What a wealthy aspect life must then have worn to justify the careless assurance with which we reckoned on the generosity of the untried years! Strangest perhaps of all, we looked upon happiness as our rightful inheritance, into whose certain possession we should come at no very distant date. To live, love, and be happy seemed the natural sequence of human events; and though each fresh experience brought forward a more unmistakable contradiction of this agreeable theory, we did not cease to flatter ourselves that, whatever the fate of a few unlucky individuals here and there, we at least must some day realise our expectations. Knowing not that happiness is but

an accessory to life, and one rarely attainable, we found our chief delight in the creations of our fancy and of our desire; and now, looking back on those youthful dreams with the juster perceptions of maturer years, we understand only too clearly that, when youth and hope were with us, we held the chief elements of joy within our hearts. The real delight was in the foretaste of anticipation, or, at the most, in the first brief, sweet moment of realisation. Our fairy visions have proved merely such stuff as dreams are made of, yet we wake with reluctance to face the cold reality; and, like Mr Zangwill's hero, echo with wistful approval Lessing's words: 'Dreams are our life.' It is a hard saying of Mr Morley's that 'experience often changes the idealist and the reformer first to doubter, then to indifferent, then to pure egotist, and last to hard cynic;' but there is only too much truth in the stern dictum. For the higher a man's hope is placed, the greater will be the reaction should it fail of realisation. The idealist and reformer is of all men the most sanguine in his youth. He resists to the last the attack made by Time and Experience on the citadel of his dreams; and, when forced to surrender to the inevitable, hides his rage and mortification beneath a cloak of indifference, or sears his secret wounds with thoughts of scorn.

'A cheap cynicism' is said to be the prevailing note of our time; and the remark only proves how hard it is to carry practical wisdom into the sphere of the emotions—in other words, how difficult it is to be reasonable where our feelings are concerned. Like scholars whose first high ambitions have failed, we are apt to pursue life's studies with listless eyes and indifferent interest. We have relinquished our cherished aims, but we have not allowed their place to be occupied by simpler ideals. Yet in every other department of life we

have long since recognised the fact of our limitations. Those 'spacious days' when philosophers and men of learning were wont to 'take all knowledge for their province' are of the past, and men realise that life is brief, that knowledge is infinite, and that he who would win power or fame must concentrate his attention on some particular branch of learning or of science. He is a wise man who has thus learned to limit his ambitions; he is a wiser who learns to moderate his desires. But though the rosy tints of sunrise have yielded to the more sober light of experience, there is no reason why 'the freshness of that early time' should not still revive our jaded energies. We may smile at the memory of its flushed fervours; but in our secret hearts we cannot but acknowledge that the old visions had a dewy purity and sweetness which shame our travel-worn ambitions; and happy indeed is he who preserves, to some extent at least, his faith—call it credulity if you will—in life's fairer possibilities. Like that 'true romance' of which our modern poet sings, his ideal may change its form, it may manifest itself in new and unfamiliar ways; but the 'shaping spirit' is still the same. He has exchanged, it may be, the dream of an earthly paradise for the daily routine of persistent effort, of high endeavour. He has learned to judge the conditions of life more accurately, to estimate the value of its rewards more justly—


To see a good in evil, and a hope in ill-success.

Exacting less from others, and more from himself, he clings to the belief that, within the narrow circle of his opportunities, he may yet realise some part at least of his boyish aspirations; may use the silent influence which he exerts in his day and generation

To speed the coming of the Golden Year.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER IX.

OW, Monsieur Browne,' said Madame Bernstein as she seated herself with her back to the window, 'we can talk in comfort, and, what is better still, without fear of being disturbed. It is indeed

kind of you to come and see me, for I expect you were considerably surprised at receiving my poor little note yesterday. What you must have thought of it I dare not think; but I must console myself with the reflection that it was written in the interests of another person, whose happiness is dearer to me than I can make you understand. To tell you the truth, it is a most delicate matter. I think you will admit as much when you have heard what I have to say.'

Browne accordingly reserved his judgment.

His distrust of the woman, however, was rapidly coming back upon him, and he could not help feeling that, plausible as her words were, and desirous as she appeared to be of helping a third person, she was in some way attempting to deceive himself.

'I beg that you will not consider me at all in the matter,' he said, seeing that he was expected to say something. 'I am, as you know, only too glad to do anything I can to help you. Perhaps it is regarding Mademoiselle Petrovitch that you desire to speak to me?'

'You have guessed correctly,' said madame. 'It is about Katherine. The poor child, as I have reason to know, is in terrible trouble just now.'

'I am indeed sorry to hear that,' said Browne,

a fear of he knew not what taking possession of him. 'But I hope the trouble is one that can be easily set right.'

'It is possible it may,' madame replied. 'But I think it depends, if you will permit me to say so, in a very great measure upon yourself.'

'Upon me?' cried the young man, this time with real surprise. 'How can that be? I should never forgive myself if I thought I had made Miss Petrovitch unhappy.'

'Not perhaps exactly in the sense you mean,' said madame, moving a little nearer him, and speaking in a tone that was low and confidential; 'but still you have done so in another way, Monsieur Browne. Before I go any further, however, it is necessary that I should remind you that I am an old woman.' Here she smiled a little coquettishly, as if to remind him that her words, in this particular instance, must not be taken too literally. 'I am an old woman,' she continued—'old enough to be your mother, perhaps; at any rate old enough to be able to say what I am going to say without fear of giving offence, or of having my motives misconstrued. Monsieur Browne, as you are well aware, Katherine is only a young girl, and, like other young girls, she has her dreams. Into those dreams you have come, and what is the result? I will leave it to your common-sense, and perhaps a little to your vanity, to read between the lines. Had you been differently situated it would not have mattered. But at the time that you rendered her that great service on the mountains above Merok she had no idea who you were. But later on, when you were so kind to us in London, though you did your best to prevent it, we discovered all about you. Immediately, as is often the way with young girls, a change came. She is simplicity itself. She is also the soul of honour. She feared to let her true soul be seen lest you might think that we were cultivating your acquaintance for the sake of your wealth.'

'I never dreamt of such a thing,' Browne replied indignantly. 'That is the worst part of being a rich man, Madame Bernstein. One-half of the world preys upon you for your money, while a large number will not be friendly to you lest they may be supposed to be doing the same. I should be a cad of the first water if I had ever thought for a moment that Miss Petrovitch was capable of such a thing.'

From the way he spoke Madame Bernstein saw that she had overshot her mark, and she was quick to make up for her mistake.

'I do not think I said that we thought so, Monsieur Browne,' she said. 'I only remarked that I feared my ward was afraid lest you might do so.'

'She might have known me better than that,' said Browne a little reproachfully. 'But perhaps

you will tell me what it is you wish me to do?'

'Ah! In asking that question you bring me to the most difficult point in our interview,' she replied. 'I will show you why. Before I do so, however, I want you to give me your promise that you will not be offended at what I am about to say to you.'

'I will certainly promise that,' Browne answered.

'I am going to put your friendship to a severe test,' madame continued. She paused for a moment as if to collect her thoughts. When she spoke again it was with an abruptness that was most disconcerting. 'You must be blind indeed,' she said, 'if you cannot see, Monsieur Browne, that Katherine loves you.'

The revulsion of feeling caused by her announcement of this fact was so strong that, though Browne tried to speak, he found he was incapable of uttering a word. And yet, though she seemed so certain of what she said, there was something in the way she said it that did not ring quite true.

'Monsieur Browne,' she went on, leaning a little forward and speaking with still greater earnestness, 'I feel sure you will understand how much all this means not only to her but to me. Since my poor husband's death she has been all I have had to live for, and it cuts my heart in pieces to see her so unhappy.'

'But what would you have me do?' inquired Browne.

'That is the very subject I wished to speak to you about,' madame replied. Then, shaking her head sadly, she continued: 'Ah, Monsieur Browne, you do not know what it is to love, and to love in vain. The favour I am going to ask of you is that you should go away; that you should not let Katherine see you again.'

'But, madame,' said Browne, 'why should I go away? What if I love her as you say she loves me?'

The lady uttered a little cry as if of astonishment.

'If you loved her all would be different,' she cried, clasping her hands together—'so very, very different.'

'Then let it be as different as you please,' cried Browne, springing to his feet. 'For I do love her, and with my whole heart and soul, as I should have told her had she not left London so suddenly the other day.'

Looking back on it now, Browne is obliged to confess that the whole scene was theatrical in the extreme. Madame Bernstein, on hearing the news, behaved with the most amiable eccentricity; she sprang from her chair, and, taking his hand in hers, pressed it to her heart. If her behaviour counted for anything, this would seem to have been the happiest moment of her life. In the middle of it all the sound of a

light footstep reached them from the corridor outside.

'Hush!' said Madame Bernstein, holding up her finger in warning. 'It is Katherine! I implore you not to tell her that I have said this to you.'

'You may depend upon my not doing so,' Browne answered.

An instant later the girl, whose happiness they appeared to be so anxious to promote, entered the room. Her surprise and confusion at finding Browne there may be better imagined than described. But if the position were embarrassing for her, how much more so was it for Browne! He stood before her like a schoolboy detected in a fault, and who waits to be told what his punishment will be.

'Monsieur Browne was kind enough to take pity on my loneliness,' said Madame Bernstein, by way of explanation, but with a slight falter in her voice which told the young man that, although she wished him to think otherwise, she really stood in some awe of her companion. 'We have had a most interesting discussion on modern French art. I had no idea that Monsieur Browne was so well acquainted with the subject.'

'It is the one thing of all others in which I take the greatest possible interest,' replied Browne, with corresponding gravity. But he dared not look at Katherine's face, for he knew she was regarding him with a perplexed and somewhat disappointed look, as if she were not quite certain whether he was telling the truth. She did not know how to account for his presence there, and in some vague way it frightened her. It was plain, at any rate, that she placed no sort of reliance in her guardian's somewhat far-fetched explanation.

Seeing that she was likely to be *de trop*, that lady made an excuse and left the room. After she had gone, and the door had closed behind her, things passed from bad to worse with the couple she had left behind. Browne knew exactly what he wanted to say, but he did not know how to say it. Katherine said nothing at all; she was waiting for him to make the first move.

At last Browne could bear the silence no longer. Advancing towards the girl, he managed to obtain possession of her hands before she became aware of his intention.

Holding them in his, he looked into her face and spoke.

'Katherine,' he said, in a voice that trembled with emotion, 'cannot you guess why I am here?'

'I understood that you came to see Madame Bernstein,' she faltered, not daring to look up into his face.

'You know as well as I do that, while I made that excuse, it was not my real reason,' he answered. 'Katherine, I came to see you because I have something to say to you which must be said at once, which cannot be delayed any longer.

I would have spoken to you in London had you vouchsafed me an opportunity, but you left so suddenly that I never had the chance of opening my lips. What I want to tell you, Katherine, is that I love you with my whole heart and soul; God knows I love you better than my life, and I shall love you to the day of my death.'

She uttered a little cry, and endeavoured to withdraw her hands from his grasp, but he would not let them go.

'Surely you must have known all this long since,' he continued with relentless persistence. 'You believe, don't you, that I mean what I say?'

'I must not hear you,' she answered. 'I cannot bear it. You do not know what you are saying.'

'I know all I want to know,' said Browne; 'and I think, Katherine, you on your part know how deeply in earnest I am. Try to remember, before you speak, that the whole happiness of my life is at stake.'

'That is exactly why I say that I cannot listen to you,' she answered, still looking away.

'Is my love so distasteful to you, then, that you cannot bear to hear me speak of it?' he said, a little reproachfully.

'No, no,' she answered; 'it is not that at all. It is that— But there, I cannot, I must not hear you any further. Please do not say any more about it; I beg of you to forget that you have ever told me of it.'

'But I *must* say more,' cried Browne. 'I love you, and I cannot and will not live without you. I believe that you love me, Katherine; upon my honour I do. If so, why should you be so cruel to me? Will you answer me one question, honestly and straightforwardly?'

'What is it?'

'Will you be my wife?'

'I cannot. It is impossible,' she cried, this time as if her heart were breaking. 'It is useless to say more. Such a thing could never be.'

'But if you love me, it both can and shall be,' replied Browne. 'If you love me, there is nothing that can separate us.'

'There is everything. You do not know how impossible it is.'

'If there is a difficulty I will remove it. It shall cease to exist. Come, Katherine, tell me that you love me.'

She did not reply.

'Will you not confess it?' he repeated. 'You know what your answer means to me. Say that you do, and nothing shall part us; I swear it. If you do not, then I give you my word I will go away and never let you see my face again.'

This time she looked up at him with her beautiful eyes full of tears.

'I *do* love you,' she whispered; and then added, in a louder voice, 'but what is the use of my saying so, when it can make no difference?'

'It makes all the difference in the world, darling,' cried Browne, with a triumph in his voice that had not been there a moment before. 'Now that I know you love me, I can act. I am not afraid of anything.' Before she could protest he had taken her in his arms and covered her face with kisses. She struggled to escape, but he was too strong for her. At last he let her go.

'Oh! you do not know what you are doing,' she cried. 'Why will you not listen to me and go away before it is too late? I tell you again and again that you are deluding yourself with false hopes. Come what may, I can never be your wife. It is impossible.'

'Since you have confessed that you love me, we will see about that,' said Browne quietly but determinedly. 'In the meantime, remember that I am your affianced lover. Nothing can alter that. But, hark! if I am not mistaken, I hear Madame Bernstein.'

A moment later the lady in question entered the room. She glanced from one to the other as if to find out whether they had arrived at an understanding. Then Browne advanced and took her hand.

'Madame,' he said, 'I have the honour to inform you that mademoiselle has decided to be my wife.'

'No, no,' cried Katherine, as if in a last entreaty. 'You must not say that. I cannot let you say it.'

Madame Bernstein took in the situation, and adapted herself to it immediately. In her usual manner, she expressed her delight at the arrangement they had come to. There was nothing like love, she averred, in the world.

'I always hoped and prayed that it would be so,' she went on to say. 'It has been my wish for years to see you happily married, Katherine. Now I can feel that my work in life is done, and that I can go down to my grave in peace, knowing that, whatever happens, you will be well protected.'

Could one have looked into her brain, I am inclined to believe it would have been found that, while she gave expression to these beautiful ideas, they were far from being a true record of her feelings. Such sentiments, however, were the proper ones to use at that particular moment, and, having given utterance to them, she felt that she had done all that could reasonably be expected of her.

'With your permission, madame,' said Browne, to whom the idea had only that moment occurred, 'Katherine and I will spend the whole of to-morrow in the country together. I should like to take her to Fontainebleau. As you are aware, there are a

number of pictures there which, according to your own argument, it is only fit and proper I should study in order to perfect myself on the subject of modern French art.'

After this Parthian shot, madame, although she knew that such a proposal was far from being in accordance with the notions of propriety entertained by the parents and guardians of the country in which they were at present domiciled, had no objection to raise. On the contrary, she had her own reasons for not desiring to thwart Browne at the commencement of his engagement, and just when he was likely to prove most useful to her. Accordingly she expressed great delight at the arrangement, and hoped that they would spend a happy day together. Having said this, she wiped away an imaginary tear and heaved a sigh, which, taken in conjunction, were doubtless intended to convey to the young people the impression that she was dwelling on the recollection of similar excursions in which she and the late lamented Bernstein had indulged at a similar period.

'To-night we must all dine together to celebrate the event,' said Browne enthusiastically, taking no notice whatsoever of the good lady's expression of woe. 'Where shall it be?'

Katherine was about to protest, but she caught madame's eye in time, and desisted.

'I am sure we shall be charmed,' returned madame. 'If you will make the arrangements, we will meet you wherever you please.'

'Shall we say the Maison Dorée, then, at eight? Or would you prefer the Café Anglais, or Au Lion d'Or?'

'The Maison Dorée by all means,' said madame, 'and at eight. We will make a point of being there in good time.'

Seeing that it was impossible for him to stay any longer, Browne bade madame good-bye, and went across the room to where Katherine was standing by the window.

'Good-bye,' he said, and as he did so he took her hand.

Looking into her eyes, which were filled with as much love as even he could desire, he put the following question to her, so softly that madame, standing at the other end of the room, could not hear: 'Are you happy, Katherine?'

'Very happy,' she answered in a similar tone. 'But I cannot help feeling that I am doing very wrong.'

'You are doing nothing of the sort,' the young man answered dogmatically. 'You are doing just the very best and wisest thing a woman could do. You must never say such a thing again. Now, *au revoir*, until we meet at eight. I shall count the minutes till then.'

(To be continued.)



THE OPEN-AIR TREATMENT OF CONSUMPTION.

By EUGENE DE TERRASSON.



HE remedies which doctors have suggested for the malady of consumption are, like the charms of Cleopatra, infinite in their variety; but, unlike those charms, time has proved their ephemeral value, for it was not until the discovery of the microbe whose presence is the immediate cause of consumption that scientific and successful treatment of the disease was really initiated. And at the present time this tiny microscopic 'animalcule' forms the cynosure of the physician's eye; he searches for its presence, he strives to render its life a burden, and he uses every means to drive it from the patient's body with inhospitable insistence. It was experimentally discovered that fresh air was regarded by the microbe with the greatest distaste, and that sunlight caused its death; therefore the conclusion was arrived at that the consumptive patient should obtain as much open air as possible, and be exposed to the rays of the sun. What is known of the 'open-air treatment of consumption' has hitherto given the best results both in curing the disease and in prolonging life where complete recovery was impossible; and this method may be summed up in the words, 'rest, abundant food, and a life in the open air.'

The leading principle of this treatment of phthisis is that the patient should spend the whole day in the open air, protected from the weather, and that at night he should sleep with his window open. In recommending this method of cure it is necessary to overcome a prejudice, to subvert the axiom that the consumptive patient is to be rigidly protected from the least cold or draught; that the lungs are to be fed with impure or 're-breathed' air poor in oxygen (the food of these organs), and rich in carbonic acid (which nature has already thrown off), rather than with cold (fresh) air. What a domestic earthquake would entomb the doctor who had the temerity to suggest to the relatives that the consumptive, suffering from high fever and inflammation of the lungs, should be wrapped up and taken into the open air! Could any greater collision with traditional treatment, with the *obiter dicta* of family physicians from time immemorial, be imagined? Could any more homicidal advice be conceived? And yet this plan is followed in the 'open-air treatment' with conspicuous success.

It is difficult to persuade the patient that, as his disease has not been caused by cold, therefore warmth will not cure it. That cherished abomination the 'chest-protector' is a fetich which it is almost impossible to destroy, especially among the

lower working-classes. We have known many cases where the flannel shield has been the constant and intimate companion of the sufferer for years, where its divorce from the patient's person is a matter of tearing and pulling and ripping and undoing that occupies several minutes, so securely is it fastened. Its destruction is followed by much regret and great hygienic advantage to the quondam possessor. It is obvious that the correction of these and other prejudices founded on a wrong notion of the origin of consumption would, in the majority of cases, be carried out with difficulty in private residences, and the method of treatment is therefore generally practised in sanatoria, where there is done for the invalid that which he has not the means, the opportunity, or the strength of mind to do for himself. We know from incontrovertible medical evidence that consumption in the earlier stages is eminently curable, and it is for this class of patient that the 'open-air treatment' is specially valuable.

The doctrine that consumption has been and can be cured by a residence in the open air is by no means new. Indeed, many diseases which owe their origin to discovered microbes have proved, frequently by accidental experiment, to have been markedly benefited by treatment carried out exposed to the four winds of heaven. Sometimes a consumptive has left his cough in the African veldt; hunting by day and sleeping in the ox-wagons by night, he has almost imperceptibly thrown off his fearful incubus. At other times, in crossing the Pacific, the patient has given his disease such intoxicating draughts of ocean-air that, like Sindbad's Old Man of the Sea, it has relaxed its grip, and left him to proceed to the antipodes in peace, and with a renovated constitution. In connection with other diseases it may be mentioned that in 1854 a portion of the patients in the Austrian camp were treated in tents instead of in permanent hospitals. The results were very satisfactory. 'The most severe maladies ran their course much more mildly in the fresh air.' Tholozan reports of the Crimean war that, 'at Sebastopol, in spite of bad nourishment, and living in tents in rain and snow, out of 1200 sick scarcely any were phthisical' (consumptive).

The question naturally arises, To what peculiar properties are these beneficial results of fresh air to be attributed? According to Dr Ransome, there are several factors in operation. In the first place, it should be remembered that 're-breathed' or impure air, which, like tainted food, is bad for healthy individuals, is specially deleterious to consumptive people, whose lungs require the best

nourishment they can obtain—that is, the purest air. Further, the consumptive's lungs contain innumerable poisonous germs which indirectly set up serious constitutional mischief—such as fever—and which should therefore be got rid of at the earliest opportunity. Health demands that a minimum of 3000 cubic feet of fresh air should flow over a person in one hour; but in the open air, on an average, 324,000 cubic feet flow over an individual per hour. The scavenging power of this current must be enormous. Poisonous germs are continuously exhaled by the patient; but they are swept away, and fresh air is inspired; there is a constant ventilation of the lungs proceeding, with the best possible results. And the speedy diminution of the hectic fever which consumptives suffer from, and which is due to these poisonous germs, is thus largely accounted for. The fresh air, in conjunction with sunshine, acts antiseptically upon the bodies and clothing of the patients, still further purifying the air which enters the respiratory organs. Further, there is more active oxygen, or ozone, in the open atmosphere than in the air of dwelling-rooms, and this, while exercising a health-giving action on the structures of the body, destroys many poisonous germs. Lastly, sunlight itself is the sworn enemy of the microbe, especially that of consumption; and, exposed to the solar rays, this little germ, which inhabits the lungs of the consumptive in millions, and under the microscope presents the appearance of a 'rod'—for its structure, as it were, typifies its mission of chastening mankind—shrivels up, loses its lethal power, and ceases to exist.

Recognising these facts, a Continental physician, Dr Brehmer, proposed some years ago the 'open-air treatment' of consumption; but he believed that, for its effective engineering, patients would have to be content to resign their liberty into the hands of the doctor, and to submit to such rules of life as might be prescribed. At his own expense he established an institution at Goebersdorf, in Silesia, and the success he has met with has given rise to similar enterprises in different parts of the Continent and America, and, comparatively recently, to efforts on a smaller scale in the United Kingdom.

There are minute differences in detail at the various sanatoria, more particularly in the matters of food, exercise, and amusement; but the ensuing description of the method in which the system is carried out—although approximately characteristic of all—most nearly resembles that in vogue at Nordach in the Black Forest.

The pilgrim, arrived at the particular shrine of Hygeia which has been selected, may realise at once that the goddess has indeed enticed her worshippers from the world, for her temple is perhaps situated at the end of a remote valley densely clothed with pine-trees—ten miles from a station, and fifteen miles from the nearest town.

Streams probably descend the hillside in all directions, and the moist, aromatic, dust-free atmosphere acts like a sedative balm on the irritable lungs of the sufferer, soothing his cough, allaying the pains in his chest, and inducing a health-giving sleep. In withdrawing him from his surroundings one of the primary objects of treatment is effected—mental rest; and, as if he were in a second Land of Beulah, 'where the sun shineth night and day,' he is able from sunrise to sunrise to breathe the pure open air of heaven uncontaminated by dust, by respiration, or by other impurities. The visits of friends, although not forbidden, are distinctly discouraged, and it is an easy matter to imagine that well-meaning relatives might by their presence produce a state of mind the reverse of calm in an already irritable patient, and at the same time handicap the director who is enforcing a treatment at first sight somewhat drastic.

The houses of which the Nordach Sanatorium is composed are built of wood, or of stone which has an inner lining of wood in all the rooms. Wall-papers and carpet are repudiated as possible harbingers of those enemies of the consumptive—dust, dirt, and microbes. In the almost monastic simplicity of the rooms, cornices, projections, recesses, 'cosy corners' (much affected by microbes), ornamental dados, and other reminiscences of Vanity Fair are conspicuously absent, wherever possible to avoid them. The corners of the apartments are, in some sanatoria, completely filled in, lest dust and germs, like Puck in a gossip's bowl, should lurk there. The prevailing idea is not to provide resting-places for organisms which would vitiate the atmosphere of the chamber. There are many more microbes of consumption and other diseases in the sleeping-room of a house in Edinburgh or London than in one of these homes for the victims of phthisis. The floors and walls are not swept, but daily wiped down (to prevent raising dust) with a damp cloth impregnated with some disinfectant. The expectoration of patients—which is the principal source of diffusion of the microbes—is disposed of with elaborate and quite justifiable precautions, and the personal rules are very stringent on this point. Electric light is employed, thus preserving the air from the impurities of gas, and the heating is done as a rule by hot-water pipes. The dining-hall is closed by the end walls only, and the long sides are open to the air. During the winter a partial glazing-in of these sides is effected. The window space in each bedroom is very large, and *the windows are never shut*. The patient spends his day, winter and summer, in the open air, and if he is too ill to walk about he is carried out on a couch, and deposited in one of the specially constructed verandas (*liegenhalle*), where he finds other patients reclining in various stages of convalescence. These structures, raised two or three feet from the level of the ground and closed at

each end, are placed facing the south or south-west; they are from seven to ten feet wide or even more, to allow of the needful space for reclining-chairs. The drifting rain, the snow, and high winds are kept out by curtains, and the too intense heat of the sun by blinds. When the weather is suitable and the invalids are in a fit condition, they are allowed to sit out in the open. In the *liegenhalle* the patients lie from seven to eleven hours a day, only moving away for meals and exercise.

The invalids are under the direct supervision of a resident doctor, who doles out open air, exercise, and food in accurate doses, which are correlated to the exact constitutional condition of each individual. The treatment of the patient is largely determined by the amount of fever present—in other words, by his temperature; and he therefore takes his own temperature four times daily, and marks its progress on a chart. The physician gradually acclimatises the most delicate and fragile until they can stand frost and wet, reclining in the verandas. At first there may be complaints of cold and discomfort, especially in inclement weather. The director is summoned, and the complainant—usually an Englishman or an American—runs through a gamut of woes, of which ‘confoundedly cold’ is the fundamental note. The director politely sends for more wraps; but the windows remain inexorably open. Also, it is occasionally found that a patient resents the quasi-military discipline of the institution. One medical director remarks of these disaffected subjects: ‘I leave them to their own devices for a few days, and they very soon come to me, and promise to be good, and to follow the example of the other patients.’ If the weather is cold the invalids are encouraged to lie prone, as in that position the low temperature of the air is more easily endured. A visitor to Dr Turban’s sanatorium at Davos, when there was thick snow on the ground—the temperature being four degrees below zero—was surprised to find patients clothed in furs lying out in the *liegenhalle* after sunset, reading by electric light or playing chess and draughts; their hands and feet were found to be perfectly warm in spite of the frigidity of the atmosphere. The life of reclining in the open air hardens the invalid against fresh cold, excites the appetite, reduces ‘night-sweat’—so distressing an accompaniment of consumption—procures sleep, and reduces fever.

The feeding is another item in the treatment, which is graduated by a system of dosage or, in certain cases, as will be seen, overdosage.

At some sanatoria the patient is merely encouraged to eat as much as he can manage; at others it is one of the rules of the institution that he eat double what he feels inclined to! The excellent results of overfeeding appear the more extraordinary when we consider the feeble digestion of the majority of cases of phthisis. At

Nordach the maximum amount of food is not administered until after the lapse of the first few days. Then the doctor takes up a convenient position at each meal, and watches that the following liberal menus are partaken of:—*Breakfast*: Half-litre of milk, coffee and rolls, eggs and meat, as the patient likes. This is the only meal at which one can suit one’s inclinations. *Dinner* at 1.15: Half-litre of milk. First course, about half-pound of beef or fish; second course, about half-pound of veal, mutton, or poultry; as much vegetables as can be crowded into two platefuls; half-pound bread, half-pound pudding, rice, batter, custard, or ice-cream. *Supper* at 7: Same quantity as dinner, without pudding, and the courses are as varied as possible.

These two meals have to be taken under the eye of the doctor, and no servant is allowed to remove a plate until quite empty. Alcohol is allowed (as beer or wine). A half-litre of milk is nearly a pint.

The results of these feasts, which, it will be observed, are the reverse of Barmecide, are various; the ultimate effects are highly favourable, but the immediate consequences are, on occasion, disagreeable. In order to point out the great importance which is attached to heroic overfeeding, it is necessary to state that, in the exceptional event of vomiting occurring, the patient, in certain sanatoria, is made to come back to the table and begin the meal all over again. In the more lenient institutions he is graciously allowed to resume the meal at the point where it was punctuated by his retirement. This procedure is not so incomprehensible when we recollect that in the sickness, which so frequently adds another burden to the already grievously afflicted victim of advanced consumption, the administration of nourishment immediately after the nausea has ceased is not followed by its rejection. But the patient speedily becomes reconciled to the process of ‘stuffing’ when he finds that his weight is going up by leaps and bounds, and when he discovers that he has gained three, four, even five pounds the first week, and after one month two pounds every week.

When the temperature and weight are satisfactory to the medical autocrat, exercise is entered upon, and, like everything else in these semi-Utopian establishments, in a system of doses. While the patient lies in bed in the morning he is told how far he may walk, which for the first week is not more than four hundred or five hundred yards. To perform this pedestrian feat he is allowed three hours—two hours out and one hour to return; the invalid progresses at a snail’s pace, one foot being slowly swung in front of the other, so that the least possible strain is thrown upon heart and lungs. Great benefit is speedily felt, and the walk, which is taken in all weathers, is gradually increased in length until miles are accomplished. Forced breathing or ‘lung gymnastics’ are carried on in some establishments as

follows: During steady walking, five or six deep breaths are taken through the nose every hundred or one hundred and fifty paces; or, when lying in the open air, ten or twelve deep breaths every five or ten minutes (Dettweiler). There is in certain cases a walk constructed for the weaker ones, and especially those with heart disease, in which a slight ascent is first encountered, then a portion of level ground, and lastly a descent home. The patients are invariably encouraged to go slowly, to avoid talking, to breathe through the nose, and to stop short of actual fatigue. By the foregoing process the weak and diseased lungs are treated like the muscles of a sick man venturing into the air after a debilitating illness; the tone of the pulmonary organs is improved by the exercise, and every portion of the lungs is, like the patient's apartments, swept and garnished by the scavenging air, so that no holes and corners may remain where the microbes may form fresh centres of infection and mischief.

Even the unruly cough of the consumptive is subject to a species of disciplinary repression. A visitor at one of the German sanatoria, who happened to be present in the dining-hall when the principal meal was in progress, noticed that scarcely a single cough was heard from beginning to end of a protracted sitting, although the room was filled with people in various stages of consumption. On interrogating the director of the institution as to what measures were undertaken to bring about this happy state of things, the physician replied that he was obliged to appeal individually to the patient's æsthetic sense, to his appreciation of *les convenances*. It was his custom to explain that nature provided the cough for the purpose of clearing the bronchial tubes of material that had collected there. This effected, the cough was no longer a justifiable act; further, it was an offence against society—an impoliteness; for it proclaimed to all and sundry that your throat was tickling and itching, and that you were engaged in scratching it. 'Do you not,' he asks, 'restrain a desire to scratch your skin in public, even if it itch ever so?' The patient, as a result of these admonitions, when he feels the impulse to cough coming on, concentrates his will on the inhibition of this feeling; the sensation then usually passes away, and the less he coughs the less he feels inclined to cough, and hence the edifying absence of the symptom.

In all the establishments the patient is under the personal supervision of the doctor, who orders every detail of his life, enforces his rules, visits him two or three times a day, and induces the invalid to make of the sanatorium, in Dettweiler's words, 'his religion, his politics, his despair, and his delight.'

It has been proved that climate is by no means an all-important factor in the 'open-air treatment,' and therefore, although our variable English weather is not an ideal one for the purpose, there is no

reason why sanatoria might not be erected in certain suitable parts of the United Kingdom. As far as we are aware, there is as yet only one institution of this description for the gratuitous treatment of consumption, and that is in Edinburgh.

The results of the 'open-air treatment' are the most favourable of any special method of dealing with consumption. We have not heard of an untoward accident as a result of the methods adopted, in spite of the bold and apparently reckless manner in which individuals who, according to all preconceived ideas, should be considered the exotics of the community are exposed to all varieties of cold and damp. It is true they are suitably shod and mantled, that the lambs shorn of resistive power are not exposed at once to the untempered winds in the same manner as the bell-wethers of the flock who have almost recovered their health, and that they are all continually under the close supervision of mature medical experience.

Very quickly remarkable changes occur in the patient as a result of treatment. A more healthy appearance is substituted for the wax-like and unhealthy complexion of the invalid; appetite returns; 'night-sweats' lessen and finally vanish; the cough lessens; the fever diminishes; body-weight and general condition improve with marvellous rapidity. The course of treatment is, on the whole, decidedly pleasant, and those in a position to judge say that the termination of the patient's sojourn is to him a black-letter day indeed.

Before dismissing a patient it is ascertained beyond doubt, by certain scientific tests, that he has for the time, at any rate, cast off the slough of disease.

Certain objections have been raised to the method of treatment. It is stated that the segregation of a number of consumptive individuals may form 'centres of infection' by means of which the germs of the disease may be conveyed to the neighbouring healthy; but inasmuch as our town hospitals for consumption have not been shown to spread the malady, it is still less likely that sanatoria situated in the breezy open country would have this undesirable effect; for here the microbes, under the influence of chemical disinfectants, of sunlight, of fresh air, and of ventilation, are speedily destroyed and swept away. Another objection, of more importance, is that the sufferers are exposed to the depressing influence of the presence of many invalids crowded together. It is certainly a matter of astonishment and congratulation that the directors of the sanatoria are able to infuse a spirit of cheerfulness into their patients. But the rapid amelioration which usually occurs, the returning vigour, the consciousness of the gradual ability to fend off the lashes of a cruel scourge, amply suffice to nullify any elements of gloom in the surroundings of the consumptive

who is fighting his way back to health armed with that intangible Excalibur—fresh, pure air.

Every intelligent reader will wish the newly formed National Association for the Prevention of Consumption success, as it aims at carrying into every dwelling in the land an elementary

knowledge of the modes in which consumption is propagated, and of the means by which its spread may be prevented. For, from what we have already seen, we have been hitherto behind the Continent in our efforts to extirpate the fell disease.

FROM THE JAWS OF DEATH.

A TALE OF SIBERIA.



ATTACHED to my watch-chain there is a common brass stud, which, like the deep scar on my left cheek, has naturally more than once aroused the curiosity of my friends; and to satisfy them I have oftentimes related the eventful history of this little piece of brass. This indented, defaced stud is precious to me, as it is the relic of a dear and trusty friend. On many a quiet evening, while enjoying the ease of the arm-chair, with my pipe as sole companion, I watch dreamily the fragrant smoke as it curls to the roof, and muse over that eventful night. Strange and eerie thoughts arise in my mind—thoughts which recall that awful experience in which this little nail of brass came to merit the honourable position which it now holds.

It was once in the collar of a brave and faithful dog, a large boarhound—'Caesar'—as fine a specimen of that noble breed of dogs as one could find. Built like a young lion, he possessed, like all dogs of the same race, the agility of the greyhound, combined with the determination and pluck of the bull-dog; yet he was as gentle as a lamb when no danger was ahead. Once, when in the wilds of Norway, near the peak of Snaehatten, in the Dovrefield Highlands, prospecting for copper ore, he was the means of saving my life. We were belated on the mountains, having wandered too far off the beaten track; and had I not been protected from the bitter night-frost by sleeping close to his warm shaggy coat, I would certainly have perished.

But this other experience which I now give my readers cost the dear fellow his life, and very nearly my own. It was in the winter of 1891, and I happened to be in Russia at the time, away far up at Yenitsk, a small village about five hundred and fifty miles north of Tomsk, in Western Siberia. I was commissioned to this outlandish place in order to make the necessary arrangements for sinking a mine where the valuable minerals silver and platinum were to be found in considerable quantity. Yenitsk is but a village of some three hundred inhabitants, consisting mostly of timber-workers, trappers, and peasants, or *Moujiks*.

As there was every prospect of my stay being prolonged for a considerable period, I took with

me my faithful companion 'Caesar.' Later on I got sent out, among a few other things, my bicycle, a rather old-fashioned solid, cushioned machine. Except around the larger cities, the roads in Russia are merely great cart-ruts, over which the vehicle lurches and jolts in an indescribable manner, sometimes taking as many as three or four horses to draw a light load. As soon as the winter sets in and the ground gets covered with snow to a depth of two or two and a half feet, all irregularities are obliterated, and the landscape to the north of Yenitsk presents a great white undulating plain, with here and there rising grounds crowned with clumps of dark pine-trees. If after a slight thaw there follows a keen, severe frost, as often happens in Russia, the surface of the snow becomes as hard as a crust of metal, and able to sustain a good amount of traffic. This snow-surface sometimes possesses a peculiar roughness or 'bite' which enables the cyclist to ride as smoothly as on a cement pavement. One can easily understand what delicious riding means under such favourable circumstances. Such was the pleasant state of affairs one evening as I sat before the blazing log-fire in my comfortable little rooms in Yenitsk, reading some magazines from home, which, though sadly clipped and ink-obliterated by the government officials, had, in their tattered guise, been allowed to reach me. Looking out into the clear moonlight, the landscape, in its cold whiteness, stretched away as far as the eye could travel. In the heavens above the stars scintillated with unusual brilliancy. What a glorious night!—so silent; not a sound to be heard except the occasional baying of some of the village dogs. 'What a splendid night for a ride!' I exclaimed, half-aloud. Caesar, who had been lying stretched to his fullest below the heavy rough wooden table, lifted his massive head and looked towards me, as if to say, 'Well, master, if you like, I am ready.' I had often been out before, but never on such a night; so I prepared for a moonlight spin. My long cravat I wound round and round my throat, then over my mouth and nose, to protect them from the bitter cold. My hands were protected in a pair of warm fur gloves. Thus equipped, I stood thinking for an instant what else was required. My revolver! Should I take it or not? I had always carried

it before, and never needed it. I had often heard from my landlady's husband—a trapper—how, about a year ago, a pack of wolves had attacked a bear a few miles from Yenitsk; the bear coming off victorious after leaving four dead wolves and a good deal of its own fur behind. 'Well, I'll be safer with it,' I murmured to myself; 'I may have a flying shot at the small game—the squirrels, weasels, ermine, and others that inhabit the place.' After filling all the chambers, the revolver was pushed carelessly into the waist-belt. Summoning my landlady, I informed her, in German, as she understood that language and I knew no Russian, that I would be home before very late, and to add a few pine-logs to my fire. After a pleasant '*Guten-Abend*,' I was gliding noiselessly through the silent moonlit village, with Cæsar trotting ahead of me at a good swinging pace. How glorious was the night! How delicious the ride! The snow was in perfect condition, and the stars twinkled merrily overhead. Flying through the keen air soon froze the moisture from my breath, so that the scarf across my mouth and nostrils became frozen and covered with ice-particles. I will never forget the delightful feeling of freedom as we sped mile after mile across the white snow in the still moonlight. It brought back to my mind the lines in Keats's '*Eve of St Agnes*,' learned when a youth at school:

St Agnes' Eve. Ah! bitter chill it was.

The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;

The hare limped trembling through the frozen grass;

And silent was the flock in woolly fold.

We now began to enter a kind of avenue, or narrow pass between two rising knolls. The banks on either side were overgrown with thick brushwood, while crowning the knolls were dense patches of fir-trees. Slowing up I peered into the pitchy darkness of the wood, but the eye could discern nothing; the stillness was oppressive. Only now and then the rustling of a rabbit or squirrel among the dry, crisp brushwood could be heard, as it nibbled its scanty supper from the bark of the twigs. With a joyous heart I sang aloud, making the silent woods echo, and once more I shot away as on the wings of the wind. My ears tingled with the cold. On emerging from this gloomy avenue what a glorious view lay before me! We were now on a rising ground, and there below us, stretching away far in the distance, seemed a limitless plain; while a little to the left, like the fringes of a vast pall, lay the silent forest, looking so black and gloomy in the pale moonlight. Cæsar was far on in advance, running with his nose on the ground, evidently on the trail of some animal.

We were now fully thirty miles from Yenitsk and drifting farther and farther into the wilderness. After having the delightful experience of flying down a long decline, with my feet on the rests, I decided to take a wide curve and turn my face homewards. In doing so the bicycle

gave a bump as if dropping into a cart-rut. Having experienced the same sensation once or twice during the evening, my curiosity was aroused; and, after dismounting, I examined the spot. It was a bear's track. Stretching away across the snow, like the dots on a great map, lay the foot-prints of the heavy beast. From the direction of the paw, it was evident he had made his way to the forest. Before remounting I stood overawed with the deep solemnity of the scene. The stars twinkled; a death-stillness reigned. Only those who have experienced being alone at midnight on the wide sea or in the desert can understand the solemnising effect it had on my spirit. But hark! what strange sound was that? I turned my ear to listen. Ah! there it is again. In an instant I could distinctly hear a jangling, discordant sound of short yelps and howls—a sound which, when once heard, can never be forgotten. A pain darted across my heart, my breath came in gasps, as the thought flashed upon me: 'Wolves! Can it be possible?' While standing for the moment petrified with horror, I could plainly see, issuing from the skirts of the great forest to the left, a number of black objects, one after another. Their fiendish chorus of howls now came clear and distinct; they were after us. Cæsar watched, with startled look, the pack of moving objects, and, with cocked ears and bristling mane, gave a few deep, ominous growls. Wolves, and thirty miles from human help! O God! I knew it must be a race for life. But I was young and strong. My limbs were hardened with exercise; I determined to give the brutes a hard race. With a trembling hand I patted Cæsar's rough neck in an encouraging manner; though, to tell the truth, it was I who received encouragement on finding the bristles of his neck stiff and his whole frame rigid as iron.

'Never fear, Cæsar, my lad,' I muttered in tones thick from fear; 'let me see you do your best.' He was my only friend; my life depended upon him; and nobly, poor fellow, he stuck by me to the very last.

Mounting in an instant, I rode with such feelings as I never before experienced. Fear lends us wings, and we soon found ourselves ahead of our enemies. The long, delightful decline of half-an-hour ago was now a steep hill, and a terror to me. I determined to keep up the distance between our enemies, but I could plainly see that the brutes were gaining on us. Strange thoughts kept running through my brain—thoughts of a dear old home in Scotland, where dear faces were waiting for me; every one I loved passed before me, and such visions nerved me to the utmost. Glancing occasionally round my shoulder, I could distinguish in the moonlight a string of black animals following us tirelessly, while their fiendish yelps and howls chilled my very blood. Would my flesh be torn by these cruel fangs? Would I ever feel their horrid breath against my face, or look

into those horrid, cruel, green eyes? 'O God! help me,' I muttered between my tightened lips. It was so hard to die away from human help, and in such a manner. My path now lay round a knoll of pine-trees on the rising ground. I strained every nerve to get the advantage of those cunning brutes; but, alas! with a sinking heart, I could plainly see the wolves were making to cross the knoll and cut off my escape at the other side. I could see them distinctly, fully half-a-dozen lean, hungry-looking brutes, like ill-fed collie dogs, all making towards the slope and entering into the dark wood. I felt my life now hung in the balance. Faithful Cæsar was running alongside of me, panting heavily, poor brute. I could feel the beads of sweat trickle down my cheeks. Would we round the knoll before the wolves got through it? If so, then we had a fair chance; if not, what then? A few pistol-shots, a savage snarl and snap, a hungry wolf upon my breast, a tumble, and a dozen foaming fangs tearing me at once. All would soon be ended. I felt as in a horrible dream. Never before had I breathed so fervent a prayer for Heaven's help. But, ah! how silent were the heavens! The moon shone as quietly as before; the stars twinkled as before. I strained every muscle, and already felt the thick cravat like to choke me. My life depended upon a few minutes—the suspense was terrible. I rounded the knoll breathless, but felt an inexpressible thrill of thankfulness and joy as I saw all was clear before us. We were first. Cæsar, poor fellow, was beginning to lag behind. I was sorry for him, and cried some words of encouragement, which he answered with a whining yelp; but he kept on bravely. Scarcely had we got clear of the knoll when the brushwood crashed, and the horrid howls of the wolves, as they issued from the wood, reached my ears. They had been cheated of their prey, and were now more savage than ever.

How long was this terrible nightmare going to last? We made the best of our advantage. Having now reached the top of the rising ground, we widened the distance between our pursuers. We were now ten miles from the village of Yeniuisk. How I yearned to reach the first hut on the outskirts, after which the wolves would probably slink off. But our escape had disappointed them, and they would no doubt pursue us to the very last, as they had done about two years ago to a horse-sleigh. There was yet one more grand effort to be made, and all would be either lost or won. About five miles from the outskirts of the village my path lay for about half a mile between two knolls of trees, with banks sloping steeply upwards on either side. Would we be successful this time and be before them, or would the wolves learn from their last failure and cut through the patch of trees at a better angle and thus entrap us? As we approached the dark avenue between the steep banks, through which, but a short time

ago, I had sung so lustily in the jollity of my heart, I felt a cold dread creep over me, as if I were riding to my tomb. I must prepare myself for the worst. Freeing my right hand, I felt nervously for my revolver, and fired one shot before me to frighten the beasts. How loud the crack reverberated through that solemn stillness!—a stillness which seemed only broken by the thumping of my heart and my own panting. I, too, could hear Cæsar pant heavily behind me; but somehow the loud crack of the revolver broke the oppressive and death-like suspense. I gained fresh courage and confidence in myself, and seemed to gain a firmer hold of life. I strained every nerve; the bicycle, old machine as it was, behaved splendidly. Crash! crash! went the brushwood up the bank a little in front of me. A fierce, savage yelp told me that we were hemmed in at last. In an instant three large wolves shot down the bank a few yards in front of me. I fired—the foremost turned a somersault in the snow. I fired again, but missed.

I glanced behind me, and saw a deadly battle waging between Cæsar and a large wolf. I seemed to slip my right foot all of a sudden, and, to my dismay, I found the pedal had worked loose and dropped off. My last hope was now gone. The sinews of my legs seemed already like to crack. I saw the final scene was drawing near. A gaunt brute, with eyeballs gleaming with a horrid greenish fire, sprang at me from the bank. As I rode past I heard his jaws snap together like a steel trap. In a few moments he was again in front of me. He made another spring. I fired, but too late. His skull came into collision with my hand, and directed the bullet skywards. I felt his horrid breath in my face; his gleaming, fiendish eyes stared into mine, and in an instant we rolled over together in the snow. A cold shiver still runs through me as I think of that awful moment. We were both somewhat stunned. I staggered to my feet; the heavens seemed ablaze with fireworks. Moon and stars wheeled round and round, while a loud noise as of a cataract sounded in my ears. Luckily I happened to be uppermost in the fall; otherwise I could not tell my tale. The wolf was below the bicycle; and my weight, combined with the shock of the fall, stunned him for a few seconds. My revolver—it was gone! The next instant the brute was up and at me with snarling jaws, his white fangs gleaming in the pale moonlight. Cæsar, poor fellow, had done valiant service, but he was sadly maimed. The blood-marks followed him on the snow. It was a stand-up fight with death. I found this could not last, and my end was drawing near. As the wolf made another attack my boot caught him heavily on the under jaw, which helped to keep him at bay a little longer. My heart sank within me as I heard a horrid exulting howl, and saw another wolf rush down the bank towards me. Cæsar flew at the one, while the

other sprang upon my breast and tried to reach my throat. Luckily my thick cravat protected me, and we fell together in the snow. Desperation gave me almost superhuman strength. I clutched his shaggy breast and tried to hold him at arm's-length, but his claws tore me frightfully. It was then I received that deep scar upon my cheek which I will carry to my grave. How long this battle lasted I cannot tell. It seemed years. I felt a strange dreamy sensation stealing over me, and gradually I must have swooned away.

When I came to my senses I found myself wrapped up in bed in my little room in Yenitusk, with the landlady—kind soul that she was—bending over me and bathing my face. I lay in bed with fever for many days, and the memory of that awful night haunted my mind. For some five weeks I was confined to bed 'in daily doubt whether to die or live;' but with careful nursing

I managed to pull through. A few scars remain behind, reminding me that my moonlight experience was no nightmare, but a stern and terrible reality. The villagers heard the pistol-shots and the howling of the wolves, and turned out with lanterns and weapons to my assistance. They had arrived not a moment too soon. I was found lying bleeding and insensible in the snow, with the body of a dead wolf beside me. Cæsar had evidently come to my rescue, and finished my last antagonist. The villagers carried Cæsar home; but he died, poor fellow, the next day from his wounds. How I would have liked just to have patted him for the last time, or held his head during his last moments! No doubt, poor dog, he missed me. The only relic we could find of him was a remnant of his leather collar, in which there still remained *one small brass stud*. This was found on the very spot where the two of us had fought so bravely for our lives.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A NEW USE FOR SAWDUST.



HERE are few waste products now, for human ingenuity finds a use for most things. Sawdust, the accumulation of which in certain trades was at one time regarded as a nuisance, is now turned to many useful purposes; but certainly few would have anticipated that it would ever be employed for the production of alcohol. Yet it is a fact that works are now in progress for the manufacture of the potent spirit from sawdust. The process has been worked out by E. Simonsen, a Dane; and the method consists in treating the sawdust with dilute acid under pressure, by which the lignin is converted into sugar; fermentation with yeast follows, and alcohol is the result. Fuller particulars may be found in the *Journal of the Society of Chemical Industry* for 1898, pp. 365-481.

NEW TYPE OF ORGAN.

The organ has long been known as the king of musical instruments; and although many improvements have naturally been introduced into its manufacture since the time of Father Smith, in general structural arrangements it remains much as it did in the day of that grand old builder. A new system has, however, been recently introduced in America, which represents a wide departure from the old method in vogue in Europe. Messrs Austin Brothers of Detroit are the patentees of this novel system, which is said to possess many advantages. In the old method of building, separate bellows furnish wind by means of wind-trunks to a wind-chest, upon which the pipes are arranged, the air finding access to them through

channels closed with pallets which are controlled by the keys beneath the organist's fingers. In the new organ, bellows and wind-chest form one huge reservoir, and at the same time part of the framework of the instrument. The wind-supply to all the pipes is direct from this chest, without the intervention of channels or wind-trunks. A large organ built on this principle, and erected at Hartford, Connecticut, was opened at the close of the past year. A similar instrument, built specially for inspection in this country, has been erected at Knuston Lodge, Ilchester, Wellingborough.

THE PANAMA CANAL.

According to the *Washington Post*, we are some of us still destined to see the Panama Isthmus cut through, and a great canal established between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. Although little is said about it, the work now in progress is on such a scale of magnitude that the enterprise is bound to come to a successful issue. Four thousand men are employed in a business-like and scientific manner, which, if it had been pursued in the early days of the operations, would long ago have opened the isthmus to the traffic of the world. The Canal Company owns the railway which traverses the little neck of land—forty-seven miles in breadth—that ties together the two Americas; and this railway naturally is of great service in the prosecution of the work.

MISCHIEVOUS ELECTRIC CURRENTS.

Electrical action is sometimes set up in quarters where it is not only not desired but is prejudicial. A curious case of this kind recently occurred at the port of Leghorn, and was fought out in the Italian law courts. It seems that certain wooden

yachts with coppered bottoms were anchored in the Darsena harbour of Leghorn, not far from various new warships and other iron and steel vessels. It was found that the copper vessels, aided by the steel ropes which found a common centre in the buoys to which they were attached, set up galvanic action, which had a most serious and corrosive effect upon the steel and iron ships; and the captain of the port, therefore, became nominal plaintiff in an action at law to compel the owners of the copper-bottomed vessels to remove their craft from the harbour. The fact of material damage was proved to the satisfaction of the court, and the owner of the smaller vessels had to remove his property elsewhere.

A TRAVELLING EXHIBITION.

A novel commercial experiment is about to be tried by certain Austria-Hungarian manufacturers, backed by the support of their government. A large steamship is to be fitted out as an exhibition, and is to call at different foreign ports, the stay at each being in duration regulated by the importance of the place. The ship will carry a number of experts, each one of whom will represent so many manufacturers of one class of goods, and to these men will fall the duty of explaining to visitors the merits of the manufactures, and they will also be prepared to take orders for them. To obtain good linguists versed in the intricacies of the different industries would seem to us to be the most difficult part of the enterprise; but no doubt its promoters see their way to solve this problem. The arrival of the floating exhibition at each port will be extensively advertised, and the scheme will doubtless receive the attention of many buyers, if only on account of its novelty, or the desire to see whether the idea is worthy of imitation.

JOVE'S THUNDERBOLTS.

Many aerial observers attached to the U.S.A. Weather Bureau have recently been unwittingly repeating Franklin's historic kite experiment of 1752, with very startling effects; but, whereas the original experiment was conducted with a mere toy kite, the modern workers are employing for their researches huge machines, held by ten or twelve thousand feet of steel wire; for the primary use of these kites is to carry to high altitudes meteorological instruments whose duty it is to make records of the state of the upper regions of the atmosphere. On the finest days sparks can be drawn from the sky by means of these kite-wires; but it is when a storm approaches that things become serious for the operator engaged. One of these gentlemen reports that when he had seven thousand five hundred feet of wire reeled out he heard distant thunder, and immediately began to turn the winch which hauled in the wire. Suddenly came a flash which fused the wire; he saw a rope of smoke stretching away in its place, and he was for a moment

stunned. Another observer had a similar experience when he had only five thousand feet of line out; in this case, too, the wire was suddenly fused and the kite set free, the phenomenon being accompanied by an explosion which caused people to think that guns had been let off. These are by no means singular experiences, and the Weather Bureau authorities see no way to get over the difficulty except by the avoidance of observations on uncertain days.

A NEW FIRE EXTINGUISHER.

The great value of an efficient means of coping with an outbreak of fire at its initial stage is acknowledged by all; and any contrivance which is serviceable in securing this end is worthy of attention. The extinguisher recently invented by Dr A. M. Ring, of Arlington Heights, Massachusetts, provides a means of generating a quantity of carbonic acid gas (carbon dioxide), which is known to be a foe to combustion; and this gas, dissolved in water, is squirted upon the incipient conflagration by its own pressure. The apparatus consists of a tank holding several gallons of a solution of soda bicarbonate. On a kind of shelf above the liquid stands a bottle of sulphuric acid, which can be easily broken by the action of a lever outside the receptacle. A tube and nozzle for discharging the liquid in any required direction completes the arrangement.

PAPYRISTITE.

This is a new artificial stone-like substance, which is highly spoken of in one of the U.S. Consular Reports, and which is being manufactured at Zurich. The principal constituent of this substance is purified pulp obtained from waste-paper; hence its name. The material is supplied in powdered form, and is packed like cement in barrels or sacks; mixed with water, it can be spread like cement, will harden in twenty-four hours, and is then susceptible of receiving a high polish, if such treatment should be required. Papyristite can be cut, sawn, or bored; it is as hard as marble; it can be given any tint desired; it is adapted to all temperatures; and it is light, elastic, and inexpensive. It is non-absorbent of moisture or any filthy or obnoxious matter, and is not liable to the attacks of insects, mice, or rats. Samples of the material in a finished state, or of the raw ingredients, will be furnished by the inventor, provided that applicants will pay cost of carriage. For these and other particulars application should be made to the Papyristic Company, Post Fach 10,469, Zurich, Switzerland.

DUMMY BULLETS.

Many are the stories which are told of dishonest contractors who in the past have supplied our troops with food and articles of clothing which have turned out to be worthless at a time when the soldiers stood most in need of creature

comforts. But times have changed with us, and under present conditions such pitiful cheating would be impossible. It appears that the unfortunate Spaniards had in the late war this kind of insidious foe to deal with, as well as their more generous American enemies; at least, so it would appear from the report of a United States naval officer who visited the *Maria Teresa* after the destruction of Admiral Cervera's fleet. Here he found a number of cartridges arranged in groups of five ready to charge the magazines of the Mauser rifles; and if the bulk of the Spanish cartridges were of this particular make, it is not a matter for wonder that so little execution was done among the American troops. These so-called cartridges consisted of a metal shell filled with hair, with a sprinkling of gunpowder, and a bullet made, not of lead, but of wood! We doubt whether the rascally contractor who supplied his country's soldiers with such rubbish will ever be run to earth; but surely a few patriotic Spaniards may be found who will institute an inquiry into the matter.

DEPOSITING METALS ON WOOD.

According to the *Electrical World*, a new industry is springing up in Germany in the electrical deposition of different metals upon wood, in the same manner that such metals are commonly deposited upon other materials, as in electroplating and electrolyzing. There is little doubt that there is a demand for such an industry, for suitable designs in wood which could be coated with copper, brass, or nickel would supersede to a great extent the far more expensive work in the solid metals themselves, just as electroplating serves so widely for solid silver. There are many ways in which wood may be given a conducting surface, so that metal will adhere to it in the plating-bath; but some of these cause the material to expand by the absorption of moisture. The plan recommended is to first immerse the wood in melted paraffin-wax; then to place it in a bath of gasoline, which dissolves the paraffin near the surface without touching that which has soaked into the pores; after which the wood receives a coating of some metallic salt which gives it a conducting surface. It is now immersed in the plating-bath, and quickly acquires a metallic surface of any required thickness.

PHOTOGRAPHY THE HANDMAID OF ASTRONOMY.

Sir Norman Lockyer, the first authority on spectroscopic work in this country, recently gave at the Camera Club, London, a most interesting account of his twenty-eight years of labour in this difficult field of scientific research, and explained in a popular manner the way in which it was possible, by means of the spectroscope, to ascertain the actual composition of the distant stars. He said that the advance in methods of observation had been so rapid that it was now

possible to get spectra of the stars to the third magnitude as good in quality as those obtained of the sun itself twenty years ago. This advance had been mainly due to photography. 'Stop photography,' said he, 'and you stop astronomy as we now understand it.' The lecturer also said, in speaking of the enormous importance of photographic records, that it was a waste of time for the astronomical student to use his eyes, save to see that the apparatus was all right. By means of photography, millions of facts are accumulated automatically which can be studied subsequently, and such facts are reliable in that they are not biased by the personality of the observer. It seems curious that a great authority should gravely state that in making observations during a total eclipse 'it is ridiculous to waste one moment in looking at anything.' Truly photography may be called the astronomer's handmaid.

COMMERCIAL ELECTRICITY.

An important electrical enterprise is being talked about, and a bill will probably be introduced into parliament next session to give it life. The scheme, which is being backed by several influential manufacturers and capitalists, is to establish a large system of generating and distributing electric stations in the midland counties, so that the chief manufacturing districts can be supplied with currents for all purposes, including the working of railways and tramways. The various towns comprised in the scheme will be connected by electric mains laid along the highways, so that any manufacturer or resident can be supplied with electricity to be paid for by meter. This will be an enormous boon, especially to the small manufacturer, for it has long ago been proved by many that the working of small machines by the electric current is very economical. In most cases current can be supplied for such a purpose during the daylight hours at a much cheaper rate than at night, when the demand for lighting is likely to tax the full capacity of the supply station.

THE X-RAYS IN WARFARE.

It was long ago anticipated that Professor Röntgen's marvellous discovery of those invisible rays—which will easily penetrate certain substances, while they are obstructed by others—would prove of signal value in the hands of army surgeons. For the exact situation of bullets or fragments of metal in the flesh can be easily detected; indeed, such metallic bodies can be seen by interposing between the eye and the wounded part a fluorescent screen. In this case anticipation has been justified, and now every body of troops on active service carries the X-ray apparatus as part of its necessary equipment. Surgeon-major Beever recently gave at a lecture a most interesting account of his work with the apparatus during the Afridi campaign on the north-western frontier

of India, and spoke most highly of its merits. The Afridis are a brave and warlike race, but they are not very particular as to the missiles which they fire against opponents, provided those missiles are hard and heavy. When bullets run short they use bits of telegraph-wire, nails, stones, or anything that may be at hand; and, in consequence of this custom, the wounds received by our troops were of the most varied kind, and of great interest from a surgical point of view. Small fragments of metal which set up grievous inflammation, and in some cases blood-poisoning, with every prospect of a fatal termination, were detected by the useful X-rays, and removed. In many a case life was thus saved which must have been sacrificed in the absence of such a detector. Many of the Surgeon-major's patients were treated at the front and under fire.

CHRISTMAS ISLAND.

A most interesting account of this lonely island of the Indian Ocean was recently given before the Royal Geographical Society by Mr C. W. Andrews, who spent twelve months in its exploration. Many previous attempts have been made to explore the island, but this is the first time that the work has been thoroughly accomplished. The island is about the same size as Jersey; but, instead of being thickly populated, the total number of inhabitants when Mr Andrews left the island in May last was forty. Several coolies have since been imported from Java to work the valuable deposits of phosphate of lime which are found on the island. There are only five species of mammals in the place: two kinds of rats, a shrew-mouse, and two bats. The rats swarm everywhere, for there is abundance of food, and no enemies to check their increase. One of the bats, a large fruit-bat, is described as a great nuisance, not only because of the amount of fruit it destroys, but also because of its harsh scream. A peculiarity is that this creature has abandoned nocturnal habits, and can be seen circling about high in the air in sunlight—sometimes in the middle of the day. The climate of Christmas Island is a delightful one; and it is thoroughly healthy, for there are no marshes or stagnant pools, and plenty of fresh water.

A NEW ILLUMINANT.

M. Denayrouze has invented a new form of spirit-lamp by which it is claimed that the maximum amount of light, with the minimum of cost, is to be obtained; and by so doing has solved the long-contested question whether alcohol, properly treated, has or has not magnificent lighting qualities. M. Denayrouze recently gave an exhibition and explanation of the different models of his new spirit-lamp before the French Minister of Finance, with perfectly satisfactory results. The competence of M. Denayrouze is beyond dispute. Twenty years ago he was one of the original pro-

moters of the electric light; some years later he was among the first to experiment in gas-lighting with that great reform—incandescence; and but a few months since Paris, after many trials of the best methods for illuminating her principal thoroughfares, adopted his magnificent form of gas-lighting, which has also had great success in other countries. It will therefore be easily understood that when this *doyen* of engineers in the lighting world announced and demonstrated before the French Agricultural Society that, in his practised and capable hands, alcohol had become an element without parallel in the production of light, the news naturally produced a veritable sensation, which has spread far and wide. In the laboratory where his experiments have been made, M. Denayrouze has exhibited various models of lamps intended for the burning of alcohol, of which the smallest burning-point is not larger than a glow-worm, though it nevertheless gives the light of a good gas-jet. There are, of course, lamps of all sizes. The largest is mounted on a tripod, after the fashion of a drawing-room lamp for petroleum burning. From this sphere emerge many luminous points, the flame from which gives the effect of a ball of fire as large as two fists; while the light emanating from this novel arrangement gives an illumination double that of the electric candelabra of the Boulevards. It is all so perfect and so simple as to leave the examiner both puzzled and doubtful. For reasons which are easily to be understood, since the lamp is not yet before the public, the exact explanation of M. Denayrouze's valuable invention cannot be given here; but he asserts that, with a can of alcohol and half-a-dozen copper pipes, finger size, the poorest village can be most brilliantly illuminated.

A SONNET.

'To be and not to do!' To idly lie
With feeble, nerveless hands that try in vain
To use the winged hours that hurry by—
The golden hours that ne'er can come again.
Oh, great and unsolved mystery of pain,
Which dulls the music of Time's busy loom,
And twists Life's threads into a complex skein,
And fills the sunny world with sunless gloom!

Hush, hush! in patience still possess thy soul,
Till the clear shining comes which follows rain;
When all Life's broken threads shall be made whole,
And what was counted loss prove truest gain.
Then let the lips that murmured smile and say:
'The path of suffering was the perfect way!'

E. MATHESON.

*. TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
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Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



THE UNIQUE MRS SPINK.

By Mrs A. S. BOYD.

I.

FOR many years Albert Edward Spink had been a contented bachelor craving from Fortune no blessings other than he held. Throughout his boyhood, and during a portion of his riper years, he and his parents had resided in placid amity at Fairweather Villa, a desirable family residence situated in a quiet road of respectable Balham.

On the death of his wife the senior Mr Spink had retired from business, relinquishing his connection with the importation of indigo in favour of his son; and thereafter divided his time almost equally between pottering in his sunny garden and, with the aid of a vivacious press, studying matters of national importance.

The household necessities of the two were attended to by the joint service of Elizabeth and Emma, maidens who, although young and attractive-looking, were quiet and discreet.

Albert Edward Spink's years numbered thirty-five when the death of his father ruptured their tranquil companionship. Thenceforward the deserted arbour and the empty arm-chair served but to remind Albert of his loneliness. Speedily reorganising his household, he dismissed Emma, and retained Elizabeth to keep Fairweather Villa in order and render what little service he required—a function well within her powers, her master having resolved in future to spend most of his leisure at his club, and, except on Sundays, only to sleep and breakfast at home.

Mr Spink must have been nearing forty when one morning Elizabeth, her sweet face hot with blushes, interviewed him, and falteringly tendered the information that, 'if quite convenient to him,' she contemplated matrimony.

Though he could not with any show of reason withhold his consent, the idea troubled Mr Spink vastly. He felt secure with the trustworthy Elizabeth to guide his home affairs, and to see

that that portion of his heritage which lay in solid mahogany furniture, fine linen, and good, old-fashioned silver and crystal was maintained in proper condition. So for several days he felt decidedly unhappy, and was proportionately annoyed to find how greatly this threatened domestic upheaval disturbed his peace of mind. The prospect of being forced to look for and engage a new housekeeper lay like a load on his heart by day and banished sleep at night.

It was Elizabeth who wrought the solution of his difficulty.

'If you haven't got suited yet, Mr Albert, I was thinking, perhaps—if you've no objection, that is—that perhaps I might manage to stay on.'

'Is your marriage broken off, then?' Mr Spink inquired eagerly.

'Oh no, Mr Albert! But Jonathan and me were saying, what was to hinder me from living on here as usual, and him only come at nights? He's very quiet, sir, and wouldn't give any trouble. Why, you'd never hear him in the house; and he'd do a bit of gardening for his rent.'

Needless to say, Mr Spink, experiencing an incredible sense of inward relief at the prospect of avoiding a domestic rupture, promptly agreed to her proposal. As a matter of precaution, he demanded an audience with the intending bridegroom, whom he was gratified to find a modest, unassuming man, considerably older than his future spouse. Mr Lopham was naturally of quiet manner, and the pursuit of his professional duties—he was assistant to a local undertaker—had added a *souçon* of solemnity to his demeanour.

Their brief converse having assured Mr Spink that the suggested inmate of his establishment would be low-voiced and soft-footed, he had no further hesitation about admitting him.

So matters progressed, and save that Elizabeth wore a brand-new wedding ring on the third

finger of her left hand, and that her master was a ten-pound note the poorer—the value of the cheque wherewith he had sweetened the marriage festivities—there was no outward sign of change.

It is true that, just before their union, a sudden misgiving with regard to future generations flashed across Albert's mind.

'What if?'—

But no. The memory of the sedate elderly man whose affianced bride Elizabeth was made him confident that his fears were groundless.

Months sped peacefully by. Then the unconscious bachelor began living on a volcano.

Well-nigh a year and a half had passed since the wedding, when, on returning to Fairweather Villa one blustering November evening, Mr Spink found himself admitted by Jonathan instead of Elizabeth. He would have passed over the incident without notice but for the fact that a frilled apron of his wife's encircled Mr Lopham's manly figure, while a half-bashful and wholly delighted smile embellished his lauk countenance.

At the sight of these unwonted attributes Mr Spink could not refrain from casting an inquiring glance. Which look Jonathan answered:

'It's Elizabeth, sir'—

'Oh!'

'A—fine boy, sir.'

'Oh!'

'Yes, sir. This afternoon at 3 P.M., sir.'

'Oh!'

Overwhelmed by a surprise which was not unmingled with disgust, Mr Spink entered his snuggery and sat down to digest the news.

As he pondered, a persistent creaking in the hall just outside his door vaguely disturbed him. He endured it until the door-handle half turned, as though some one outside were striving to summon up courage to enter.

'Come in!' Mr Spink said sharply.

The door opened several inches, and the complacent face of Mr Lopham, his figure still girt with the ridiculous apron, filled the aperture.

'Which the doctor, sir?'—The proud father hesitated timidly, as though awaiting encouragement to proceed.

'Well?'

'The doctor said, sir, as how he'd never seen a finer boy, sir!'

II.



OR a space Mr Spink felt inclined to harden his heart against the infant intruder. When at intervals a faint echo of its penetrating plaint reached his alert ears, he would ruthlessly decide that the days of its stay under the roof-tree of Fairweather Villa were numbered.

But when, at the close of a fortnight, Elizabeth herself, looking pale and fragile, but divinely happy in the possession of the atom of manhood she carried so tenderly in her arms, appeared

downstairs, he could not find it in his heart to reprimand her.

On the contrary, he received the child graciously, poking its cheek with a hesitating forefinger, and making with his tongue and teeth those weird noises which ignorant celibate gentlemen are wont to deem acceptable to new-born babes.

Indeed, the kindness of his heart further induced him to purchase in town so handsome a set of coral and bells that Elizabeth could never allow the child to play with them.

Thus time passed, the presence of the uninvited guest at first making but little stir. So long as he continued a babe who, placed in his cradle, had perforce to remain there until removed, there was little friction. But when he began 'to find his legs,' to borrow his fond mother's phrase, and would insist on crawling after her, appearing at odd times and seasons on all-fours, like some young quadruped, matters were different. Then Albert was perforce obliged to accustom himself to a somewhat desultory answering of his bell, and to a delay in the bringing in of letters, if, on the arrival of the post, Mrs Lopham chanced to be hushing her tyrant to sleep.

The climax came one night, however, when Mr Spink took a couple of men, with whom he had been golfing, into Fairweather Villa to have some whisky and soda. After ringing in vain and receiving no reply, he explored the servants' quarters, to find that little Jonathan had been seized with a sudden attack of croup, and that, while Lopham was out fetching a doctor, Elizabeth had put the child in a hot bath, and dared not leave him.

It was soon after this juncture, too, that Mr Spink began to be assailed by doubts and misgivings. Unless he were mistaken, there was a not very remote prospect that little Jonathan might cease to be the only babe in the establishment. Knowing, however, that this was a subject on which he, as a bachelor, was scarcely qualified to judge, he bided his time in silence.

A morning did come whereon his most gloomy prognostications were verified.

A strange female brought in his breakfast, and with the toast and bacon served up the news that Mrs Lopham had had a little girl in the night, and that they were both 'doin' beautiful.'

Mr Spink possessed his soul in patience until Elizabeth had once more assumed the reins of management. Then, seizing the opportunity one evening when she tendered the weekly bills, he invited her to take a chair, and spoke seriously on the subject which for so long had perturbed his mind.

'You are a sensible woman, Elizabeth, and must understand that this—a—a—increase of family must not go further. When I agreed to Lopham coming to live here, and to there being no change of arrangement on your marriage, I certainly did not—a—anticipate the—a—contingencies which have arisen.'

'No more did I, Mr Albert, I can assure you,' murmured Elizabeth regretfully. 'And it's been very good of you to put up with us all as you have.'

Mr Spink was warm-hearted. Elizabeth had been a faithful and trustworthy servant for years, and at the sight of her repentance all his resentment melted away.

'Well, well, now the thing is past, we need not say any more about it. Matters can go on as usual.'

'Oh, *thank* you, sir!' cried Elizabeth, rising relieved.

'But I must say one thing. I hope—er—er—I hope it won't happen again, because—you must see for yourself, Elizabeth, I cannot have my house turned into a nursery.'

'No, indeed, sir.'

'Then you understand that, in the event of there being a prospect of this'—he indicated the round-eyed boy who was improving the occasion by rummaging in the wastepaper-basket, and the tail of his glance included the infant on her bosom—'occurring again, you must give me due warning, and I shall make a change.'

'Yes, Mr Albert. I do hope, I'm sure, that you won't have any cause to complain again, and I'll do all I can to keep the children from worrying you.'

She had taken the cheque and pass-books, and was moving towards the door, and Albert was congratulating himself that the interview, which was distinctly embarrassing to his kindly nature, had ended, when she turned round, and said hesitatingly:

'If you please, Mr Albert, Jonathan is in the garden now, sir.'

'Eh—what? Very well, I shall see him.'

It was a pleasant evening in early summer. Even in suburban London the foliage was fresh and green, and the air cool and sweet. The hardy ferns on the rockery, which erstwhile had been the pride of Mr Spink, senior, showed a pro-

fusion of graceful fronds. There was a goodly show of Canterbury-bells and pinks in the borders, and in the round bed in the centre of the lawn Lopham was planting out the last of the bedding geraniums. But the tranquil nature of the picture was marred for Albert by the presence of a dilapidated woolly monkey, pet plaything of little Jonathan, which, like a snake in the grass, gave a sinister touch to an otherwise Arcadian scene.

By reason of his proximity, Lopham inherited Mr Spink's cast-off clothes, which, when his professional duties for the day were over, he was wont to don for garden work. On this occasion his form was encased in a suit of summer tweed, rather short at the ankle, and slightly redundant elsewhere. A soft gray felt hat, predecessor of the one worn at that moment by Mr Spink, shaded his serious face.

As the shadow of his master fell athwart him Lopham looked up, and respectfully touched his hat. Irritably kicking aside the woolly monkey, Albert approached, and plunged at once into his subject.

'I have been speaking to your wife, Lopham, and telling her that I trust there will be no further additions to your family. When I agreed to let you both live here, I did not bargain for a lot of children. Now, while I will tolerate the two who are already here, I must warn you that the matter rests there, and that, should the likelihood of a further increase of family ever occur, I shall be forced to look out for a new house-keeper.'

Jonathan was slow of speech. During Mr Spink's admonition he listened silently, wearing the while the expression of a reprimanded school-boy; and when his master paused for a reply, reply had he none.

'Well—sir,' he managed to stammer after a pause—'well, sir, what you says is right, and Elizabeth and me, sir, we abides by your decision.'

THE COLLAPSE OF SOUTH AMERICA.



GENERATION ago there was a considerable air of respectability about South America. *Pronunciamentos* in the usual Spanish fashion were certainly never far away from some of the states; but there was a leaven of stability that reacted upon them, and enabled them to trade to an extent upon the good name of their neighbours. A glance at the map showed then an empire and a republic, the one of enormous extent and vast natural wealth, the other full of energy and enterprise, and both with a record about as good and as solid as the majority of the then Powers of Europe. Under

Dom Pedro, Brazil enjoyed steady and continuing prosperity, and British enterprise and capital flowed thither. The mixed population of Portuguese and blacks remained in comparative quiet, and industry of a kind was general. Such a population can only be wisely controlled by the higher educated classes; and these the empire provided, and protected in their administrative functions.

On the Pacific coast, the Republic of Chili, which from the first owed so much to Scottish initiative, and whose merchants to this day are of Scottish extraction when they are not directly from home, showed from the commencement self-

control and wise guidance. The population, while almost equally mixed with that of Brazil, was distinctly of a better type. The native Indian was undoubtedly far above the imported negroes of Brazil. The population continued to be controlled by the educated classes, with the Church organisation as a go-between; and the temperate climate and comparative poverty of the country induced habits of industry and laborious effort such as are never natural to a country with the tropical luxuriance of Brazil. In spite of a few petty disturbances, the progress of the republic was continuous, business was on a sound basis, her finances were well managed, her honesty accepted, and her future looked upon as assured. Quite a number of presidents of high character gave a good tone to the administration, economy was a necessity, and facilities for the development of the country were not difficult to obtain by responsible men. Chili was honestly prosperous and progressive. But, whereas the weight of Brazil was great and her influence paramount, her frontiers were not a source of serious anxiety. On the north and west her confines were rudely drawn, and not of sufficient practical importance, in her then condition, to cause serious friction. Uruguay, on the south, always turbulent in itself since its independence of Brazil, was aware of the superiority of its northern neighbour in all that constitutes a great power. The difficulties of Brazil then were never vital to the greater power, that could scarcely be said to have a vital point open to attack. The heroic struggle of Paraguay weakened all its neighbours except Brazil—a struggle in which Paraguay lost not only all its male population able to bear arms, but many of its women, who fought by their sides. Bolivia, amongst its almost impenetrable mountain fastnesses, was only vulnerable and troublesome when issuing forth to seek a seaport as a controllable exit for its products. Until Rosas ruthlessly settled the Indian difficulty, that and the long-continued quarrels with Uruguay and Paraguay occupied Argentina; while Peru waxed rich and restless and unreliable over her guano deposits, her nitrate-fields, and her wealth of minerals that seem almost inexhaustible.

Dom Pedro of Brazil, a man of great learning and great desire for knowledge, was an unwise emperor and did not read the signs of the times. Spending a large proportion of his maturity in European travel, he left his subjects to themselves, and thus taught them that they could exist quite well without their noble figurehead. Surrounded everywhere by republics, this empire was naturally not slow to learn the lesson of self-government; and, with such a heterogeneous population, self-government meant only too certainly misgovernment and misrule. The hereditary administrators had to give way to the most energetic, but hitherto untrained, upstarts. The strong central hand was weakened, and Brazil entered upon a period of

costly disturbance that unsettled industry, created a body of adventurers to whom turmoil was a necessity, and shook the confidence of the financial world. The boundless natural wealth of this, one of the richest regions of the habitable globe; the great interest of Europe in its continued prosperity; and the number of resolute, enterprising capitalists from the Old World who exploit its vegetable and mineral resources, and influence its administrators, give it a false financial standing in face of its delinquencies. It has fallen from its high estate, despite its capital of gilded palaces amid a beautifully lavish nature, and on the finest harbour of the world. Its friends look more with hope than with confidence to the future of a land that needs little labour and less capital to make it a veritable Paradise. Will the negro admixture, that enables the Portuguese to endure the climate, give backbone and stamina to this decaying Latin race?

If the 'Portuguese' empire has left Brazil in a questionable state of health, the 'Spanish' republic of Peru, on the Pacific, does not seem to have fared much better. Her fall, however, has been from a very different cause. It is unnecessary to go into details of her quarrel with Bolivia over an exit to the Pacific, of her jealousy of Argentina advancing southward, of her friction with Peru over guano. International difficulties are never far to seek, and republics are no more free from mutual jealousies than the aristocratic Powers themselves. If Chili were the aggressor, certain it is she was unprepared for the war with Peru and Bolivia, out of which Buenos Ayres was bribed and Bolivia eventually bought. The hardy Southerners were the conquerors—the ruthless and brutal conquerors; and Chili became suddenly rich and powerful through the guano, and especially the nitrate, of Peru. At the end of the war she found herself the Germany of South America, confident in her own valour, secure in her added wealth, and looking askance at Argentina, which had meantime absorbed a country that had recently been a desert, and was being gradually transformed through foreign energy and enterprise into a cattle-ranch and a great sheep-run. Patagonia seemed to Chili her natural heritage, which would have brought her better into touch with Europe—at present too far away round the Straits of Magellan. The railway from Buenos Ayres to Valparaiso has never been greatly in favour with Chili, and the holders of the concession cannot appreciate her great unwillingness to complete the gap across the mountains. She would greatly prefer one in her own territory, to cross by the pass of Villa Rica, and come down upon her finest seaport of Talcahuano.

Thus it is that the two powers that ought to be most solid and reliable, that ought to pay their way most readily, that have attracted most capital from this country for their development, and have most enterprising Europeans leavening

their populations, are dragging each other down. The same mutual jealousy, mixed with fear, that has filled Europe with armed men and emptied her coffers is at work in the South American states. Both go on building new ironclads, drilling and arming their adult population, laying in war munitions, and preparing to support their pretensions with the sword. Both have borrowed from Europe all that she is at present prepared to lend. We have not yet recovered confidence in Argentina since the last serious collapse that deeply involved London, although its financiers are again seeking to place a loan in the European markets. The splendid palaces of Buenos Ayres, the finest city in South America, have been built by English money that has not returned home. Chili has robbed Peter to pay Paul—raising money in the English market to hand over to Armstrong and Co. Poverty at the moment is the main cause of peace. If the English market was open to a war-loan, the two peoples now divided by the Andes would be at each other's throats. Chili has been seeking allies all around. Is it for self-protection, or to free her sword-arm for attack? She has sent a Minister Extraordinary to gain over Brazil, to keep her at least neutral. She has been specially liberal in her interpretation of the treaty with Peru. Her envoy to Bolivia has been particularly gracious, and apparently successful. But no one trusts either of the two possible combatants.

The story of all these powers is a parody upon republicanism. The differences between all of them is fostered by the governing families, determined to secure the fruits of administration at any cost to the multitude. What should it matter to a true republican whether he lived under one or other republic, were it not that the one was frequently more unjustly administered than the other? It would be difficult to say that the other was more justly administered than the one! The cause of the collapse of South America is not far to seek. It lies in the virtual enslavement and brutal treatment of the native races, which has reacted, as usual, upon the conquerors. Add to this the incapacity to submit to the control of their fellows of the Latin races, and the absence of wise control to which to submit. The original rule of the conquerors was based on spoliation, disregard for the rights of their fellow-men, and the greed of gold and love of display that was universal in the days of conquest. The republics which followed emancipation from Spain were only nominal. The power remained in the governing families, who rebelled periodically if their neighbours kept them out of their share too long. Extravagance, display, and the necessity for gold to maintain them led also to regardless methods. The overflowing purse of Europe, seeking new outlets, was tapped successfully. The ease with which this was obtained proved too tempting; and, when interest could

not be paid, repudiation came as easily. New projects, new propositions kept the interest from flagging; and the excessive capital of the industrious centres of civilisation returned again and again to the ocean that engulfed it.

If only peace were maintained it is probable that the goose would still go on laying its golden eggs, even to purchase the war-vessels and the war-material that were supposed to be needful to maintain it. But to supply two belligerents with the sinews of war to destroy our own investments does not appeal even to the multitude of blind investors; and at this moment the whole of South America, from Venezuela to the Straits of Magellan, is a very unstable area. Large proportions of the populations throughout the various states are of so-called inferior races. Those of Spanish, or Portuguese, or mixed descent are insufficiently educated for the most part, and are not yet permeated with the true republican idea, which, indeed, is not fostered by a Church aristocratic—when not autocratic—in its methods and administration.

What is to become of this great continent, with its marvellous natural wealth, which is yet only in its infancy? After four centuries of Spanish and Portuguese rule, the population of the whole continent—well on to twice the area of Europe—is probably not greater than that of the British Islands. Of the supposed forty millions not more than a fourth, and probably not really more than six millions, are of pure European descent. In Peru more than half the population is Indian, and a large percentage of the remaining republican populations is either Indian, Mestizo, or, as in Brazil, negro. The equatorial regions will probably be left to the present inhabitants with little important alteration; but if the other regions do not show more capacity for progress and natural increase of population, the Anglo-Saxon race, so called, will in all likelihood enter into possession, following their capital, their industries, and enterprise that have preceded them. Their pioneers already form an important element in all the states. Their civilisation is the dominant note throughout even the most purely Spanish republics. Their best citizens, anxious for honest administration and security of tenure, would welcome a strong dominating race, that could and would see justice done, and secure safety of person and of property. The collapse financially of South America may therefore presage a far more important and vital collapse in the near future, when the overflow of the United States and Great Britain, with probably the addition of the valuable elements of Germany and Scandinavia, enter in. South America, with its handful of whites, may soon be considered another Africa—if not another Australia. But for immigration, its population would advance backwards. But for Europe, it would rapidly sink into barbarism!

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

By GUY BOOTHBY.

CHAPTER X.

HOW Browne got back to his hotel is a matter of mystery to this day. He had an insane desire to tell every one he met of his good fortune. He wanted to do something to make other people as happy as himself, and, for the reason that he could find no one else at the moment, had to be content with over tipping his cabman and emptying all his spare change into the hands of a beggar in the Place Vendôme. The afternoon was gray and cold; but never had the world seemed so fair to him, or so full of sunshine. He told himself over and over again that he was the luckiest man on earth. He had already built himself several castles in the air, from the battlements of which the banner of Love was waving gaily. What a difference he would make in Katherine's life! She had been poor hitherto; now his wealth, the proper use of which he had never before realised, should be devoted to giving her everything that a woman could dream of or desire. In his satisfaction with himself and the world in general, he even forgot his usual dislike for Madame Bernstein. Was it not due to her action, he asked himself, that the present happy state of affairs had been brought about? In return he would show her that he was grateful. As for the morrow, and the excursion to Fontainebleau, he would send his man at once to arrange for a special train in order that they might run no risk of being disturbed or inconvenienced by other tourists. On second thoughts, however, he changed his mind. He would not do anything so absurd. He might be a *parvenu*, in a certain sense, but he did not want to prove himself one to her. No; they would go down quietly, sensibly, and unostentatiously like other people. They would enjoy the outing all the more if they did not attract unnecessary attention. Then another idea struck him, and he acted upon it immediately. Putting on his hat once more, he left the hotel, and proceeded in the direction of a certain jeweller's shop. Having entered it, he approached the counter, and asked for a plain gold ring of heavy pattern. He had at first been tempted to buy her one set with diamonds and a bracelet to correspond—two articles that should be so perfect that even millionaires' wives should envy. That time however, would come later on. At present all that was wanted was something good, plain, and in perfect taste. He felt sure she would understand his action and think the better of him for it.

Anticipating a large order from the wealthy young Englishman, whom he recognised immedi-

ately, the shopkeeper was a little disappointed. But he tried not to show it. With his precious purchase in his pocket, the happy young man returned to his hotel to dress for the evening's entertainment. Needless to say, he was the first to arrive at the rendezvous, but it was not very long before Madame Bernstein and Katherine put in an appearance. Browne met them at the door and conducted them upstairs to the room he had reserved. If the dinner he had given them in London had proved a success, this one was destined to prove much more so. Madame and Browne were in the highest spirits, while Katherine, though a little shy and reserved, had improved considerably since the afternoon. Before they separated arrangements were completed for the morning's excursion. Browne, it was settled, was to call for Katherine in time to catch the early train, and, in return for the trust reposed in him, he pledged himself to return her safely to her guardian before nine in the evening. Before he retired to rest that night he opened the window of his bedroom and studied the heavens with an anxious face. A few clouds were to be seen away to the north-west, but elsewhere the stars were shining brightly. Taken altogether, there seemed to be every reasonable chance of their having a fine day for the excursion.

But, alas! how futile are human hopes, for when he woke next morning a grievous disappointment was in store for him. Clouds covered the sky, and a thick drizzle was falling. A more miserable and dispiriting prelude to the day could scarcely be imagined. His disappointment was intense; and yet, in a life that seemed as dead to him now as the Neolithic Period, he remembered that he had gone cub-hunting in England, had fished in Norway, and shot over his deer-forest in the Highlands in equally bad weather, and without a grumble or a protest. On the present occasion, however, everything was different; it seemed to him as if he had a personal grievance to settle with Dame Nature; and in this spirit he dressed, ate his breakfast, and finally set off in a cab for the Rue Jacquarie. Whether Katherine would go out or not he could not say, but he half-expected she would decline. Having passed the *conciérge*, he made his way upstairs to Madame Bernstein's sitting-room. Neither of the ladies was there, but after he had waited for a few minutes Katherine put in an appearance, dressed in a tight-fitting costume of some dark material which displayed her slender figure to perfection.

'What a terrible day!' she said, as she glanced out of the window. 'Do you think we can go?'

'I will leave it for you to decide,' he answered.

'If you consider it too wet we can easily put it off for another day.'

Something in his face must have told her how disappointed he would be if she refused. She accordingly took pity on him.

'Let us go,' she said. 'I have no doubt it will clear up later on. Must we start at once?'

'If we wish to catch the train we should leave here in about ten minutes at latest,' he answered.

She thereupon left the room, to presently return with a cup of steaming chocolate.

'I made this for you myself,' she said. 'It will keep you warm. While you are drinking it, if you will excuse me, I will go and get ready.'

When she returned they made their way to the cab, and in it set off for the railway station. Rain was still falling as the train made its way along the beautiful valley of the Yerès, and it had not ceased when they had reached Melun. After that Dame Nature changed her mind, and before they reached their destination the clouds were drawing off, and long streaks of blue sky were to be plainly observed all round the horizon. They left the station in a flood of sunshine; and by the time they had crossed the gravelled courtyard and approached the main entrance to the palace, the sun was as warm and pleasant as a spring day.

It would be difficult to overestimate the pleasure Browne derived from that simple excursion. He had visited Fontainebleau many times before, but never had he thought it so beautiful or half so interesting as he did on the present occasion. When she had overcome the first novelty of her position, Katherine adapted herself to it with marvellous celerity. Side by side they wandered through those rooms of many memories in the wake of the custodian, whom they could not persuade to allow them to pass through alone even under the stimulus of a large gratuity. Passing through the apartments of Napoleon, of Marie Antoinette, of Francis the First, they speculated and mused over the cradle of the infant king of Rome, and the equally historic table upon which Napoleon signed his abdication.

The wonders of the palace exhausted, they proceeded into the gardens, visited and fed the famous carp, tested the merits of the labyrinth, and marvelled at the vineries. Finally they returned to the village in search of luncheon. The afternoon was devoted to exploring the forest, and when dusk had descended they dined at the 'Hôtel de France et d'Angleterre,' and afterwards returned to Paris. It was during the homeward journey that Browne found occasion to carry out a little scheme of which he had been thinking all day. Taking from his pocket

the ring he had purchased on the previous evening, he secured Katherine's hand and slipped it on her slender finger.

'The symbol of my love, darling,' he said softly. 'As this little circlet of gold surrounds your finger, so my love will encompass you on every side throughout your life. Wear it in remembrance of my words.'

Her heart being too full to answer him, she could only press his hand, and leave it to him to understand.

Faithful to his promise, he delivered Katherine into the keeping of her guardian before nine o'clock. Both declared that they had had a delightful day, and Madame Bernstein expressed her joy at hearing it. It seemed to Browne, however, that there was an air of suppressed excitement about her on this particular evening which he could not understand. When he bade them good-bye he returned to his hotel, feeling that he had come to the end of the happiest day of all his life.

Next morning he was standing in the hall preparatory to going out, when his servant approached him and handed him a note. One glance at the address was sufficient to tell him from whom it came. He had only seen the handwriting once before, but every letter had been engraved upon his heart. He tore it open, delighted at receiving it, yet wondering at her reason for communicating with him. 'Dear love,' it began, 'when you asked me the other day to be your wife, I tried so hard to make you see that what you wished was quite impossible. Yesterday we were so happy together; and now I have had some news which makes me see, even more clearly than I did then, that I have no right to let you link your life with mine. Hard as it is for me to have to say it, I have no choice left but to do so. You must forget me; and, if you can, forgive me. But remember always this promise that I give you: if I cannot marry you, no other man shall ever call me wife.—KATHERINE PETROVITCH.'

Browne stood for some moments, like a man dazed, in the hall among the crowd of happy tourists, holding the letter in his hand, and staring straight before him. His whole being seemed numbed and dead. He could not understand it; he could not even realise that she was attempting to put herself out of his life for ever.

'There must be some mistake,' he whispered to himself; and then added: 'She admits that she loves me, and yet she wants to give me up. I will not believe that it can be true. I must go to her at once, and see her, and hear it from her own lips before I will believe.'

He thereupon went out into the street, called a cab, and set off for the Rue Jacquarie.



C O T T O N B A G S .



THE neat cotton bag, filled with flour, oatmeal, yeast, salt, or other requisite of the storeroom, is now so familiar in the shop and the household that it is strange to be reminded that such a thing was practically unknown twenty-five years ago, and that its inventor is yet some years off the attainment of his own half-century. In the year 1874 barely a million of these bags were manufactured in England, and there was no factory for making them in any other country. At the present time the annual output in England alone is about fifty millions, while forty millions at least are added to these by the American manufacturers; and the total for the world—Great Britain and our colonies, the European Continent, and America—is somewhere about one hundred and thirty millions. In these one hundred and thirty millions it is calculated that nearly five thousand million pounds of produce is annually packed, of which amount Britain contributes seven hundred millions, representing goods to the value of some six millions sterling. Out of this huge quantity, nearly thirty million bags, employing seven million yards of cotton cloth, are turned out, at the rate of three hundred thousand a day, at the factories of the inventor, Mr T. Judge, in Kennington Lane, London, and travel thence to all parts of the world.

Mr Judge began early the business of an inventor. An idea that fortune awaited the man who should successfully utilise some strong and cheap fabric for packing dry goods—the disadvantages of paper being manifest—appears to have possessed his mind when he was not more than seventeen years of age; and after spending his leisure hours for three or four years in thinking the matter well over, and in planning the methods by which theory could be carried into practice, he set up in business as the first cotton bag manufacturer at the age of twenty-one, in partnership with a brother of nineteen. The machinery was his own invention; the workpeople had all to be taught; opposition and prejudice in the first place, and competition in later years, had to be faced; and the young firm's capital consisted at the start of the lad's savings only, a wholesome dislike of borrowing being one of its characteristics. It says much for the prudence and zeal of the head of the firm (who was soon the whole firm, for the younger brother died) that for ten years after setting up in business he remained in the office of a Lombard Street firm, attending to business there in office hours and to the running of his own factory in the earlier and later hours of each day; for, while he made the praiseworthy effort to place his own employes on the 'eight hours for work' footing, and has con-

sistently kept to the nine hours' working day, he more than doubled that time in his own case.

Needless to say the cotton bag had its infantile ailments and troubles before developing into the important article of commerce it has become today. Millers and other traders, whose appreciation of the improvement was necessary to success, looked askance on the novelty; town firms in particular being highly conservative in their opinions, and leaving it to provincial men to exploit the dubious new-comer. It was dearer than paper, and their affections clung to the old jute bag, which had come down from time immemorial. There were practical difficulties by the score to be overcome in the manufacture. It was hard to produce the cotton article cheap enough to bear a proper proportion to the worth of the goods to be packed in it; machinery had constantly to be contrived and improved so as to reduce the amount of hand-labour in all the processes; ink which yielded results satisfactory on paper was not adapted for producing good effects on a woven fabric, while its greasiness and smell, familiar to all who have knowledge of a printing-office and to a good many who are simply readers of the daily papers, were serious objections to its employment on bags intended to hold food-stuffs. Levers of wood and rope, with a man or boy 'thrown in' as extra weight, had to be improvised to give sufficient pressure for stamping the imprint on larger bags; and the respective cost and demand for the various sizes had to be considered. In the early days it was barely possible to turn out five-pound bags at sixty shillings the thousand; the fall in the price of cotton and the use of new machinery afterwards reduced this sum by one-half. At first the actual stitching-up of the bags was entrusted to the workpeople at their own homes; but this soon proved unsatisfactory, and a workshop was opened. Not only the idealist's short hours but ideally large wages were the dream of the philanthropic inventor; and the women working for him were paid thirty shillings to fifty shillings a week, a wage necessarily brought down by competition, and equitably curtailed by the gradual introduction and training of younger hands. Printing-inks had to be experimented with for two years before a wholly suitable composition was concocted; this is made on the premises, and nowadays the firm is the largest printer in the district, as well as the largest employer of labour in the extensive parish of Kennington.

An amusing passage in the volume which narrates in full the history of the bag and its inventor (*A New Industry of the Victorian Era*) records an odd little incident in the early history of the concern. In 1876 there was a falling off in the demand as compared with expectations. Only

fifty hands were employed at that time; but of these it appeared as though half must be discharged. Mr Judge, however, always reluctant to dismiss his workpeople, and anxious to maintain regular hours and regular wages, bethought himself of a way out of the difficulty. If they might not make cotton bags, they could make something else. So the machines were kept going, and fifteen thousand cotton shirts were put into the market. 'These goods found their way into many parts of the country, some thousands having been sold to Wood Street firms. A portion, however, were not considered quite of an up-to-date shape, nor in accordance with the enlightened taste of the British public. These were collected and shipped abroad, where they sold well, especially among the negroes.' It is also to be noted that many of the larger bags themselves, after serving their original purpose, are utilised as clothing in hot countries, while smaller goods go to feed the paper-mills. The shirt achievement entailed a loss of £50, but it fulfilled the intention by tiding firm and hands over a slack time.

At other periods events of the day have given an impetus to the new industry. The first Food Exhibition, for example, brought into prominence smart-looking stacks and pyramids of cotton bags, with coloured and even gold and silver designs and trade-marks upon them, which naturally attracted the eye of visitors and made dealers reflect upon the elegant appearance which some such trophies would present in their own windows. In 1875 the Explosives Act—seemingly far enough removed from the peaceful associations of food-industries—afforded a whet to the national appetite for cotton bags of another sort. The act required that all bags and barrels for the conveyance of explosives should be either very substantially constructed or possess an inner lining. The Kennington firm rose to the occasion by placing their cotton bag material on the market as a suitable substance for these inner linings; and large orders from gunpowder manufacturers followed. Ten years later, when telegraphic addresses were first registered, Mr Judge, naturally enough, selected the word or words 'Cotton-bag,' contending that it was practically a new and distinct material, entirely different from the drapers' calico, and that the word was entitled to pass as a compound word equally with 'cotton-wool' or 'hansom-cab.' The Post Office took another view of the matter, and declined to allow the choice. Some of Mr Judge's friends accordingly brought the question before the House of Commons, the newspapers reported the discussion, and Mr Judge quite unexpectedly found himself the gainer of a splendid advertisement, which had a practical effect upon his sales. Moreover, his selected address was registered, though as two words.

Cotton bags are now made in all sizes from one pound to one hundred and forty pounds; but at first the best-selling sizes were the smaller bags, holding from two and a half pounds' to fourteen pounds' weight of goods; and these probably remain the most in demand. They are made of fine white 'cloth,' adulterated as little as possible (in spite of the peculiarities of public taste in this unwholesome direction) by 'dressing.' Larger ones are manufactured of stouter material, bleached or unbleached, for half-sacks for millers, superseding the old and unwieldy sacks. The cloth is measured and cut into suitable lengths on a mammoth machine, which runs on tram-lines, and is furnished with a twenty-foot knife capable of striking through several hundred thicknesses at one swoop, or eight hundred in less than two minutes. Finishing and calendering follow, to fit the cloth to receive the impression of the printing-machine, and in the printing-room the special devices and imprints for every class of goods and every manufacturer or trader are impressed by special rollers and special ink. The sewing operations are the women's department; but the actual stitching is accomplished by large overhead sewing-machines, driven by steam, with horseshoe-shaped needles, only requiring guidance from the workers. In all, the bag goes through from forty to fifty pairs of hands before it is turned out complete, although labour-saving machinery, most of it made on the premises, is fully utilised.

No patent was applied for by the inventor of the article, so that rival manufacturers have, of course, started the business in England, Scotland, Ireland, on the Continent, in the Colonies, and in America; but the general effect of competition has been stimulating to the trade; and the Kennington firm is worthy of record, not only as the pioneer of a novelty that has now become a requisite, but as one which has consistently made a fair day's wage for a short day's work, steady employment to old servants, a regular system of profit-sharing all round, and the hearty encouragement of friendly-clubs paying features of an extensive and extending business.

It is worth noting, also, that throughout the existence of the Kennington factories, beginning as they did with untried workers in untried work, and with newly-designed and untried machinery, no serious accident has ever happened to an employé; while it is almost needless to add that no strike or rumour of strike has interrupted the pleasant relations between employer and employé. When the Factory Inspector paid his first visit to the premises the young workwomen sent a deputation to inform him that he need not come again, as any interference with their work and pay was not likely to be to their advantage.



AN INCIDENT OF THE NIGER TRADE.

By HAROLD BINDLOSS, Author of *In the Niger Country; Rising of the Brassmen, &c.*

TWO white men were hard at work in the galvanised iron oil-shed of the little trading factory of Gwelo, which lies far away among the Niger swamps, one sweltering July day. Young Charles Carson, clad in cotton singlet and thin duck trousers, stood with the perspiration dripping from him beside a big tub 'cooler,' into which a swarm of naked river-men cast basket after basket of greasy black kernels until the measure was full. Then he handed the native trader a brass 'tally' as a voucher for the goods brought down. Meantime a middle-aged man, Agent Crosby, carefully probed the calabashes of sticky yellow oil thrust upon him one after another, lest the wily bushman had inserted a chunk of wood therein—timber being cheaper than oil. Every now and then he squeezed a coil of viscous green rubber together, in case a heavy stone lay in the centre, for it is by no means so easy for an unprincipled white trader to victimise the unsophisticated savage as some missionaries aver. It was fiercely hot, and the sickly smell of palm-oil mingled with the fetid odour of raw rubber, which is considerably worse than that of rotten eggs, and savours even more disagreeably; while every negro endeavoured to thrust his comrades aside, and shouted at the top of his voice. The din and the awful atmosphere would have driven a stranger gasping outside in five minutes; and yet these two white men had toiled there from early dawn to noon, and their day's work was but half-done. Presently four pompous Krooboyes cleared the shed with staves, and, followed by an unruly mob, the traders crossed the scorching compound and entered the 'store-shed' or 'shop.' The room was at once filled with a shouting, struggling crowd, and a scene of wild confusion ensued. Each negro hurled down his tally, and proceeded to grab at whatever took his fancy, regardless of value. Cases of gin, pieces of cloth, flintlock guns, and powder were most in demand; but bottles of pomade (used as a condiment), scarlet jackets, battered silk hats, and brass-framed looking-glasses were also fought over; and amidst a babel of contentious cries the white men did what they could to protect their property from wholesale loot. As usual, the weakest went to the wall, and in the confusion the savage with the strongest hands secured as much as he could of his neighbour's goods in addition to his own; and this is how trade with the natives is carried on among the Niger creeks. Once or twice Carson noticed a naked bushman calmly appropriating double the value of his tally right under the agent's eyes, and wondered thereat, for Crosby was not a man to trifle with. That afternoon, however, there was a weary

look in the shrewd face which he had never seen before, and the agent seemed to have lost his usual keenness over a bargain. At last, when the scorching day drew near its close and the shadows of the palms lengthened across the dusty compound, the babel of voices ceased suddenly, and the surging crowd grew still. Agent Crosby laid a hand upon his revolver and swore savagely beneath his breath. Then a tall negro, only distinguishable from the rest by the intricacy and beauty of his tattoo and the curious device standing out in relief upon his naked breast, passed through the shrinking negroes, and, gazing for a moment at the white man, turned suddenly away.

'One of those condemned Ju-Ju men, only a half-fledged poisoner this time. I'd have shot the brute, for there's always trouble when they're about, only this unhallowed crowd would have burned the factory about our heads. Anyway, it's time to close,' said the agent harshly, and his face twitched as he spoke. Then he raised his voice. 'No more trade live, palaver set. Hyah, Krooboy, clear them store. Get out, all of you.'

Two hours later, after finishing their scanty meal, the white men sat out upon the wide veranda, tormented by buzzing mosquitoes, and gazing across the moonlit river. Behind them lay the reeking swamps, and in front a sheet of shimmering water, streaked with trails of fever-mist, beyond which a great cottonwood forest rose like a wall against the starry heavens. The inevitable whisky and a syphon of lukewarm mineral water stood upon a carved Accra stool by the agent's side; and Crosby's speech was slow as he said, 'No one could be cheerful in this weather; but I've been unusually unfit all day, and there's a curious weight upon my mind to-night.' The young assistant made no reply. He knew that alcohol and fever had spoiled his comrade's nerve, and he was used to talk of the kind. Then the agent continued: 'I suppose it was that Ju-Ju man. Every time one of the brutes has set his foot in the place something has happened; and I wish to goodness we had left their condemned fetich-house alone.' Carson only nodded. He had heard that when the factory was established the spot most available for a canoe landing was occupied by a little basket-work hut, erected in honour of the river-devils and wandering ghosts. This Crosby had promptly destroyed, and had regretted it ever since.

Presently the thick voice went on: 'Two oil-sheds burnt, no one knew how, and three assistants dead in eighteen months—though that was fever; and I hardly expected you would have lasted so long. Pah! it's a sickening, soul-destroying business, and I was not always a gin-trader. The old life, when I walked among my

equals at home, with clean hands, comes back very plainly to-night. That's all gone, long ago; the rest are dead, and I'm stewing here in this pestilential hole, expiating my sins, I suppose.'

Charlie groaned inwardly. There were times when the awful isolation and the deadly monotony of the life appalled him too; and, with a cheerfulness he was far from feeling, he answered, 'Take a tabloid, and sleep over it; you'll feel better in the morning. Good-night.'

When the young assistant entered his room he lighted a kerosene lamp, and smiled bitterly as the glow fell upon a scrap of printed paper, which, with grim irony, he had nailed to the mouldy wainscot above the medicine-chest. It was an advertisement from a provincial paper: 'Wanted, a young man of good physique for West African factory. Interesting life, easy work, sport and adventure. Salary, £70 first year, with prospect of rapid advance.' Then, shaking his fist at the delusive cutting, as he had done many times before, with the words, 'You cruel lie,' he flung himself down on his canvas couch, and, in spite of the heat and mosquitoes, was soon asleep. Twice he awakened from a restless doze, and walked out upon the rickety veranda, feeling a strange uneasiness, for the agent's words weighed upon his mind; but forest and swamp were sleeping silently in the tropic moonlight. Fireflies flashed and sparkled among the half-closed purple cups of the flowering creeper about the balustrade, and he heard the drowsy chatter of the Krooboy below, who apparently never sleep at all. Reassured, he flung himself down again, and passed far away from the dreary factory into the fairyland of dreams. Suddenly a strange, choking cry awoke him; and, while he wondered drowsily what it could be, the veranda stairway creaked. Then the ringing bark of a Snider awakened all the echoes of the forest, and he heard the whirling flight of a heavy ball, followed by a dull thud as the projectile buried itself in a palm-trunk. There was a babel of many voices, and a rush of feet into the veranda; and Carson, wide awake at last, entered the adjoining room with a smoky lamp in his hand, while a crowd of trembling negroes clustered about the door. Agent Crosby lay gasping and fighting for breath upon his couch, with blue lips and ashy face, a reed spear buried in his breast. As the shuddering lad bent over him he choked out, 'Remember the big lot of oil. A hard life. Ah! it's over,' and, with a groan, turned away his head. There was a sudden silence; and while Carson gripped a post with quivering fingers a big Yoruba, who had once served the Niger Coast Protectorate as corporal, approached the couch.

'Trader live for dead, sah,' he said, holding up the spear, and proceeded to relate how he had fired at a shadowy figure flitting through the gloom of the palms. Charlie took the weapon mechanically, and, like one in a dream, noted

the tuft of red rags which adorned the haft—a symbol of the Ju-Ju mystery. Then he drove the wondering negroes away, and, this done, locked the door, and seated himself upon the veranda to wait for dawn, shivering in spite of the heat.

Shortly before noon next day he stood beneath the dusty palms, the burning sun-rays beating down upon his uncovered head as the curving fronds swayed to and fro in the sultry breeze. A shallow trench yawned at his feet, dust and sand upon its edge, and two feet of ooze and water below. Four Krooboy boys leaned upon their kernel-shovels beside him, and in the sloppy mud lay one of the rough deal cases the long Dane-guns are shipped in, and this held all that remained of Agent Crosby, while his successor with dry lips and shaking voice repeated such portions of the burial service as he could remember. Presently he raised his hand, and two naked Krooboy boys stood upon the case to hold it down until their companions shovelled over the sand. Twice the thing tilted sideways, and floated to the surface; but at last the work was done, and Charlie Carson turned away with faltering steps towards the lonely factory. And this is a characteristic funeral in the Niger swamps.

A Protectorate official came up a few days later with an armed launch to investigate the affair. A native village was mulcted in palm-oil for the supposed offence of concealing the murderer; but the latter could not be found, and the officer went back uttering vain threats about closing that river to trade. This the natives knew he could not do without ruining the white factories at its mouth; therefore they laughed in their sleeves, and, as the weeks went by, sent down dribbles of adulterated oil in payment of the fine. Meantime the young agent hardened his heart to face the months of solitude that must elapse before assistance could arrive from home. To make things worse, it was the wet season, and his Krooboy labourers sickened one by one, while the intermittent fever came upon him too. Still, the chance of being duly appointed agent, at a salary of £300 per annum, was not likely to happen often; and, staking health and reason upon the uncertainty of surviving, he held grimly to his post, working twelve hours a day in the steamy heat of 'the rains.' Then, when darkness came, he dragged himself towards the quarters of the stricken Krooboy boys, whom he treated with draughts prepared according to the Government Manual, which sometimes proved efficacious and sometimes the reverse. But no European may overwork himself with impunity in Africa, especially if reduced by fever; so week by week the health of the lonely man gave way, and strange fancies filled his mind. There were times when the wakeful Krooboy boys shuddered and told strange tales of Ju-Ju magic and the power of the wood-devils, as they heard him pacing to and fro upon the veranda all night long. Also, when trade was

slack, he would sit for hours gazing vacantly at the forest with stern, set face, and there was no negro among them dare approach him.

Then it came about that Captain Hinton Clifford was sent up the river with a dozen Yoruba soldiers to inquire why certain instalments of the fine had not been paid, and to ascertain by whose authority a stiff-necked headman levied a heavy toll upon all the oil-carriers passing his stockade. Hinton Clifford was lately out from India, and brought with him a high opinion of himself and a very low one of the Niger country, which latter was perhaps justifiable. He was five feet ten in height, with shoulders to match, and had a way of looking at one out of half-shut eyes and speaking in a languid drawl, as though there was nothing in Africa worthy of his interest, which was trying to those who did not know the man. This, together with the spotless neatness of his dress, which is a thing rarely seen on the Niger, gained him the sobriquet of 'Dainty Jim,' though the observant Consul had an idea that his languid subordinate could be very much awake when occasion demanded.

The fever-mist was rolling in woolly wreaths across the tumble-down factory when his panting launch shot alongside Gwelo landing. The roar of the rains was in the air, and every palm-frond vibrated and quivered with the rush of falling water. A few sickly Krooboys dragged themselves about the entrance to the oil-shed, for trade was very slack; and there was an indefinite something which spoke of sickness and death about the whole place as the officer, accompanied by a big boarhound, splashed through the compound towards the factory. When he stood dripping upon the veranda there was no one to meet him, and, thrusting open the door, he entered the trader's room. A young man, with deep lines upon his hollow face, knelt beside an open medicine-chest, measuring out drugs with a shaking hand.

'Glad to see you. I haven't heard a European voice for two months,' he said; and Captain Clifford answered slowly, 'A mutual pleasure; but you don't seem particularly cheerful. Alone here for two months! How any white men can live in the place at all is beyond me.'

'As a rule they don't live very long. You can see four crosses, there, beneath the palms,' was the quiet reply. 'But you must be hungry.—Hyah, Kalloto, hurry that chop.'

Captain Clifford did not delight in half-boiled yams, rancid palm-oil chop, and two-year-old Chicago beef; but there was nothing else, and he ate with the best grace he could. Afterwards he explained that the factory would be honoured with his presence for a fortnight, and handed Carson a letter announcing the fact that two new assistants were on the way, and that he might return when they arrived. Then the young agent commenced a rambling narrative, in the course of which he said various things which nearly shook the imperturbable officer out of his usual

calm. When he concluded, 'Crosby's dead; he died two months ago—I buried him myself; and yet—do you know?—he walks about the house all night and calls me,' the officer's eyes were open wide.

Presently Carson went out to resume his work, and Hinton Clifford became suddenly intent. 'I've heard that kind of talk in the Indian jungle stations, and he's too young for the life—he knows it now,' said the officer as he proceeded to overhaul the medicine-chest, for this man knew a little of many things. 'As I expected—all the opiates gone; that accounts for part of the story, but no one can live for weeks without sleep. I'll take a few precautions,' he continued, coolly appropriating various rough phials with red labels. Afterwards he visited the quarters of the sick Krooboys, and the sights he saw there haunted him at nights, though it would have been hard to recognise in that eager, thoughtful face and those skilful hands the indifferent dilettante of the Consular headquarters. Hinton Clifford did not enjoy that visit. The little tumble-down factory seemed full of whispers. The dog whined mournfully all night long, and it was disconcerting, to say the least, to be awakened at midnight by a creaking of the veranda, and to hear the hoarse voice of his host conversing with an unseen something in the mist below. More than once he had doubts of Carson's sanity, and wondered whether he would be justified in sending him down to the coast by force; but, after a glance at the carefully-kept books, he dismissed the idea. At last, as the officer afterwards said, the whole place so got upon his nerves that he fancied he saw two shadowy figures, and not one, pacing the dark veranda, and caught his breath when the rotten flooring creaked behind him for no apparent reason. At this he dosed himself with quinine, and compared the climates of Hindustan and Africa, to the disadvantage of the latter.

Then one evening he returned, covered with ashes and soot and glory, having burnt the water-gate of the offending chief, and after a scanty meal flung himself down to sleep. The trader lay in the adjoining room, which was that of the murdered agent, and a Yoruba sergeant slept upon the veranda. This was contrary to all ideas of discipline; but discipline is relaxed upon the frontier—and it was comforting to have him there. Tired as he was, the officer could not rest. It was intensely hot, with that damp and clammy heat which checks the perspiration and puts the fear of death into the hearts of Europeans dwelling in the African swamps. The mosquitoes, too, were unusually thirsty, and their triumphant trumpeting over a new victim nearly drove the officer mad. At times the boarhound also crept about its master's couch, whining as though in pain or fear; and Clifford abused the animal, then stretched out a hot hand and patted the rough head, for he remembered that dogs suffer from the malaria as much as men. At last he

sank into a restless doze, and awakening some hours later, saw the hound standing in a stream of misty moonlight, with every bristle of his neck erect. This had happened before, and, with a malediction on all things African, Clifford turned over on the other side. Then the dog crept softly out, and he heard the patter of its footsteps across the veranda; after which from the other side of the wood-work there rose a low, angry howl. 'A most distressful brute; and I'm as nervous as a frightened child,' he muttered, sitting up and rubbing his drowsy eyes. For a space there was no sound save the growling of the dog, the dry rustle of the palms, and the monotonous 'crick-crack' of a boring-spider eating its way through the wainscot. Then the floorings creaked mysteriously; but they often did that. This time, however, there was something unusual in the sound; and, with the big revolver which always lay beneath his pillow in his hand, Clifford sprang to the floor.

As he did so he heard a short, half-breathless cry, and something struck the partition a blow that made it shiver. In an instant the officer was out upon the veranda, keen-eyed and resolute, now the need of definite action had come. The door of Carson's room was shut, but a thrust of the powerful shoulder tore it from its rusty hinges, and, preceded by a crash of falling wood, Clifford leapt across the threshold. Two indistinct figures were swaying backwards and forwards in the gloom of the farther end; then, as he stood breathing hard and wondering what it could mean, they reeled into the stream of moonlight that entered the doorway. The pale rays fell upon the naked limbs of a huge negro and the thin form of the white trader, who, with one hand upon his assailant's throat, and one upon the sinewy black arm that raised a short reed-spear above him, made desperate efforts to withhold the thrust. Even as Clifford gazed, waiting a chance to intervene, the trader's head was forced backwards, and with a choking gasp he loosed his hold, while the negro raised his arm to drive home the glinting blade. But the broad black breast was now uncovered, and the foresight of the officer's revolver trembled across the tattoo-device on its centre; then there was a flash of red flame, followed by a sharp detonation, and the room was filled with smoke. Through the smoke a wild object leapt towards the white man. Twice more the revolver flashed, but the assassin came on unchecked, and Clifford flung back his arm as the spear-head glittered before his eyes. But before it fell the steel butt of the heavy revolver came down upon the ebony face like the head of a battering-ram. In went teeth and jawbone; the negro lurched forward and struck the creaking boards beside the officer's feet with the crash of a falling tree. Then there was a glimmer of lamps upon the veranda, and a rush of feet to the door as the Yorubas and Kroobos crowded round the entrance.

Wiping the cold perspiration from his brow, Hinton Clifford said languidly, 'Carried a lot of lead and died hard; but that fellow will fight no more.' The factory Yoruba bent over the limp, black form, with a lamp in his hand, and pointing to the tattoo-work upon the naked breast and the curious carving on the spear-haft, rose suddenly and cried in the vernacular, 'It is blood for blood; truly this is the justice of Allah.'

'What does he say?' asked Clifford sharply; and when a soldier translated, added thoughtfully, 'Perhaps he's right—these things are beyond me; but I should say that the man who killed Agent Crosby has met his deserts at last.'

Charlie Carson came feebly forward, and, holding out a shaking hand, said hoarsely, 'How can I thank you? You were only just in time; another moment there would have been an end. Pah! I can feel the choking fingers about my throat now.'

'Very glad I did it. There, that will do. No use making a fuss,' was the quiet answer. 'Some of the Consul's tales about the power these brutes possess must be true, or the dog would have torn him to bits. See, he's afraid still, and the beast never showed the white feather before.' Then Clifford stooped to pat the trembling hound, which crept whining to his knee, and afterwards raised his voice: 'Take him away, you, Krooboy, and bring plenty lights. I don't want to sleep any more to-night,' he said.

On the following morning the new staff, consisting of an alcohol-soaked agent, with more energy than character, from Lekki lagoon, and two young assistants fresh from home and evidently little pleased with what they had seen of the Oil Rivers, arrived in a broken-down launch. Thereupon Charlie Carson shook off the dust of that factory from his feet, and departed with Captain Clifford in the Consular despatch-boat. He was invalided home, and when he reached England found a letter from the Government officer had preceded him; and six months later he returned as full agent to a healthier station.

It was, of course, coincidence; but, owing to disputes between a certain bush headman and the oil-carriers over the right-of-way, which were argued out with the aid of poison and ambush, the Gwelo factory did little good. Therefore the owners abandoned that particular creek, and the forest closed about the rickety buildings and swallowed them up. Festoons of rope-like creepers are steadily pulling down the tottering oil-shed; the house has crumbled into a mass of mouldering timber before the grasp of the ti-ti trailers; and the compound is covered feet deep with brushwood, though it is barely two years since the last white man left it. Nevertheless the native traders, who are above all things superstitious, will not enter that creek in the darkness, and at all times give the ruins a wide berth. They say there is a curse upon the place; and perhaps they are right.

'OUR STAIR.'

By MARGARETTA BYRDE.



FATE brought me, a stranger, to an Edinburgh flat, or, to use the more picturesque Scottish expression, to 'bide in a stair.' One would have liked to be established in what is called 'a self-contained' house. It sounds disciplinary, and might have a beneficial effect on a frivolous and erratic temperament; but no one can resist Fate, and mine came in the shape of an introduction to a landlady so kindly-faced, so honest-eyed, and so winsome altogether that I called her 'Jeanie Deans' to myself, and succumbed instantly to her charms. Yet the grave exterior of houses in 'residential quarters' still has its fascination. The sun rises morning after morning on a scene unique in its charm and beauty; the air, to an enthusiast, is charged with the electric current of romance; at every turn the mind responds to the touch of association; and yet these old houses look on as 'self-contained' as the advertisements promise. Did any of them *really* resound to roars of laughter over the *Noctes*? Is it possible that in the decorous street—which one keeps wrongly calling 'Saint' Ann's, it has such a sanctified retirement, like that of a Cathedral Close—supper-parties were protracted until the guests dispersing beheld Arthur's Seat in morning mist, and the 'Opium Eater,' his brilliancy evaporated, curled up again for a day's delirium? Ghosts of livelier times haunt these 'self-contained' dwellings; and one wonders whether if at night they occasionally have 'high jinks,' get hysterical with memory, and let off some of their suppressed warmth and good-fellowship, as their inhabitants are said to do at Burns dinners.

However, we live on a stair, and in a house so old that it may presumably be haunted by ghosts, though we are too many for them. And though nothing is more ordinary and commonplace than a stair, once you are inside, there is an element of uncanniness in the fact that it has a Main-Door. A first visit to a stair is decidedly eerie. One arrives at the given number, and is confronted by a row of bells; and when one has selected and rung the correct one, strange things happen. First, after a moment, the Door shakes, as if with irritation at its afternoon nap being disturbed, and gives a premonitory rumble, like a yawn. Then begins a weird creaking and straining, that continues fitfully, and comes from somewhere above and within, giving one a sense of mysterious forces being set in motion. At last the Door condescends to be moved, and, to your awe and amazement, slowly opens by invisible agency, and stands solemnly, showing an empty passage and a flight of stone steps that may lead you—oh, where? I protest, the first time that mute, mysterious summons is obeyed one feels

positively adventurous! One turns and looks at the Door; and well one may, for it is an awful and potent thing. It is to exercise an influence on your future life. It will depend henceforth on its benevolent or malevolent intentions towards you whether life seems worth living under its guardianship; whether you will work or sleep, be glad some or miserable. Hitherto you have innocently supposed doors mere conveniences of exit or entrance. Shortly you will know that the Main-Door of our stair is a sentient thing, with a strong theological bias towards depression of animal spirits by means of its own, hereafter to be described. It makes Sunday the most dreaded day of the week, and the Sunday nap it sternly prohibits. You learn to associate it with oatmeal and the Shorter Catechism, so hardy and so stern is its moral influence.

You never forget the Main-Door, whatever else you forget on our stair. You may forget that you left your bicycle below, and that the bairns come from school early to-day; you may forget, as the wind blows you delightfully up Leith Walk, that it will have business in your chimney; you may even forget that the young lady in the parlour below, who plays 'The Campbells are coming' with one finger and an unreasonable prejudice against sharps and flats, returns this evening from her week-end trip; but the Door is as constantly on your mind as were the greens on Mrs Bucket's. In the daytime, by dint of imploring messages, and even personal visits to the various families who share in it, you may secure its being kept 'on the chain;' and you have long since ceased to see any humour in the suggestive phrase: 'The Door is a wild beast, whose ferocity is rightly curbed.' But then come the equally wild winds of Edinburgh, whistling and roaring up the narrow passages, and banging so many other doors about you that you almost think the great gun preferable to small artillery. You discover what a vacillating creature you are when you have lived through a winter on our stair. 'Jeanie Deans' looks at you sadly as, for the third time in one day, she sets the complicated machinery in motion that lets the Door loose, and says, 'I wadna pit mysel' name aboot wi' sma' things.' Ah, 'Jeanie,' I wish I had your cheerful serenity. But I must dree my ain weird—which means the Door.

But at night one has the worst of it. The latest comer is sure never to sneek it. His very foot has menace in it as he comes up the stair—should you chance to hear it. Probably, however, you are wakened out of a sound sleep by a reverberation like thunder; and then the torture begins. The Door knows well enough when you are lying listening, and keeps quiet to catch you

(dozing presently) with three distinct and terrific bangs. You sit up gasping, and wonder whether you *could* manage to creep down in the cold and shut it; and while you are wondering, sleep again steals over you with a comforting sense that nothing more will happen. It does happen, however, of course; and now, although you hear somebody from the first floor making it secure, you cannot sleep again until morning dawns and the usual slamming begins for the day. During that vigil you think evilly of stairs, and marvel at your infatuation for a city where strangers are so ill-lodged, and think you will leave it. But next morning, when the Newhaven fishwives cry 'Caller herrin' under your window, and you look over to the hills of Fife or across to Arthur's Seat, or walk in Princes Street, you know you can never tear yourself away from Edinburgh and 'Jeanie Deans.'

Everybody on 'our stair' is kind to the stranger. One wonders who first started the slander that Scottish folk are unapproachable. I can witness to a year's record of genuine kindliness, of quiet, unobtrusive, yet ever-ready friendliness, from people of every class, that could not be beaten, if equalled, in any other country; and our neighbours are not behind in the record. One suspects that one is regarded as a 'bit feckless body,' with peculiarities unknown to strong-nerved folks; but the kindly, good-humoured pity does not hurt. Great harmony prevails on 'our stair.' I believe the only source of discord in the little world is the drying-ground; and that is out of it, as Mrs O'Connor—top flat to the right—truly observes. The other ladies say that but for her there would be no troubles over the laundry bounds, as there never were until she came. Like all territorial disputes, it is a complicated question; and I, as an outsider, am not qualified to judge of it. Mrs O'Connor possesses the agreeable but capricious manners of her countrywomen; and, meeting her frequently on the stair, I prefer to be neutral in the international matter, which is, I believe, under arbitration. It is Mr O'Connor who forgets to sneek the door; but he told me yesterday that the very next time this happens he will remind his wife to send him down!

The young ladies on the first floor give parties, and in the night cries of 'Hoch!' and faint perturbations of the floor, like slight earthquake shocks, together with tunes of a monotonous nature, tell one when national dances are in progress. I wonder whether they invite the artist opposite, into whose studio I once strayed contemporaneously with the man who shouts up the stair thrice a day 'Co-o-o-als,' and put the genius into a momentary flutter, because every chair had a picture on it, except one that contained a very dilapidated hat and a big pipe; and he was divided between fears of my sitting on the pipe and the man depositing the bag of coals in the middle of the floor. It takes a great deal to disconcert a Scot; but the circumstances

were trying to an artistic temperament. I felt for him, and when he returned from the coal-closet (which was hidden behind a *portière*) I laughingly said that it was good of him to be so anxious about my dress. 'I'd sooner ye'd sat down in yon canvas,' he answered fervently, 'than to have smashed my briar-wood pipe!' I believe that Scot will be heard of. He lives on oatmeal, I suspect; and he is big and red and rough-looking, and, as you see, not particularly gallant; but his pictures are tender with colour and atmosphere drawn straight from Nature's heart, which with a Scotsman means the heart of his own hills and dales and lakes. That is the source of every Scotsman's success, as it was of that greatest of all, or most typical of all, if you will have it so—that he draws his strength and weakness alike from his nationality. It is the secret of the Burns dinners to those who have an open heart and eye.

We are very 'common Burnsites' on 'our stair,' yet not altogether uncritical. My own flat has resounded with disputations on the exact shade of meaning conveyed in some old Doric word—disputations that have filled my soul with amazement, for the debaters are both young working-men—brothers—not at all 'educated,' yet they can argue a point excellently well. They do not *love* Burns. That is a poor word to express the Scottish feeling that he is Scotland's expression of herself, her sturdy independence, her patriotism; her coarseness, if you will, covering tenderness the most tremulous and yet the most profound; her humour, dry, whimsical, but never levelled at suffering or poverty; her ideality and common-sense, her grim facing of odds, her deeply-rooted piety and surface scepticism, her love of Nature, her spirit of comradeship, her proud reticence in general, and her self-abandonment at times. Rob is a Scot of the dry, slow type; Alick is one of the quick, emotional kind; and both are devoted to Scottish minstrelsy, and ready to act as tutor to the stranger who essays to sing the national songs. But, alas! they can never agree; so their tuition is less valuable than can be desired. Such a point as whether, when the piper met Maggie Lauder 'gaun to Fife,' that nimble lady or the bagpipes were turned towards Anstruther, can break into a musical recital, and divert it into a debate as serious as if a matter of heresy were before the Assembly. At last they agree to a truce, Alick being the first to give way. 'Ah, weel, Rob,' he admits compromisingly, 'I'll no' say but ye may be richt. Fine I ken thae tunes, but I'm no' muckle authority aboot the words.' 'Ay, I'm no' sae wrang,' says Rob with caution but decision. 'I dinna ken muckle aboot singing, but fine I ken thae words.' They both speak English when not excited, as I joy to see them. But the Doric is dying out, though it dies hard. I am glad to be in a stair where there are still signs of life.

We had one fine old Scotswoman on the top flat, opposite the O'Connors; but the other day I was told she was dead, and they buried her while I was wondering when the funeral would be. I had seen her once; she was eighty-seven, and her old eyes fixed me with that strange intentness that the aged give, just as babies do, to any one new in their experience—an intentness wholly without interest. 'Yours has been a very long life,' I said, naturally enough. 'Ay, I'm gey auld,' she answered; and then she seemed to find offence in my look or words, for she added quickly, 'I'm no' sae auld as mony. I'm no' thinkin' o' deein' the noo.' 'You still find it good to live,' I replied cheerfully; but the old lady was not to be got to agree with me on any terms. 'It's mebbe no' sae guid, an' mebbe no' sae bad, but I dinna care to dee. Guid an' bad, I can tak' it a'. I'll bide a wee whilie.' And she gave me a look expressive of her belief that I wished to rob her of her small remnant of life,

and also of her disinclination to further cultivate my acquaintance. But I would have got some flowers had I but known! She had outlived her kith and kin, and all the family she had served, and from whom she had had a small annuity. That had decreased, for some reason, of late, and a year ago, when her grocer called for orders, he was told that he need not come again, as she had no money. 'Hoots! Hoo are ye to live?' asked the grocer. 'Ye'll just have what ye've been having these years from me, and we'll say nae mair about it.' 'Weel,' said the old lady, 'gin ye'll promise no' to tell any one after I'm gane, John Campbell, ye may bring me them. But I'll no tak' anything frae ye wi'out a promise—ye mind that?' 'I'll no' tell a soul on earth,' answered the grocer solemnly. And he did not. The landlady overheard the conversation, and retailed it after the funeral for the benefit of our stair. She was not a Scotswoman, or she would not have done it; but I am glad she did.

A M P H I B R A C H S.*

BY A FIFTH ENGINEER.

Now farewell to Lulow,
Its kirk and red steeple;
Its sandy square full o'
Tall yellow-haired people;
Its ruddy-faced seamen,
With oaths in their talk;
Its corsetless women,
That swing as they walk;
To ship-chandling Forsman,
And Asplund the Maire,
And Oberg the Norseman
So vain of his hair!

We leave thee, Norbotten;
But can we forget?
Thy scenes, unforgotten,
Shall stay with us yet.
We bear to our birthland
No vision that fades:
This flood of the northland
Shall show from the Braids;
And far on farms inland
Of Pentlands shall fall
The deeper peace Finland
Is mantled withal.

Farewell to Norbotten!
To Lulow farewell!
These scenes unforgotten
The future shall tell.
The calm pinewood shadows,
The sledge and the goard,
The huts in the meadows
With meadow-hay stored,
The well-sweeps, not going,
The snow-ploughs and skees,
The rafts and the rowing—
We'll no forget these.

On board leaps the pilot;
We float and are free;
And down past the islet
We glide to the sea.
The tower and the narrows
We hail and pass through;
And, smoking of claros,
Look round on the view.
The broomsticks at Quarken,
They keep us all right;
But fogs make us hearken
And peep through the night.

By Gothland and Olan'
We pant down the Baltic,
Where waves that are rollin'
Begin to grow saltic.
And, when we are oppos-
ite old Elsinore,
The billows o'ertop us,
And break and fall o'er,
And drench us, and drive us
On three courses tearin',
And hammer and rive us,
And keep the chief swearin'.

And when from the Skagger
We come to the Sea,
And into it stagger
As drunk as can be;
Then, up and down lifting,
We send to Old Harry
The freight that keeps shifting—
Thy gift, Gellivaré;
Till, signalled, aboard
Comes Tom from the Tees;
And night finds us moored
At Whitelaw's in peace.

J. LOGIE ROBERTSON.

* For the prose narrative of this voyage, see article 'To Lulea in Norbotten,' *Chambers's Journal* for 1897, page 39.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



REMINISCENCES.

By Lieutenant-Colonel Sir R. LAMBERT PLAYFAIR, K.C.M.G.

III.—AFFAIRS IN SOMALI-LAND.

THE first serious difficulties we had with the Somali coast resulted from the unprovoked outrage on Captain Burton's expedition in 1854. The story has often been published; I will only mention that in consequence of the outrage certain demands were made on the Somalis, and enforced by a blockade of Berbera during an entire year. When at length the blockade was raised I was sent over to conclude a treaty, in which our demands were embodied. One of these was: 'The traffic in slaves shall cease for ever; and any slaves who, contrary to this engagement, shall be introduced into the said territories shall be delivered up to the British; and the commander of any vessel of Her Majesty's or of the H.E.I.C.'s navy shall have the power of demanding the surrender of such slaves, and of supporting the demand by force of arms if necessary.'

For several years this engagement was successfully evaded. At last it reached our ears that not only was the slave-trade being carried on as briskly as ever, but that it had assumed a new and most revolting character. The masters of vessels from the south-east coast of Arabia, who congregated there for the annual fair, not satisfied with the purchase of Abyssinian and Galla slaves, were in the habit of kidnapping Somali girls, on the plea of pretended marriage. In March 1860 I was sent over to the Somali coast, in the *Lady Canning*, to inquire into this matter. I had absolute proof of three girls having been thus kidnapped; and I learnt that, to guard against the possibility of their capture by our vessels, they had been sent overland to Kurrem, where their purchasers intended to call for them on their way home. Thither I went. I sent for the chief elder of the place, and pointed out the disgrace they were bringing on themselves by consenting to the sale of their own people—free girls—a crime particu-

larly heinous in the eyes of good Mohammedans. Of course they denied all knowledge of the facts, and averred that, as far as they knew, the girls had been legally married, and had been sent by their husbands to await their arrival. I knew they lied, and insisted on the girls being delivered up to me. They refused; and it was not till I had threatened that the vessel would open fire upon their fort that they came to their senses and the captives were brought on board.

Just as we were on the point of leaving I received information that a large number of girls in like evil case were at the neighbouring port of Siyarrah, and I determined, if it were possible, to effect their liberation also. We steamed into the harbour, and anchored close to the fort. All the arguments of the previous day had to be gone over again; and it was not till a similar threat had been made that the elders promised to surrender the girls that had been sent to them for safe custody. They swore by the solemn 'oath of divorce' that there were only sixteen, and these were sent on board. The girls on arrival informed me that there were eight more, and these also I demanded. To ensure my demand being complied with I requested the commander to send a boat on shore, to seize the first six men they could lay hands on, and to detain them till the girls were sent on board. At the same time a shot from the *Lady Canning*, fired wide of the fort, but near enough to be unpleasant, lent strength to my demand; and in all twenty-four girls were delivered up to me at this place. They were all pretty young creatures of from twelve to sixteen years of age, and all told the same tale: that they had been inveigled by their relatives into the possession of the Arab slave-dealers by a simulated marriage, and then sent off to Siyarrah to await shipment. The joy they experienced was unmistakable, and hardly more than my own at having been the means of restoring them to freedom. Once

more, as we were about to leave, a messenger, who had been formerly a Sepoy in the Aden police, arrived at Siyarrah, where he had heard I was; he informed me that a large Arab slave-vessel was then making its way to Kurrem. We went there at once, and found her anchored about twenty miles east of Siyarrah. All the slaves had been landed under charge of the *nacoda* or master and part of the crew. I had eight Somali attendants with me, and these men were armed and sent on shore to track the fugitives. They found them, and brought them back before 10 P.M. The vessel belonged to a son of the chief of Amulgavine, in the Persian Gulf, who had purchased or kidnapped at Berbera a number of slave boys and girls, all of whom were captured. The boat and her crew were sent to Aden for adjudication.

We then went to Berbera. There the *Lady Canning* captured the sister boat, belonging to the same owner. I learnt that a caravan had arrived from Harrar, with a vast number of slaves. I could not ignore their presence, yet we felt powerless to take them from the shore, with the small crew of the *Lady Canning*, in presence of twenty thousand armed Somalis. I demanded their surrender, however, and I was strongly supported by one Hadji Jamäa, a man of great repute for learning and sanctity, who went about from tribe to tribe in the capacity of teacher and peacemaker. He openly declared that though the traffic in slaves was lawful in accordance with Mohammedan law, yet to them it was unlawful, as they had made a solemn pledge not to engage in it; but that nothing else save a breach of treaty could be expected from people who so far forgot their religion as to sell their own daughters into slavery. Of course they refused to surrender the slaves, and nothing remained for me but to take precautions that they should not be embarked. I therefore warned every boat to leave Berbera within twenty-four hours; and, as I had to replace Brigadier Coghlan at Aden, I returned there. The *Lady Canning*, however, returned to the Somali coast, and captured twenty-two more slaves. The total number thus rescued was one hundred and forty. This was all plain sailing in comparison with the task that devolved on me afterwards: What was to be done with one hundred and forty slaves, most of them young and attractive girls? One or two of the youngest were sent to missionary orphanages at Bombay, and a few more were taken as servants by English ladies at Aden. There appeared nothing for it but to marry off the remainder as best we could. But a very unexpected difficulty occurred. The Kadi, an exceedingly devout and learned theologian, declared that, according to Mohammedan law, the institution of slavery was perfectly legal. We, who had brute force on our side, had declared it to be the contrary, and had rescued these girls from their lawful owners; therefore he

could not conscientiously marry them; he was quite willing to do so if he could find a text of the Koran to justify him. I told him that I thoroughly appreciated his scruples, but if he failed in his search he would certainly cease to be Kadi of Aden. The text was found!

In October 1858 I was sent on a punitive expedition to the African coast in H.M.S. *Chesapeake*. The circumstances requiring an example to be made were, as far as we knew, the following: In January the British barque *Telegraph*, of Bristol, from Aden bound for the Kooria Moorria Islands, when coasting along the African shore had been piratically seized by the Somalis of Ourbeh. The master and crew, driven from the brig, and forced to leave her in an open boat, without water or provisions, were picked up by the H.E.I.C.'s ship *Elphinstone*, and brought to Aden. The officer commanding that ship was sent by General Coghlan to exact satisfaction for the outrage, and, if possible, to recover the brig. He went, bombarded the town, and, finding the ship hopelessly stranded, set her on fire and returned to Aden. The punishment inflicted by the *Elphinstone* appeared scarcely commensurate with the offence; but no more was possible by means of a small sailing-vessel on that dangerous coast. I was therefore sent in H.M.S. *Chesapeake* to inquire more fully into the circumstances of the case, and to act as might appear necessary. On the 7th October we sighted a town which we took to be Ourbeh, and the *Chesapeake* began to prepare for action. Fortunately, as it turned out, we had passed Ourbeh, and the town we had mistaken for it was Bunder Murayah, eight or ten miles farther east. Seeing a boat put off to the steamer, we lay to, and were not a little surprised to observe two English sailors in her. As soon as they came on board they informed us that they were part of the crew of the barque *Henry Tanner*, which had been wrecked at Ras Hafoon, and that seven of their companions remained on shore. No sooner had the vessel struck than she began to break up; the boats were stove in, but eight men managed to get on shore on spars. The master and four others were drowned. The survivors found about one hundred Somalis on shore, who treated them with the greatest kindness. The natives themselves had little to offer except a few fish; but they made them a hut of brushwood, and there the whole party remained for about six weeks in a very miserable condition. The Somalis had a small boat, and, when the weather permitted, they loaded it with gum and mats and some of the copper from the wreck, and took the seamen with them to Allooda, a small port west of Cape Guardafui. There they were treated most hospitably, and distributed amongst the inhabitants, who fed them as well as they could. They were then passed on from place to place, on foot, till they arrived at Murayah, where we received them

on board the *Chesapeake*. At Murayeh they were especially well cared for, and fed with the best that the village afforded.

It was manifestly impossible for us to take on board a party of distressed seamen who had been so well treated by the very poor natives of this coast and proceed to destroy one of their towns. I went on shore to inquire into the matter, and had an interview with the chief men of the place. The account they gave of the so-called piratical seizure of the *Telegraph* was quite different to that which had reached us. They stated that when the vessel grounded, a number of Somalis went alongside to proffer assistance; the two parties could not, of course, make themselves understood; and the crew, alarmed for their safety, took to their boat and escaped. The Somalis then collected all the movable property they could find on board and stored it on shore, thinking that we should send for it from Aden. On the arrival of the *Elphinstone* they were eager to deliver it up, but that vessel, without making any inquiries, at once proceeded to fire upon the town. The natives at first thought that she was saluting them; but on seeing the shot strike the town they dispersed, and the property was eventually carried away by the natives and Arab traders. I was quite disposed to accept this explanation for many reasons. I liberally rewarded the natives who had succoured our countrymen, and bade them repeat to all their tribe that kindness shown to distressed British subjects would always meet with reward.

The last mission on which I went from Aden was to the same part of the Somali coast as that where the *Telegraph* had been wrecked. In October 1862 news reached us from Makulla, on the Arabian coast, that a massacre of English seamen had occurred near Cape Guardafui. I immediately left for Makulla in H.M.S. *Semiramis*, of the Indian navy. Almost immediately after anchoring, a steamer was observed making for the port; she proved to be H.M.S. *Penguin*, commanded by Lieutenant M'Hardy, which had come from Zanzibar in search of two missing boats. It appeared that on the 1st of September, Lieutenant M'Hardy, then at Kiama (lat. $0^{\circ} 44'$ S.) had despatched a cutter and whaleboat to search for slavers between Juba River and Port Durnford, with orders to meet at the latter place in fourteen days. The cutter was commanded by Lieutenant Fountaine, with whom were a quartermaster and eight men. The whaler contained the gunner's mate and eight men; in all, the expedition consisted of fifteen souls. Lieutenant M'Hardy, alarmed at the long absence of his men, followed them up the coast, and eventually went to Makulla, where we met him. On the evening of the 23d we left that port with the *Penguin* in tow, and proceeded to Bunder Murayeh, the most important place on the eastern coast of Somaliland. It belongs to the Mejeriteyn tribe, the Sultan

of which is the only hereditary prince in north-east Africa; he sometimes resides in Murayeh, but more frequently at a watering-place two days' journey to the south. Both this place and Ourbeh, which have been before mentioned, are situated on a narrow strip of sand, here and there widening out into bays, which intervene between the sea and a lofty, precipitous range of hills producing great quantities of frankincense, gum-arabic, and various other gums and resins; in fact, the *Thurifera Regio* of the ancients. My great desire was to see the Sultan, who was absent in the interior; and I at once despatched a messenger begging him to meet me, at as early a date as possible, somewhere on the coast.

The natives of this place admitted that the crew of one boat, containing fifteen European seamen, had been murdered on their coast; and, as the Sultan could not be expected before nine days, we started in search of the place where the atrocity was committed. One of the principal inhabitants volunteered to guide us. Lieutenant M'Hardy came with us in the *Semiramis*, leaving his own vessel at Bunder Murayeh. We anchored about fifteen miles west of Ras Asseer, or Cape Guardafui, at a place called Baraida, a rather extensive plain enclosed between the sea and a semi-circular chain of hills; and within a very short time after landing we had ample proof that here our unfortunate countrymen had perished. At almost every step some trace of them met our eyes: here a scrap of canvas, there a morsel of clothing, and in the middle of the bay we clearly saw where the boat had been pulled ashore above high-water mark. Close by a fire was lighted with fragments of the *Penguin's* cutter, which showed that the natives had been on the spot just before our arrival. Proceeding about a mile inland, we reached a small village of mat-huts, in every one of which were articles belonging to the ill-fated party, such as oars, ammunition-boxes, a pair of parallel rulers, a paint-brush, and a seaman's hat-ribbon with the inscription *Narcissus*—the Admiral's flagship, to which the *Penguin* was tender—many of them stained with blood. The people of the village had fled at our approach. We burnt every hut and every article of property we could find. After this we went to Allooda, where I found several people having some knowledge of the affair.

As far as could be gathered from such sources of information, it appeared that the two boats, after having left Magadosha, proceeded northwards, no doubt in pursuit of slave-vessels, but certainly to such a distance as to preclude all hope of being able to return, and they were compelled by the violence of the monsoon to run before it. They called at Ras Mäaber (lat. $9^{\circ} 29'$ N.), and here the cutter anchored at some little distance from the beach, while the whaler went on shore for water. Through some unexplained misunderstanding between the whaler's crew and the

natives, several of the latter were wounded, if not killed. The former were compelled to seek safety by flight. They abandoned their boat on shore, and, jumping into the water, swam off to the cutter. Both crews, in the one remaining boat, continued their course northward, and after rounding Cape Guardafui, anchored off Baraida. The boat arrived here on the 26th September; and, as it had originally only fourteen days' provisions, it is by no means improbable that the crews were much exhausted by hunger, thirst, and fatigue.

There is no means of knowing what took place here. A misunderstanding of some kind must have occurred, and perhaps the necessary precaution which the seamen adopted of keeping their arms in readiness might have been interpreted as an intention to commence hostilities. But whatever the cause, the Somalis attacked the boat in overpowering numbers; and it is said that when some of them had been killed, and the Somalis were in the act of dragging the boat on to the beach, the rest jumped into the sea. They were prevented by the natives from landing. Some were speared in the water. Only one, a strong swimmer, succeeded in rounding a cape about half a mile distant, where, landing, he fled towards the east. On the way he met two Somalis, who took him to Asseer, where they made him over to a merchant of Allooia for a ransom of ten dollars. This man, by his own account, engaged four Somalis to conduct the seaman overland to Allooia; on his way he was met by a party of the same people who had murdered his shipmates, and he also shared their fate.

I found it impossible to ascertain the motives which prompted this massacre. There was no time to take them into consideration; prompt retribution was necessary while the tragedy was still fresh in men's minds. I felt sure that the Sultan himself was guiltless in the matter. He had on too many occasions proved his fidelity to us, and shown too much hospitality to British sailors wrecked on his coasts, to be lightly suspected; but he and his advisers would have been accomplices after the act if they failed to cause justice to be done. However strong his desire, he had not the power to do so unless he could plead a considerable amount of pressure as a justification to his people; so I resolved to demand the surrender and execution of the culprits, failing which every village on his coasts within range of the ships' guns would be destroyed.

On the 2d November the Sultan arrived, and next morning I had an interview with him. The result of the meeting was quite satisfactory. He showed himself the just ruler and firm friend of the English that we had ever believed him to be. He did not attempt to palliate the atrocity, or to accuse the English sailors of having commenced

the affray; he readily admitted its enormity, his sorrow for it, and his desire to cause justice to be done. He stated his determination to march against the murderers that night, and he specified ten days as the time within which he could ensure their capture. This appeared reasonable enough, as, forewarned of our demands for their surrender, they had, no doubt, attempted to secure safety by dispersion and flight. Punctual to his appointment, the Sultan met me at Allooia on the 13th. Lieutenant M'Hardy and I landed, and had an interview with him. He had brought all the plundered property he had been able to collect, consisting only of a few arms. The account he gave of the affair was precisely similar to what we had heard from other sources; he assured us that the assailants had only been fifteen in number, without counting women, who are generally as active as the men in an affray. He accounted for their having been able to overpower the sailors by stating that only five of the latter had used firearms, and that some of the rifles and revolvers had been lost in the whaleboat. This was confirmed, to a certain extent, by the rifles which were delivered up; they bore no appearance of having been fired, and the Somalis are too ignorant of the use of firearms to render it probable that they could have cleaned them. The remaining seamen, having only swords, were unable to use them against the Somalis on shore, or to contend against their spears, which they throw with great dexterity. Of the fifteen assailants, three, he assured me, had been killed, four had escaped to places beyond his jurisdiction, and the remaining eight he had brought, and were at my disposition. To estimate how much the Sultan had done in delivering up these culprits we must remember how many murders had been committed on our subjects since we had held possession of Aden, and that in no single instance have we ever succeeded in enforcing the surrender of the murderers. I determined that an immediate example should be made, and that, as the Sultan had tried and condemned the prisoners, only he should execute them. To this he offered no objection; and shortly before sunset the boats of both vessels proceeded to the shore, but the crews did not land. The prisoners were then brought down to the beach and decapitated. Amongst them was the chief elder of the clan to which they all belonged, also one of the two who had killed the last survivor on his way to Allooia. They all confessed their guilt, walked to the beach with steady pace, bent their necks to the sword, and met their death without a murmur.

Thus prompt and signal retribution was exacted, the honour of the British flag was vindicated, and it was made evident to the savage residents on the Somali coast that, while we never failed to reward services rendered to our subjects, we were no less prepared to avenge their wrongs.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XI.



WHEN Browne reached the Rue Jacquarie, after his receipt of the letter which had caused him so much pain and consternation, it was to learn that Katherine was not at home, and to find Madame Bernstein in her sitting-room sniffing vigorously at a bottle of smelling-salts and on the verge of hysterics. Seeing Browne, she sprang to her feet with a cry that was half one of relief and half of fear.

'Oh, Monsieur Browne,' said she, 'Heaven be praised that you have come! I have had such terrible trouble this morning, and have passed through such a scene with Katherine that my nerves are quite unstrung.'

'Where is Katherine?' Browne inquired almost angrily, and quite ignoring the description of her woes; 'and what is the meaning of the letter she wrote me this morning?'

'You must not be angry with her,' said madame, approaching and laying her hand gently upon his arm, while she looked up into his face with what was intended to be a piteous expression. 'The poor child is only doing what she deems to be right. You would not have her act otherwise, I know.'

'You understand my feelings, I think,' Browne replied bluntly. 'At the same time, I know how over-conscientious in such matters she is apt to be. Cannot I see her? Where is she?'

'She has gone out,' said madame, with a sigh. 'She and I, I am sorry to say, had a little disagreement this morning over her treatment of you. I know it was very wrong of me, and that you will hate me for it; but I could not help it. I could not let her spoil her own life and yours without uttering a protest. As a result, she did what she always does—that is to say, she put on her hat and cape, and went for a walk.'

'But have you no notion where I could find her?' asked Browne, who was beginning to feel that everything and everybody were conspiring against him. 'Has she any usual haunts where I should run a moderate chance of coming across her?'

'On that point I am afraid I can say nothing,' answered madame. 'She seldom takes me into her confidence. Yet, stay; I do remember having heard her once say that when she was put out by anything the only thing that could soothe her, and set her right again, was a visit to the picture galleries at the Louvre.'

'You are sure you know of no other place?'

'None whatever,' replied the lady. 'The pic-

tures at the Louvre are the only things in Paris in which she seems to take any interest. She is mad on the subject.'

'In that case I'll try the Louvre at once,' said Browne, picking up his hat.

'But let me first explain to you the reason of all that has happened,' said madame, stretching out her hand as if to detain him.

'Thank you,' Browne returned, with greater coldness than he had ever yet spoken to her; 'but, if you do not mind, I would rather hear that from her own lips.'

With that he bade madame good-bye, and made his way down to the street once more. From the Rue Jacquarie to the Louvre is not more than a ten minutes' drive at most—that is to say, if you proceed by the Avenue de l'Opéra—and yet to Browne it seemed as if he were hours in the cab. On entering the museum he made his way direct to the picture galleries. The building had not been long open, and for this reason only a few people were to be seen in the corridors, a circumstance for which Browne was devoutly thankful. It was not until he reached Room IV. that he knew he was not to have his journey in vain. Standing before Titian's 'Entombment of Christ,' her hands clasped before her, was Katherine. Her whole being seemed absorbed in enjoyment of the picture, and it was not until he was close to her that she turned and saw him. When she did he noticed that her face was very white and haggard, and that she looked as if she had not slept for many nights.

'Oh, why have you followed me?' she asked piteously.

'I have come to acknowledge in person the letter you sent me this morning,' he answered. 'Surely, Katherine, you did not think I should do as you asked me, and go away without even bidding you good-bye?'

'I hoped you would,' she answered, and her lips trembled as she uttered the words.

'Then you do not know me,' he replied, 'nor do you know yourself. No, darling; you are my affianced wife, and I refuse to go. What is more, I will not give you up, come what may. Surely you do not think that mine is such a fair-weather love that it must be destroyed by the first adverse wind? Try it and see.'

'But I cannot and must not try it,' she answered; and then she added, with such a weight of sorrow in her voice that it was as much as he could do to prevent himself from taking her in his arms and comforting her, 'Oh, you can have no idea how unhappy I am!'

'The more reason that I should be with you to comfort you, darling,' he declared. 'What am

I here for, if not to help you? You do not seem to have realised my proper position in the world. If you are not very careful, I shall pick you up and carry you off to the nearest parson, and marry you, willy-nilly; and after that you'll be obliged to put the management of your affairs in my hands, whether you want to or not.'

She looked at him a little reproachfully.

'Please don't joke about it,' she said. 'I assure you it is by no means a laughing matter to me.'

'Nor is it to me,' answered Browne. 'I should have liked you to have seen my face when I read your letter. I firmly believe I was the most miserable man in Europe.'

She offered no reply to this speech, and perhaps that was why a little old gentleman, the same old man in the threadbare black cloak and old-fashioned hat who haunts the galleries, and who entered at that moment, imagined that they were quarrelling.

'Come,' said the young man at last, 'let us find a place where we can sit down and talk unobserved. Then we'll thrash the matter out properly.'

'But it will be no use,' replied Katherine. 'Believe me, I have thought it out most carefully, and have quite made up my mind what I must do. Please do not ask me to break the resolutions I have made.'

'I will not ask you to do anything but love me, dear,' returned Browne. 'The unfortunate part of it is, you see, I also have made resolutions that you on your side must not ask me to break. In that case it seems that we have come to a deadlock, and the only way out of it is for us to start afresh, to discuss the matter thoroughly, and so arrive at an understanding. Come along; I know an excellent corner where we can talk without fear of being disturbed. Let us find it.'

Seeing that to protest would be useless, and deriving a feeling of safety from his masterfulness, she allowed him to lead her along the galleries until they reached the corner to which he had referred. No one was in sight, not even the little old man in the cloak, who was probably

gloating, according to custom, over the 'Venus del Pardo' in Room VI.

'Now let us sit down,' said Browne, pointing to the seat, 'and you must tell me everything. Remember, I have a right to know; and reflect also that, if there is any person in this wide world who can help you, it is I, your husband in the sight of God, if not by the law of man.'

He took her hand, and found that it was trembling. He pressed it within his own as if to give her courage.

'Tell me everything, darling,' he said—'everything from the very beginning to the end. Then I shall know how to help you. I can see that you have been worrying yourself about it more than is good for your health. Let me share the responsibility with you.'

She had to admit to herself that, after all, it was good to have a man to lean upon, to feel that such a pillar of strength was behind her. For this reason she unconsciously drew a little closer to him, as though she would seek shelter in his arms and defy the world from that place of security.

'Now let me have your story,' said Browne. 'Hide nothing from me; for only when I know all shall I be in a position to say how I am in a position to help you.'

He felt a shudder sweep over her as he said this, and a considerable interval elapsed before she replied. When she did her voice was harsh and strained, as if she were nerving herself to make an admission which she would rather not have allowed to pass her lips.

'You cannot imagine,' she said, 'how it pains me to have to tell you my pitiful tale. And yet I feel that I should be doing you a far greater wrong if I were to keep silence. It is not for myself that I feel this, but for you. Whatever may be my fate, whatever may come later, I want you always to remember that.'

'I will remember,' her lover replied softly. 'But you must not think of me at all, dear. I am content to serve you. Now tell me everything.'

Once more she was silent for a few moments, as though she was collecting her thoughts; then she commenced her tale.

THE ELIMINATION OF THE DRUNKARD.



HERE are perhaps as many proposals for the solution of the drink problem as there are sides to the question. Inasmuch as the evil is one of the people's own choosing, it is suggested that a popularly elected body for the control of the drink traffic would have the effect of doing away with as much of it as, in their later experience of

it, they found to be desirable. Some say that the evils of the traffic are almost entirely due to the bad quality of alcoholic liquors on sale in the public-houses, and would have us believe that by the prevention of adulteration and by the enforced maturing of spirits we would be rid of drunkards. Others again say that no more need be done than simply to enforce the law as it at present exists, and drunkenness—at least in public—will soon be

a thing of the past. A certain number of persons, probably in a very small minority, would impose total prohibition upon the drunken community, whether the public wish it or not; and these and the Local Option party are not averse to a sacrifice of the opportunities of the many in order to save the drunken few. Lastly, there have always been some who have insisted that the only way to deal with drunkenness is to remove the drunkard. All attempts to deal with the question may be classified under one of three proposals: those which put restrictions upon the kind of liquor to be offered to the public, those which would put more restrictions upon the opportunities of the public to obtain liquor, and those which would put greater restrictions upon the drunkard. One is inclined to one or other of those methods according as one regards a moderate use of alcohol as desirable or not, and according as one interprets the principle of the liberty of the individual subject.

Perhaps it is true that the scientific men of the country and the medical profession have on the whole most strongly advocated the restriction of the drunkard. They have been telling us for many years now that there is a stage in drunkenness when the vice becomes a disease, when the drunkard should be called a patient, and when he can no more be held capable of choice or of self-restraint in the matter of drinking than an epileptic can be supposed capable of staving off a fit by an effort of will. Accordingly, it has been the constant recommendation of science and of medicine that the drunkard should be taken prisoner and segregated for a season in spite of himself. The value to the community of the removal of the drunkard from its midst is not to be measured only by the happy release which is bound to be felt when a most undesirable class of persons disappears. Nor is the gain to be regarded only as a relief to the ratepayer by the removal of an incubus on the parish. Even if all drunkards were summarily removed by death the gain to society would not only be here and now. Posterity might perhaps be considered to have gained even more than the generation from which the drunkards have been taken; for one of the worst features of the habit of excessive drinking is that it is in some sense hereditary.

In a recent work, *The Present Evolution of Man*, Dr Archdall Reid takes the view that the human being, regarded as an organism, is evolving chiefly in relation to infectious diseases and in relation to alcohol and other drugs. We can have no sort of surety that a person or a stock is able to survive any disease, or that immunity to it has been acquired, except by the slow process of experience and of survival of the fit. Similarly, we can have no surety that a family or a race will be strong to resist alcohol except the probability that immunity will follow upon an experience of it which eliminates the most weak. Now, though the effects of

alcohol are more slow and lingering than the effects of a disease such as that of smallpox, the immediate results are much more miserable. If drunkenness killed quickly there would be a speedy end to the trouble. But it does not; and in the process of drunkenness much misery comes to the drunkard, to society, and particularly to his family. The best we can hope is that, by some slow process of elimination of those who are weak in relation to alcohol, the race will be spared all those miseries which precede the death of the drunkard. The revised version of the inheritance of drunkenness is that the offspring of drunkards inherit a predisposition to fall victims to the habit to which the parents were predisposed before them. If drunkards, then, were removed from social life, if they did not marry and did not beget children, posterity would at least be spared that proportion of drunkenness which is due to inheritance. But a much more important consideration is that which refers to the effect upon the children of drunkards of growing up in a domestic environment which is drunken. These things are all a matter of opinion; but we are probably within the mark in saying that for one man who is born to drunkenness there are two or three who are educated to it by drunken parents. Fortunately this educational influence is one which a process of elimination of drunkards from social life will prevent even more than it will prevent the procreation of children born to drunkenness.

These considerations would be irrelevant and purely academic were it not that on the 1st of January 1899 there came technically, though not practically into operation until a little later, an act which, for the first time in the history of our constitution, explicitly aims at the elimination of the drunkard. The Inebriates Act, 1898, as it is to be called, is an act which provides for the detention in a reformatory, for a period not exceeding three years, of persons who have come into court because of crimes committed under the influence of drink, or to which drunkenness has contributed, and for a similar detention of offenders who have been convicted four times within a twelvemonth of acts of drunkenness which the law already regards as offences. The general effect upon society of the compulsory detention of these drunken criminals does not now concern us, nor need we now inquire into its effect upon the drunkard. We are dealing now with the effect upon posterity of the elimination of drunkards; and we may confidently hope that if this act is well administered it will lead to a great improvement in the chances of posterity in relation to alcohol in the two directions which we have indicated. The detention of habitual drunkards for the periods indicated may be expected to have but a slight effect upon their procreative capacity, and the effect in withdrawing the baneful influence of drunken parents from

the rising generation may not be of much greater importance; but we may be assured that this act, which was admitted by the Government at the time of its passing to be more or less tentative, opens the gate at which the scientists and doctors have been clamouring for years. If pains be taken to make this act successful, it will have paved the way for an act which will provide for the detention of all habitual drunkards, whether

criminal or not. Without doubt time will prove the necessity of extending the period of detention of those for whom a few years' segregation are found insufficient. Then posterity will have to bear all the blame of its drunkenness, because this generation will have taken the necessary precautions to eliminate from social life those who would otherwise come to be looked back upon as a drunken ancestry.

THE UNIQUE MRS SPINK.

III.



O matters drifted on for a space, Albert congratulating himself on the effect of his timely word, and becoming more and more settled in his old-bachelor habits. His days were passed in regular routine. He rose at eight, breakfasted at eight-thirty, had a stroll round the garden, and took the nine-twenty-five train to town; lunched at one o'clock; and, leaving business for the day at five, dined at his club, and thereafter joined in a game of billiards, or, if the weather permitted, adjourned to play golf at Tooting Common. Occasionally he dined with some old friend, or went to the theatre. So that his daily occupation of Fairweather Villa began and ended between the hours of 9 P.M. and 9 A.M.

It was a placid, unemotional existence; and, knowing no other, he was contented. But, all unknown to Albert, a little cloud had arisen which threatened to overshadow him.

One glorious summer night he reached home in splendid spirits. His side had just won a hardly-contested foursome, and he owned the proud consciousness that never had he played better golf. There was no premonition of the thunderbolt which, modestly encased in an ordinary envelope, lay on the hall table awaiting him.

The enclosure was in Elizabeth's handwriting. Holding it under the hall lamp, Mr Spink succeeded in deciphering the careful penmanship:

DEAR MR ALBERT,—We are going to have another. Will you kindly let us know when you are suited and we shall leave.—Yours respectfully,

MR AND MRS LOPHAM.

Here was indeed a calamity!

Folks accustomed to change their maids monthly, and their dwellings every third year, can form no conception of what this threatened innovation meant to Albert Edward Spink, who had been born in Fairweather Villa, Ballham, S.W., and to whose requirements the same servant had attended for many years.

That, under the circumstances, the Lopham family should remain was, of course, impossible.

Already they numbered four; and despite Elizabeth's vigilance and anxiety to keep her husband and family in the background, Mr Spink could not fail to be at times painfully conscious of their presence.

Little awkwardnesses darted across his memory. He had not forgotten that Sunday afternoon when Hackstraw, a City acquaintance, being in the neighbourhood, chanced to call, bringing with him his wife and sister. They were cosily chatting in the drawing-room, when young Jonathan, who was of an adventurous turn, took it upon himself to fall downstairs, landing, with a tremendous crash and a series of piercing yells, in the hall just outside the drawing-room door; Mrs Lopham had swiftly appeared and spirited her offspring away to the back premises, whence his howls, although softened by distance and intervening doors, still reached their ears.

He had found it distinctly annoying when Mrs Hackstraw prefixed her murmurs of sympathy with the remark that she had been under the impression that he was unmarried. It was disconcerting to be obliged to reply that it was the child of his housekeeper, who, with her husband, resided with him. He intercepted a glance Mrs Hackstraw exchanged with her husband, and felt that they pitied him for the foolish lenience which led to the possibility of such awkward occurrences.

Yes, the fiat had gone forth. The Lophams must go.

Albert smoked three pipes without coming to any definite decision regarding the best method of procedure towards the engaging of a new housekeeper, and finally resolved to take Mrs Thorneycroft's advice. She was an old friend, and a bright, sensible woman. She would be sure to counsel him aright.

IV.



HERE is nothing else for it. You must marry.'

Such was Mrs Thorneycroft's ultimatum, and it startled Mr Spink vastly. 'Marry!' he echoed, appalled.

'Yes, Albert. Why not? You should have married years ago. Do you never consider that, when men are so scarce, you are doing a positive injustice to womankind by remaining a bachelor?'

'Well, no. I must confess I never thought of it in that way.'

'You have been too comfortable, that's all. I am inclined to believe that this episode of the Lophams will turn out an admirable thing for you, after all, if it lures you on to matrimony.'

'But couldn't I get another housekeeper? I hoped that you might be good enough to engage one for me.'

'I shall, of course, if you wish it, Albert. But supposing I do, who is to teach her her duties, and see that she keeps the house as it should be?'

'It shouldn't be difficult for a capable woman. Half the rooms are locked up. I only use three, and, except on Sundays, merely breakfast at home.'

'Well, I'll do what you ask. But I am certain you would be happier with a nice wife.'

And somehow, after thinking the matter over, Mr Spink found himself veering round to Mrs Thorneycroft's point of view. It would certainly be pleasant to have a sympathetic wife. It was dismal coming home in the evenings and finding no one with whom he could discuss his affairs. If he did marry he would dine at home, too: the reiteration peculiar to the club menus wearied him.

There was a strong strain of romance in Albert's nature, albeit his prosaic mode of life had allowed it to lie untuned; and, as the idea grew upon him, he began unconsciously to build castles in the air.

His wife would sit opposite him as they breakfasted in his cosy dining-room, and be at hand to give him a cup of tea when he reached home in the afternoon. Then they would have a game of tennis or golf, and a dainty little dinner, followed by some music.

He opened the old cottage piano whereon his chubby infant fingers had learned to play 'Listen to the Mocking-bird' and 'Life let us Cherish.' It had been silent since his mother died, and some of the yellow keys struck dumb.

The sweet, feeble music of the notes thrilling his nerves brought a little rush of emotion, and for the first time he realised how lonely and self-centred his life had been.

With a wife to share his interests all would be changed. They would not stagnate as he had been content to do. Together they would gather up the threads of some dropped friendships, and make new ones, and a pleasant exchange of hospitality would follow. He would not devote himself so exclusively to business as hitherto. His circumstances permitted him to take a holiday when he listed. They would often escape the London fogs by spending a day or two at

Hastings or Bournemouth, and each autumn they would do a little Continental travelling.

Hastily writing a line to Mrs Thorneycroft requesting her to take no steps about engaging a housekeeper for him until he had seen her, he ran out and posted the missive, then retired to rest, feeling happier in the prospect of the future change than a few hours earlier he would have deemed possible.

It was with a new spirit of adventure that Mr Spink awoke next morning, and he was conscious of making a more than usually careful toilet. Though even to himself he would not acknowledge it, he had the feeling that now any moment might bring him into the presence of the woman who was fated to share the remainder of his life; so that it behoved him to appear at his best.

In response to Elizabeth's questioning look, he replied that he had received their note, and that other arrangements were in progress. He would let her know when they were completed.

At the station he found himself viewing with a new interest the few young ladies who were on the platform while he waited for his train.

His morning's work was despatched with unusual alacrity, and, after a hurried lunch, he took a hansom and sped westwards to Mrs Thorneycroft's mansion in Kensington.

Fortune favoured him, for his mentor was at home, and alone.

Albert did not waste a moment in beating about the bush.

'My dear friend,' he made frank avowal, 'I am going to take your advice. I have resolved to marry.'

'Now that's *delightful*. Albert, I am rejoiced. Who is the happy woman?'

'Well, really,' Mr Spink laughed a trifle sheepishly, 'that is for you to say. I must confess I haven't the most remote idea!'

Mrs Thorneycroft fairly sparkled with delight. Here, then, was a task after her own heart.

'I know lots of awfully nice women, and I'm certain you could find a perfectly suitable wife among them. Tell me what qualifications your ideal woman must have.'

'Well, she must be nice-looking.'

'Of course.'

'And good-tempered.'

'Surely.'

'And I would like an intellectual woman. Not a frivolous one.'

'Yes.'

'If she were musical, that would be an attraction.'

'Yes.'

'And her relatives must be desirable; I would not like her to have too many or disreputable ones.'

'An orphan preferred. Go on.'

'I always admire tall women, and slender.'

Mrs Thorneycroft's figure being tall and slender, not to say attenuated, she answered cheerfully, 'Very good. Proceed. You would like one of a suitable age, of course?'

'Yes, of course, about'—

'Well, about?'—

'Oh, perhaps twenty-three or so.'

'Oh!' said Mrs Thorneycroft, but her emphasis escaped Albert's notice. He was too much engrossed in building up his ideal goddess to remark the slight touch of sarcasm which leavened her 'Oh!'

'And I am to find the lady. Now let us sum up. She must be young—as matters go nowadays twenty-three is as young as eighteen was in my girlhood; she must be pretty, and tall and slender, good-tempered and clever, musical and intellectual, and have no objectionable relatives. The unique Mrs Spink! My dear Albert, I sincerely wish you may get her!'

'Why? Don't you know of any girls who have these requirements?' he asked anxiously, a little disturbed by her badinage. 'I'm sure you must know lots.'

'Oh yes! I am only jesting. I know plenty of charming girls.' Mrs Thorneycroft was of a sympathetic disposition, and hated giving pain, so she did not add, as a more candid and less tactful friend might have done, 'but perhaps they won't wish to marry you.' She decided to see that Albert had a fair selection, and the result would be his concern, not hers.

'We go up the river to our little bungalow on Friday. Suppose you visit us there from Saturday till Monday. I won't promise anything, but'—

And Mr Spink left Cromwell Gardens with the conviction that the romance of his life was dated to begin on the following Saturday.

NOVELISTS I HAVE KNOWN.

By T. H. S. ESCOTT, Author of *Personal Forces of the Period*, &c.



NOTICEABLY handsome clerical couple—the clergyman himself slight, tall, with fine features, clear voice, an abundance of light silken hair, reminding, as it used to be said, the Somersetshire villagers of

Absalom; the lady glorying in a wavy profusion of golden locks. Here is the first dim memory belonging to the present writer of a once popular novelist. The clergyman himself was curate of a little village outside Bridgwater some time during the first fifty years of this century. He was a striking preacher, and much thought of by the connoisseurs of sermons from the neighbouring town. In those far-off years Mr and Mrs Gordon Smythies were undoubtedly chief notabilities in that part of the western county. There was close logic as well as flow of words in the sermons of the gentleman. There were brightness, briskness, and study of the lighter aspects of life in the novels of the lady. These were the fictions that, rivalling the popularity of Mrs Gore, prefigured as well as perhaps inspired a more pretentious school of later novelists of society. *The Marrying Man*, *The Flirt*, and so forth were the titles of these unsophisticated, rather flimsy, but morally harmless romances. Mrs Gordon Smythies was enough of a contemporary with Mrs Gore to be able to repudiate the charge of being her imitator or even disciple. Her husband, the Rev. Yorick Smythies, had seen the world both at college and in society, and had lived with well-known people; he was thus more likely than any literary teacher of that period to have eked out the knowledge of his wife from his own reminiscences. The mother of

the golden-haired Mrs Smythies was also a bright, well-informed, experienced old lady; her son, too, a pupil of the clergyman in his Oxford reading, had known what was then not called society, but the *beau monde*. The appetite for Ouida's more finished romances in the early sixties had doubtless been in part created between one and two decades before by Mrs Gordon Smythies. The earlier writer, too, was like the later, poet as well as novelist. In some verses wanting neither in power nor grace, and for a short while much the vogue, Mrs Smythies described those marshy, unhealthy flats of Tuscany which gave Miss de la Ramée a title for one of her novels. Probably when Ouida christened her book *Maremma* she had never heard of, still less read, the poem of the old-world society novelist. She will probably learn for the first time of the coincidence in title as a very trifling curiosity of literature. The Quantock district of Somerset—that now spoken of—has always been proud of, perhaps even still lives on, the literary traditions that have descended to it from the sojourn there of Coleridge and Wordsworth.

Another name, immortalised at least by Byron's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, has more lately associated itself with the fiction-writers of the western county. The Capell Loft who was the literary founder of his family had been the patron of poets, especially of Bloomfield, the bard of the *Farmer's Boy*, not less than the friend of members of what was called the Lake School. His descendant, vividly recalled as she is by the present writer, was, as Mrs Irwin, the wife of the rector of Charlynch, a village some few miles from the home of Mrs Gordon

Smythies. This daughter of the house of Lofft, a cultivated person, excelled as a conversationalist, and essayed fiction with far more than local success. Hers were not society novels; they showed close observation of life by an original mind. Without the inner knowledge of smart life in Violet Fane's *Sophy*, their social satire gave a foretaste of the bitter-sweet flavour which, perfected by Violet Fane, leaves a taste as of olives on the literary palate.

On the road between Bridgwater and Petherton is, or was, a square, roomy building known as Ham House. Periodical and always unfulfilled rumour attributed to Thackeray an intention of renting this residence. Even without him the county in the days now mentioned was proud of its reputation for novelists.

The last election at Bath in the fifties brought into juxtaposition a fairly well-known novel-writer, and the supposed original of a far better known novel character. The architect of the Royal Exchange, Sir William Tite (knighted in 1869), is always said to have given Dickens some hints for the character of Pecksniff in *Martin Chuzzlewit*. Mr Tite had already represented the Somerset capital in 1855. When, in 1857, he sought re-election, there was standing together with him the urbane, dignified, and universally accomplished possessor of Clevedon Court. About this time Sir Arthur Hallam Elton had written a novel which had set every one talking between the Avon and the Tamar. The book was called *Below the Surface*; its subject was the Ritualistic section in the Church of England; its motto, I think, was a line of Juvenal,* tellingly adapted to the domestic danger of the confession-hearing Anglican priest in the family. Of benevolence at least equal to his wealth, of the most perfect breeding, of the most unruffled amiability, Sir Arthur Elton was not the man, as every one knew, to use his talents or his commanding position to attack, save on public grounds, any interest or individual. The exposure of Puseyism, as it was then called, in its domestic aspects, was undertaken as a public duty, though pointed perhaps by private experiences. Neither the Oxford secessions nor Lord John Russell's Durham letter incriminating the High Anglicans were then ancient history. The fiction was a telling commentary on the historic facts. Such was the stir it made that two three-volume editions were sold off in a couple of weeks. Sir Arthur Elton's hospitalities had in the south the same sort of fame as those of Sir William Stirling Maxwell in the north. Tennyson, Gladstone, and indeed all persons of promise or distinction visiting the west were guests at Clevedon Court. Bath had then a number of small, very select literary clubs and societies, dating at least from the days of Beau Nash. At these Sir Arthur Elton's genial dignified presence, ready knowledge,

and rare conversational power made him a central figure—reflected, indeed, distinction on the place. But the memorable enthusiasm of some of his public receptions during 1857 were chiefly due to the fact of his having hit the taste of the county, in some degree of the country too, between the wind and water. Religious feeling in Bath was then, as it has often been, largely Evangelical. Sir Arthur Elton's *Below the Surface* was welcomed as the social gospel of a new Evangelical crusade, in a place whose traditions generally have been Low Church.

Intellectually not less than physically the most notable Bath novelist was a very interesting, original, and well-informed man, who recently died at Brighton, the Rev. James Pycroft. The Hatchard's of Bath was then the shop of a bookseller in Bridge Street, named Peach. Overtopping the little crowd of gentlemen and ladies on these well-known premises, Mr Pycroft's tall, thin, but well-knit and upright figure, clerically clad though not clerically occupied, seemed that of the intellectual oracle of Bath between thirty and forty years ago. As the author of *The Cricket Field*, he was also a classical authority on the national game; in the field of the Lansdowne Club, by the side of the Avon, he passed many summer afternoons. Here he predicted the national fame of the brothers Grace, of whom in those days the most famous, I think, was E. M. But Mr Pycroft foretold that it was W. G. Grace who would furnish the most formidable batsman ever yet sent forth from the west of England. In his earlier days Mr Pycroft had been a master at Cheltenham College, as well as a beneficed clergyman in North Devon. For many years he filled at Bath the place already described, that of a sort of universal referee in educational or literary matters. Suddenly he astonished many, interested others, and delighted some, himself especially, by appearing as a novelist. His story of *Agony Point*, a genially didactic satire on modern extravagance, was certain to have been full of good things, for Mr Pycroft was quite as well read as was the author of that volume of encyclopædic gossip and ana called *Lacon*, which is none the less useful although probably to-day almost forgotten. But Mr Pycroft's friends were not prepared for such clear delineation of character and such fresh domestic satire as the novel contained. The author's name seems to have been withheld from the earlier copies, when, greatly to his delight, some rumours attributed it to Anthony Trollope, and Mr Pycroft gracefully acknowledged the work, much to the satisfaction of the reading public of Bath and Cheltenham. After a short sojourn in London this novelist settled in Brighton.

That town then had a little literary society of its own, not unlike that of Bath, chiefly organised by the Misses Horace Smith, sisters of the authors of *Rejected Addresses*. Sometime during the seventies these kind ladies gave a dinner-party in Mr Pycroft's honour, Anthony Trollope and

* *Scire domus secreta volunt atque inde timeri.*

Robert Browning, then on a visit to Brighton, being among the guests. The talk was less literary than the good hostesses might have liked. Trollope blustered out a paradox denying the educational value of Greek. Browning, who had just translated the *Æschylean* trilogy, asked Pycroft, as a classical scholar, his opinion on the version, which some thought to be rather more obscure than the original; the divine diplomatically parried the question by leading back the conversation to Trollope's original statement. In deference to a meek young divine who, fresh from Oxford, kept a school in Regency Square, the rest of the talk centred entirely round the merits or the reverse of the public school *Latin Grammar*, which (1871) had not then long appeared.

Universal dissent was a common feature of kind-hearted, grumbling Anthony Trollope's talk. 'I utterly disagree with you; what was it you were saying?' Such was the comment and inquiry that followed each other after a pause in a late evening's talk, during which Trollope seemed to have been dozing. No man doing with such zeal all he engaged in took himself less seriously than Trollope; even his falls in the hunting-field elicited many more laughs from himself than from any who witnessed them. His kindness was unbounded; but he never let the left hand know what the right hand did. When a literary friend died in difficulties and his books were going to the hammer, Trollope literally intercepted them on their way to the auctioneer's, insisted on paying for them on his own lavish valuation, provided that the widow never knew who was the purchaser. Of all comparatively recent novelists, Trollope admired Whyte-Melville most. Of that finished man of the world as well as literary artist, one characteristic remark made at dinner in a Warwickshire country house can never be forgotten by those who heard it. 'If,' he said, half-soliloquising over the day's incidents in the hunting-field, 'I was asked to give a piece of advice to a young man just starting in life, it would be: "Ride straight to hounds, and never talk!"' Trollope loved Ireland, where he had first learned to ride and write, and almost adored her great novelist, Charles Lever. Once, and once only, I met these two men together, at the house in County Galway of a very popular, clever, and agreeable Irishman who then sat for the county, who afterwards served his country in responsible offices abroad, and who in his later years was one of the most welcome figures in London society. As host to Lever and Trollope in those days, he made no secret of his ancestral fortunes having declined. There were rumours—a very old story—of the half-liveried servants waiting at dinner being sheriff's officers in disguise. 'In your father's day,' observed Trollope to the host, 'his people would have taught an unwelcome visitor, on whatever plea, it was as much as his life was worth to push past the lodge gate.' 'I very much fear,' rejoined Lever across the

walnuts and the wine, holding up as he spoke his nut-crackers pistol-wise, 'all that sort of thing has gone long out of date.' Anthony Trollope often told this story, imitating the gesture with the nut-crackers, in later years; but by that time, I think, the phrase which struck him—'all that sort of thing'—and its inner meaning, had been put by Lever into one of his stories or gossipy *Blackwood* papers. It has been said of Trollope that he could work equally well at any time. The truth is, as J. A. Froude once remarked, there was never an hour in his 'banging-about life' when he was not at work; whether he were pounding on his stout old cob for his morning ride in Rotten Row, or playing his afternoon rubber at the Garrick, his thoughts seldom wandered far from the situation or the phrase which was to be the keynote of his next chapter. Only late in life did he lighten his unending labour by the help of an amanuensis, and then only because of an accident physical and domestic. He had sprained his hand. A niece of his wife was staying in his house in Manchester Square. When, according to his habit, he descended to his study just as the housemaid was about to light the fire, he found he could only use his pen with some pain. The housemaid was sent up to ask the young lady to come down as soon as might be. Trollope found the work of dictation unexpectedly easy; his niece soon took up her abode beneath his roof, and to the day of his death he never employed any other amanuensis, nor ever wrote another novel with his own hand.

He knew, of course, at his clubs and in general society every one worth knowing. His two great friends at the Garrick and elsewhere were Millais, whose pencil had so happily portrayed his best heroines, and Sir Henry James, to-day Lord James of Hereford, who perpetually appears in many of the political sketches of his later novels, and whom he had expected to see Lord Chancellor before he died. Among literary workers he saw most of Edward Pigott, the late dramatic censor, and Mr Edward Dicey, who in the later sixties had acted with him in the editorship of *St Paul's Magazine*. In general company his brightness and temper were apt both to be uncertain. As his frequent guest in Manchester Square, the present writer is but one of several who found him invariably the pleasantest of hosts and the staunchest of friends.

The recent death of Mrs Lynn Linton may be compared to that of Trollope in 1882, in that it has been followed by the break-up of one of the most interesting of little literary societies. The dinner-parties of Sir — and Lady — were often the most representative of intellectual gatherings. Mr Henry James and other cultivated Americans first made their début there, while the author of *Joshua Davidson* seldom was absent. Neither for those nor the Manchester Square hospitalities have there yet been found in the whirl and

multitude of London entertainments any exact successors. Anthony Trollope and Mrs Lynn Linton both had the gift of penetrating with their very different personalities the company in which they were. Mrs Linton was a real intellectual centre in those friendly gatherings at which was

found the best professional and absolutely the most intellectual society in London. Now she is removed those parties are no more; while, whether in club, in country house, or family party, Anthony Trollope's place still shows no sign of being filled.

THE LABOUR CONDITIONS OF A BRITISH COLONY.



HE 'Labour Problem' is assuming year by year a graver aspect. The continual recurrence of strikes and the wide publicity given to the arguments of the strikers in the press are creating in the minds of those who are watching the signs of our modern progress a feeling that a time is not far distant when the whole question of labour relations will have to be reconsidered from an entirely new standpoint.

On the one hand, the employer feels that a continual effort is being made to limit his authority, to dictate to him the conditions under which his capital can be employed; and an increased feeling of uneasiness is abroad amongst this class as to the probability of strikes seriously interfering with its plans at a time when large contracts are in course of fulfilment, involving, in the case of non-performance, heavy penalties and serious loss.

On the other hand, the labourer sees that under present conditions he has in his hands a very effective weapon with which to insist on what he believes to be his rights; and as the limit of these rights is extending, the use of this weapon of organised strikes is becoming more frequent. I will not attempt in this article to determine in how far right lies with one side or the other, but will give a brief history of the labour struggle in one of the British colonies.

The Emancipation Act was published in British Guiana on October 19, 1833, and on August 1, 1824, all the slaves became apprenticed labourers. It was confidently predicted by the abolitionist party in England that when the slaves were freed they would work on as before, only with a redoubled energy bred of the proud consciousness that they were no longer slaves.

During the period of apprenticeship signs were not wanting which indicated to all except those who wilfully refused to recognise the facts that a very different state of things would prevail after August 1, 1838 (Emancipation Day), than had been hoped for. Notwithstanding the fact that the working-hours of the labourers were reduced during the time of apprenticeship, several riots occurred, and great difficulty was found in getting the work of the plantations satisfactorily done.

As time passed this difficulty became greater

and greater; and at length, in 1836, the planters began to import labour. That this should have been necessary when the number of labourers in the colony was amply sufficient to perform the work of the estates is a striking proof of the change which had already begun to make itself felt.

In 1836 and 1837 labourers were imported from the British Isles, the United States, and Germany; but it was found that the climatic conditions were such as to render white labour, except such as came from Southern Europe, useless. In 1838 Lord Glenelg, at that time Secretary of State for the Colonies, proposed to send out to British Guiana a batch of youthful offenders who were imprisoned on their first conviction; but the proposal met with no encouragement.

So pressing did the need for labourers become that as Emancipation Day drew near labourers were brought from Madeira, Barbadoes, St Lucia, Anguilla, St Kitts, Nevis, St Barts, St Helena, Sierra Leone, and Rio de Janeiro. These labourers were imported at the expense of the planters, and were bound by contract to work on the estates for a fixed period, at a fixed rate of pay. In addition to the labour derived from the above sources, 406 coolies from Calcutta arrived in the colony in 1838, under the following terms: Sirdars to receive seven rupees a month, and ordinary labourers five rupees (fourteen and ten shillings respectively, the rupee not having depreciated at that time). Daily rations were to be provided free to all—one pound and a half of rice, with salt, ghee, dhall, or peas. Clothing was to be furnished on landing, and afterwards annually. In return for these considerations, the coolies were to work every day from sunrise to sunset, with an interval of three hours in the heat of the day, and on Sundays until nine in the morning.

It is a striking fact that these terms were almost exactly the same as those under which the slaves themselves were working before the passing of the Emancipation Act. An Order in Council dated November 2, 1831, containing one hundred and thirty-one sections, regulated the treatment of the slaves in the most minute manner, providing that a regular supply of food according to a fixed tariff should be given weekly to each slave, that certain articles of clothing should be furnished yearly, and that parents and children or husband and wife were not to be separated except with

their own consent. Every owner of more than forty slaves was compelled to engage the services of a medical practitioner, whose duty it was to inspect the slaves at least once a fortnight, and enter the result of his inspection in a book provided for the purpose.

In order that the law should be carried out, a Protector of Slaves was appointed by the government, and this official and his subordinates were empowered to visit any estate without warning, and inspect the slaves. No slave could be punished in any way without an entry being made in the Record Book, which was open at all times to the Protector. In order to render any abuse of the law impossible, each slave had the legal right of leaving an estate without permission from his owner in order to lay any complaint before the Protector.

It cannot for a moment be doubted that the interests of the slaves were far more carefully guarded than those of the early immigrants. At length emancipation came, and with it a period of the utmost depression in all branches of industry. Cotton and coffee had been articles of export on a large scale. Of the former the annual export reached seven million pounds; of the latter, eight million pounds. After emancipation these two industries perished for want of reliable labour, the last bale of cotton leaving the colony in 1843, and the last bag of coffee in 1846.

In order that the colony might not be absolutely ruined, it was determined to organise a regular system of immigration, and arrangements were concluded with the Indian government which led, in 1845, to the commencement of a yearly importation of East Indian labourers, which, with the exception of two years—1849 and 1850—has continued down to the present time.

This system of immigration is under government control; and as four-fifths of all work done in the colony to-day is done by imported labour, I propose to describe the system in detail.

Everything in connection with immigration passes through the Immigration Department. At the head of this is the Immigration Agent-General, and under him are the sub-agents and interpreters, as well as a large staff of clerks. Every one in this office above the rank of an ordinary clerk must be proficient in at least one Indian dialect, those generally used being Hindi, Urdu, and Tamil. In Calcutta resides the Immigration Agent for India, an official of the British Guiana government. His duty is to recruit immigrants and attend to their shipment. The recruiting agents travel about the country and collect a number of men and women who are willing to accept the terms offered them. These are then despatched to Calcutta, where they are received at the Immigration Depôt. Here they are fed and clothed for some weeks, during which time they are under medical inspection. At length, when the time comes for embarkation, a final inspection takes

place, and those who are found unfit are sent back to their homes.

Any immigrant who may have young children is allowed to take them out to the colony at the colony's expense, and they are not placed on the register as indentured immigrants. On the day of sailing there is a muster of the immigrants at the depôt, and the terms of the agreement are read over to the people in batches of twenty at a time, and if any one wishes to draw back he can do so. The indenture sheet is then signed, and each immigrant is given a copy of his agreement signed by the agent, whose signature binds the employer in the colony to fulfil the conditions. The conditions are printed on the back of each agreement in three dialects. The immigrants are then marched to the ship in batches—first the married people, then the single women, and then the single men. (I use the term immigrant throughout, as I am writing from the standpoint of a resident in British Guiana.) Here they are received by the doctor of the ship, who calls a muster and checks each name on his list.

The doctor has full authority and responsibility during the voyage, and no order of any kind affecting the immigrants can be given without his consent. The vessels used for transporting the immigrants are fast-sailing ships, chartered for the purpose by the colonial government. Minute regulations are in force which govern every detail of the voyage to Georgetown, the capital of British Guiana. The 'tween-decks are divided into three spaces, the single men occupying the forward division, the married people the next, and the single women the after-division. The whole ship is free to the immigrants, the poop, however, being reserved for the women. The passage over is always made as comfortable as possible for every one; and as the captain and officers each receive a bonus for every immigrant landed, the greatest care is taken to keep the ship thoroughly clean and the ventilation in good order.

The food to be supplied during the passage is fixed by law and on a scale of the utmost liberality. Fresh meat and vegetables, soup and rice and curry, form the principal items on the menu. Every day the doctor makes his rounds of inspection, in the morning and again in the evening; and any complaints are heard and investigated.

When the ship arrives in Georgetown the Immigration Agent-General comes on board and inspects the immigrants, and also receives the report of the voyage from the doctor. In this report are entered the births and deaths, and the particulars of any cases treated in the ship's hospital. As soon as convenient the immigrants are landed and marched up to the Immigration Depôt, where they are given quarters until they are despatched to the various estates.

The system of allotment is as follows: Each estate which requires immigrants sends in a re-

quisition to the Agent-General stating the number of immigrants wanted. As the number asked for is always greater than the number available for allotment, the Agent-General determines how many are to be sent to each estate, and the managers are notified accordingly.

The terms of contract between the immigrant and the employer are fixed by law, and the Agent-General has the power to refuse immigrants to any estate on which he believes the immigrants are not being treated satisfactorily.

The employer has to furnish house-room to the immigrants free of cost, and no immigrants are allotted to any estate until the medical inspector has visited the dwelling-houses, and made an entry in a book kept for the purpose to the effect that the houses are built in a manner which fulfils the sanitary requirements laid down in the regulations.

Each estate has to provide a hospital capable of accommodating a certain percentage of all the immigrants on the estate. The hospital is to be in charge of a certified dispenser, who must live on the spot. Three times a week the government medical officer visits the hospital and examines each patient. Every case must be entered by him in the hospital book, with such particulars as to treatment as will serve to guide the dispenser. Every prescription is entered by the doctor in this book. At the termination of each visit the doctor signs the hospital book, and is held responsible by the government for the accuracy of the entries made.

Every indentured immigrant has the right of consulting the doctor, remaining in the hospital whilst sick, and receiving food, clothing, and medicine as long as he is there; and for this he pays nothing. In addition to this, the women can go to the hospital to be confined, and the doctor is compelled to perform any operations that may be necessary.

In order to give some idea of the extent to which the hospitals are used, I may mention that in the year ending 31st March 1896 the number of cases treated in the estates-hospitals was 124,326. Each estate must provide a school for the young children of the immigrants, and this privilege is also enjoyed free of charge.

The law fixes a minimum rate of wages—twenty-four cents for men and sixteen cents for women. Although this rate of pay seems very low, yet in reality it is not so, as it leaves a very considerable margin for saving, the expense of living being very small. In support of this statement I may refer to the official report of the Immigration Department for the year ending 31st March 1896, which shows that the 2089 immigrants who returned to India in the year under review carried with them \$119,289. The amount of money taken out of the colony by returning immigrants reaches in all the considerable sum of \$3,240,000.

After serving five years under indenture, and remaining five years longer in the colony, each immigrant can claim a passage back to India on payment of one-fourth of the actual expense in the case of men, and one-sixth in the case of women. In return for these considerations the immigrant agrees to work five days a week, for seven hours in the fields or ten hours in the factory.

The whole of the relation between the immigrant and his employer is covered by the Immigration Ordinance (No. 25, of 1891), and in all cases where difficulties arise the magistrate's court must be visited. The employer has no legal right to inflict a punishment of any kind whatever. If an immigrant refuses to work, a summons must be taken out against him. The case is tried by the magistrate as a civil matter, and the ordinary rules of procedure are observed. The offence must be proved by witnesses, and the defendant can, if he chooses, employ a lawyer to conduct his case. This is frequently done when the charge is a serious one.

If any immigrant has a cause of complaint against his employer or his employer's agents, he can go directly either to the nearest magistrate or to the Immigration Agent-General and state his case; and he has the legal right of leaving the estate without permission in order to do this. If the magistrate or the Agent-General thinks that the man has a just cause, either of them can issue a free summons against the person complained of.

The above facts present the conditions which prevail in regard to labour on the sugar estates of British Guiana. The report of the West India Royal Commission, published in October 1897, shows that of the total exports from British Guiana sugar formed 94 per cent., after deducting the value of the gold export. It will thus be seen that the labour question is practically confined to the sugar estates.

The way in which the expenses of the immigration system are met has been much criticised in recent years, many people holding the view that the whole population of the colony is being taxed for the benefit of the planters. To take the figures for the colony's financial year 1895-96, the total cost of immigration was \$461,284, of which \$300,444 represented expenses of introduction and establishments, and \$160,840 the cost of the medical service. Of the total sum the planters paid directly into the Treasury in cash and promissory notes \$153,761, and the balance was paid out of the general funds of the colony. Thus the planters bore one-third and the colony two-thirds of the immigration expenses.

The question naturally suggests itself whether it is fair to make the general public pay for the maintenance of a system of immigration which apparently benefits only one section of the community. At first sight one might be inclined to say

that such an arrangement was far from just, but a closer examination of the position puts the matter in a very different light. The total export trade of the colony for the year 1895-96, excluding gold, was valued at \$5,846,400, and of this sum sugar represented \$5,630,400. It will be seen from these figures that the sugar industry is the backbone of the colony, and that any circumstance affecting the industry would affect in a corresponding degree the welfare of the entire population. As the sugar estates are entirely dependent for their labour on the continuance of East Indian immigration, and as it would be absolutely impossible for the planters to bear the total cost of the system, the charging to general revenue of a portion of the cost of immigration was the only alternative to an entire collapse of the colony.

Apart from this, it is to be noted that, as the revenue of the colony is raised almost entirely from duties on imports, excise duty on rum, and retail spirit licences, the East Indians themselves, who form nearly half the population, pay as consumers a large proportion of the sum devoted to defraying immigration expenses.

The continued importation of East Indians has had a very marked effect on the census returns. In 1841 the population of the colony was composed of 90,900 black and coloured; 2219 Portuguese from Madeira; 2162 Scotch, English, and Irish; 403 French, Dutch, and Germans; 343 East Indians; and 159 North Americans; with about 1300 unclassified. It is not clear whether the aboriginal Indians are included in the above returns. In 1891 the population was made up as follows: Black and mixed races, 141,184; Africans, 3433; East Indians, 105,463; Portuguese, 12,166; Chinese, 3714; Europeans other than Portuguese, 4558; aborigines, 7463; not stated, 347. Thus in the fifty years 1841-91 the ratio of the East Indians to the rest of the population changed from one in every three hundred to three in every eight.

The black and coloured races are very much averse to manual labour, and this feature of their character becomes more marked year by year. It is attributed to various causes. Some observers set it down to the natural laziness of the people; others maintain that it is the result of the wide spread of education, with the accompanying desire for social elevation, which, acting together, tend to make field-work unpopular; another class of apologists ask, 'Why should a man work if he can live on the bountiful supplies of nature?'

Whatever be the cause, the fact remains that the colony has to send thousands of miles for labourers, whilst the majority of the natives are sitting idle. What the final result will be is not difficult to foresee. The East Indian, frugal and saving in his habits, careful of his children, setting great store by family ties, will eventually stamp out the native population, who, although

possessing many virtues and of hardier physique, are idle and improvident, and are so careless of their children that infant mortality forms one-fifth of the death-rate of the colony.

SUNSET.

ALL alone I pass to-day
'Neath the pinewood's rugged arches,
While the sunset's level ray,
Piercing through the slend'rer larches,
Flecks with gold the mossy way.

Once, on such a day, you know,
Through such pines we climbed together—
She and I: how long ago!—
While across the purpling heather
Stole the sunset's deep'ning glow.

Towards the solemn verge of day
Mountains rose in stateliest order;
At our feet the brimming Spey
Flashed between each grassy border
Loitering on its dreamy way.

There we talked till day was gone
From the knoll among the heather;
And the wild bees' murmured drone
Still recalls that hour together,
Now I walk at eve alone.

How her gracious presence filled
All the pauses of my dreaming
With a glad content, that thrilled
Half my life to fairer seeming,
And my restless spirit stilled.

What although a silence fell
On our lips; our thoughts were meeting,
For we loved, I think, too well
To require much speech, repeating
What our hearts could better tell.

At her side the world looked bright,
In her eyes all hope shone clearer;
And for that sweet evening's light
Now I hold all sunsets dearer,
Though I walk alone to-night.

M. GRAHAM.

*. TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



R E C R U I T S.

By Rev. E. J. HARDY, M.A., Chaplain to Her Majesty's Forces,
 Author of *How to be Happy though Married; Manners makyth Men, &c.*

IT is to be hoped that giving the full shilling to our soldiers will bring in the quantity and quality of recruits desired; but we fear that it will make little or no difference.

In none of my frequent conversations with Tommy Atkins have I heard any gratitude expressed for the new order; and, whether rightly or wrongly, he discounts the supposed increase of pay as follows: One-half of the additional threepence he deducts for abolished deferred pay, and the other half he thinks Government will save by some dodge too artful to be easily discovered. He enlisted, he says, for a shilling and deferred pay, and if tardy Justice has at last made good the first part of the bargain, why should she pay herself for doing so by putting aside the second part—that is, deferred pay? No! if we want to tap a higher grade of society and get recruits of the artisan class, we must give pay that would be considered ruinous—that is to say, about half-a-crown a day. Boys and hobbledohs may be had for less, but hardly, when trade is good, those who have passed the threshold of manhood and settled down in some steady civilian employment. And indeed, considering the cost of crime and sickness in the army, it might perhaps be as cheap, in the end, to give even as much as two shillings and sixpence a day if by doing so we could close all the military prisons and half the hospitals. I say all the prisons; for if men were paid like this, almost the only, and certainly the most dreaded, punishment would be, as it is in the case of the Royal Irish Constabulary, dismissal from the service. Half the hospital accommodation, too, would do; for half the diseases and accidents that are treated in these places are the direct or indirect result of vices from which men better brought up would be more exempt. Another and a cheaper way of getting recruits from a better class would be to

allow a soldier after he is dismissed recruits' drill, or even after he has been in the army for a month, to live anywhere he likes and can afford, so long as he turns up for his duties—he might pay a substitute for coal-carrying fatigue—well fed and properly dressed. The one-year volunteer student-soldier in the German army has this privilege, and it seems to work well there. What respectable parents who have tried to bring their sons up well dread, and the sons themselves, is the barrack-room. Perhaps the bad reputation which this place of residence has acquired is not altogether deserved; but if a young man knew that he could live in lodgings by himself or with one or more like-minded chums, and had not to face barrack-room customs, language, and glare of publicity, he would not be afraid, whatever were his antecedents, to indulge his tastes for soldiering. A regulation like this would, as it seems to me, be far better than a regiment of gentlemen privates, with its invidious distinction, and would give us thousands of recruits whom snobs of tradesmen would not warn off their premises for fear of missing the opportunity of entertaining a moneyed angel unawares.

For some years back England has been doing all she can think of to improve the condition of her soldiers; but she gets little or no credit for it. The fact is that the advantages of the army, in spite of the official statement, which may be read at any post-office, and the coloured posters on barrack gates, are not known or are not realised. If only batches of young civilian men were personally conducted through some of our new barracks, or even through the old ones when occupied by regiments with enlightened commanding officers, what an advertisement it would be for the army! Those who think of enlisting are ready enough to find out the drawbacks of military life, but not so quick at discovering what a really good time soldiers have. When, lately, the writer was

stationed at Plymouth none of the country lads would enlist at the Royal Artillery dépôt, which was a little more than two miles from the town, because they used to see the gunners pulling about the guns, and they thought that the work might be fatiguing. Recruits for the artillery are more easily got where the work to be done is not known.

No one takes such a cynical view of recruits and of their motives for enlisting as soldiers themselves. A few of them the other day were enjoying that which is almost the greatest pleasure a soldier has—looking at an awkward squad of recruits; I began talking to them, and said something about the reasons that influence men to enlist. 'Believe me, sir,' said one of those addressed, 'few men enlist except from hunger'—that is, want of employment—or drunkenness.' This was an extreme opinion in one direction on a subject that is frequently discussed in the newspapers—the quantity and quality of recruits. 'Now then, gentlemen privates, take up your coal,' I lately heard a soldier say to his companions in a coal-carrying fatigue-party. This was a little bit of gentle satire in reference to the men of superior character, education, and social position who are supposed to be now enlisting by those who take a somewhat too rose-coloured view of our recruits. The truth lies between these extremes. It is not true that all men who enlist do so as a last resource, nor is it true that there is a startling change for the better in the quality of our recruits. The matter is regulated by the labour market. When trade is bad we get good recruits, and when good, bad ones. The army is still recruited mainly from the class of manual labourer. Of shop-assistants and clerks the year before last there were only seventy-three per thousand. Eleven others were of professional standing—students mainly. But, indeed, all sorts and conditions of men enlist, and this is why I have always liked talking to recruits. Hodge tells you about the last crop of 'mangle-wuzzel,' Jim Clerk talks of his office in the City, John Barleycorn of his days behind the bar, Mr Barnet Smith of his university days, and Mr Snag of his apprenticeship to a solicitor. Very curious experiences, too, are given by those who have travelled with a circus or show of some kind.

As to the reasons why men enlist, they are very mixed, and as many as the men. After a smart cavalry regiment or a battery of horse artillery passes through a town, young fellows think that they would like to look 'so handsome, brave, and grand,' and enlist simply and solely for the sake of the 'clothes.' Others join the army in order to see the 'foreign parts' about which they have heard chums speaking, who had returned to their native villages upon furlough. Then, of course, there is often a she in this, as in all other matters. There has been a lovers' quarrel, and the young fellow

enlists to spite the young woman; or his father has put a stepmother over him, and he thinks that a barrack-room will be less disagreeable than his home. Some become soldiers because they cannot get work; others because they do not like work, and think that a soldier has nothing to do but dress well and knock about with a cane. Others believe that the red coat, like charity, will hide a multitude of sins: they have not given satisfaction to their employers, or they have broken the laws of their country, and enter its service in order to hide themselves. Men enlist for the queerest reasons. Once a patient in a military hospital told me that he did so in order to have a military funeral, an honour that the poor fellow soon obtained. He was in consumption when he joined, but by some trick or another managed to sham the doctor. Another man gave to me as his reason for enlisting that he wanted to learn to read. He had escaped so successfully the School Board inspectors, and had been such a truant when a boy, that he grew up quite illiterate. Being ashamed of his ignorance, he thought he would learn something quietly in a military school. I would not for a moment suggest that men never enlist because they are soldiers at heart and like the profession. Many do, and this is proved by the number who try to get into a regiment that is likely to go to one of the little wars which we have always on hand. Indeed, there are a great many young Englishmen who like nothing so well as the chance of getting themselves killed.

Enlisting is very infectious. Recruits come in two or three at a time. If one youth in a village is seized with military ambition, some of those who work or idle with him, or who have been at school with him, will also wish to become Alexanders or Napoleons. I once had an interview with a man in a military prison who was there for fraudulent enlistment. He had deserted and become a soldier again; and yet the moment I saw him I noticed that his right or shooting eye was blind. Asking him about it, he said that the eye had always been blind. How did the man get through the medical examination each time he enlisted? This, however, was several years ago, and the doctor is more difficult to pass now. During the last six years twenty per cent. have failed to do so. Would-be soldiers, of course, try to make light of their defects; and one, an Irishman, when asked if he had ever had an accident, replied, 'Yes; I once took a cold.' The chest-measurement is the most frequent cause of rejection; but if a youth wants an inch or an inch and a half of girth, he can sometimes 'pull it up' by going through a militia training. So it is that the militia is a door to the army for private soldiers who are physically deficient, as it is for officers who, if not intellectually deficient, are not replete with book-lore. A candidate for the army is forcibly reminded of Herbert Spencer's teaching, that the foundation of all success in life is to be

a good animal. Divested of all his clothes, he is weighed, measured, tested in eyes and ears, and put through as many motions as a valuable horse when being bought. His first step to glory is not the goose-step on the parade-ground, as is generally supposed, but the one he takes when, in obedience to the doctor, he hops on one leg across the medical-inspection room. It is a pity that his teeth do not indicate his age, as they would in the case of a horse, for this would save him telling as many lies as some women do on this subject. But though the teeth do not show whether a growing lad is eighteen or less, or a young man over or under twenty-five, the medical officer, especially if he have carefully studied the new science of anthropometry, can generally detect a falsehood. Horne Tooke said that he had been christened and vaccinated, but neither of them took. If those who desire to join the army had to produce certificates of moral character, as is often suggested, we might have some indication as to whether their christening took. Whether their vaccination of civilian life took or not, or whatever may be their views on the subject, all recruits are immediately vaccinated. The number of men who come up to enlist varies much with the season. Fewest come in the summer, when work is plenty and it is not too cold to sleep out at night. Men who are very hard up may join at Christmas in order to share the good cheer and festivities which they hear of as provided in barracks; but those who have a table to put their legs under on Christmas Day postpone their fresh start in life until the new year.

One of the last reports of the Inspector-General of Recruiting refers favourably to the results of 'the new system of gymnastic training, which was specially drawn up with a view to the gradual development of the young soldier.' Would that some system could be provided which would save the young soldier from the demoralising influences of garrison towns and of older soldiers who undertake to show him life! Might not two or three depôts be established, in the country if possible, to one of which every man who enlists should be sent to do his recruits' drill? If recruits were

in this way all kept together moral supervision could be exercised, and special rules made which would be unpractical in reference to older soldiers. The officers and drill-sergeants at these depôts would acquire a special aptitude for managing young soldiers, and would prevent fraudulent enlistment by being able to recognise old hands.

One drawback there would be in having recruits by themselves at a depôt—there would be no older soldiers from whom they could learn how to clean their accoutrements, and other parts of a soldier's work. Still, this would be more than compensated for by an absence of instruction in vice and of petty persecutions which recruits not seldom get when they join a few at a time. It may be admitted, however, that the practical jokes of the barrack-room never did much to make military life unpopular, and that they are not now carried nearly so far as once they were. If Tommy Raw is sent by his room-mates to the carpenter's shop to get measured for a sentry-box, or persuaded to take his mess-tin on parade on muster days to get his allowance of mustard, this sort of thing happens at public schools and does not do much harm. Nor does it break rookery's (the recruit's) bones, nor inflict any permanent injury, if his bed is 'made' for him so that when he steps in he finds his feet stopped half-way, or 'set' so that it comes down during the night. In connection with the recruits' depôts suggested, there should, we think, be established schools for boys engaged, like boys for the navy, to become soldiers. They might get boys' pay, which would be better than giving to the mere boys in our regiments who are supposed to be men the wages of men.

We are glad to see from a late return that the popular impression that there is a great difficulty in getting recruits, and that, owing to a decline in the national physique, the standard had to be lowered, is without foundation. The cavalry standard was, it is true, reduced an inch; but this had nothing to do with an 'effete civilisation.' The fact was that the recruits were found to develop and increase in weight too rapidly for the comfort of the horses that had to carry them.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XII.

I begin with, I must tell you that my name is not Petrovitch at all: it is Polowski; Petrovitch was my mother's maiden name. Why I adopted it, instead of bearing my father's, you will understand directly. I was born in Warsaw, where my parents at the time had a temporary home. Though she died when I was only seven years old, I can distinctly remember my mother as

a tall, beautiful Hungarian woman, who used to sing me the sweetest songs I have ever heard in my life every evening when I went to bed. Oh, how well I can recall those songs! Her eyes filled with tears at the recollection. 'Then there came a time when she did not put me to bed, and when I was not allowed to see her. Night after night I cried for her, I remember, until one evening an old woman, in whose charge I had often been left when my father and mother were

absent from the city, told me that I should never see her again, for she was dead. I did not know the meaning of death then; but I have learnt since that there are things which are worse, infinitely worse, than merely ceasing to live. My recollections of that period are not very distinct; but I can recall the fact that my poor mother lay in a room at the back of the house, and that old Maritza wept for her continually. There was much mystery also; and once an old gray-haired man said to some one in my presence, "*Do you think he will be fool enough to come when they are watching for him at every turn?*" To which the other replied, "*I am sure he will come, for he loved her.*" Then came the funeral, a dark and dreary day, which, when I look back upon it all now, seems like the beginning of a new life to me. I was only a little child, and when they brought me home from the cemetery I fell asleep almost before my head touched the pillow. In the middle of the night I was awakened by a loud cry, a trampling on the stairs, and a moment later the noise of men fighting in the corridor outside my room. Terrified almost out of my senses, I crouched in my little bed and listened. Then an order was given by some one, followed by the sound of more trampling on the stairs, and after that all was silence. Though, of course, I did not know it then, my father had been arrested by the police as a dangerous Nihilist, and a month later was on his way to Siberia. It was not until I was old enough to understand that I heard that he had been concerned in an attempt upon the life of the Czar. From what was told me then, and from what I have since learnt, there seems to have been little or no doubt but that he was connected with a dangerous band of Nihilists, and that he was not only mixed up in the affair for which he was condemned to penal servitude for life, but that he was one of the originators of the plot itself. And yet the only recollection I have of him is of a kind and loving father who, when he was at home, used to tell me fairy stories, and who declared his wife to be the sweetest woman in the world."

'Poor little girl,' said Browne, pressing the hand he held, 'you had indeed an unhappy childhood; but you have not yet told me how you came to be placed under the guardianship of Madame Bernstein.'

'She was an old friend of my father's,' Katherine replied; 'and when my mother died, and he was sent to Siberia, she adopted me. I owe her a debt of gratitude that I can never repay; for, though she is perhaps a little peculiar in some things, she has been a very good and kind friend to me.'

'And have you always been—well, shall we say—dependent on her?' asked Browne, with a little diffidence, for it was a delicate matter for a young man to touch upon with a proud and high-spirited girl.

'Oh no,' Katherine replied. 'You see, soon

after my mother's death it was discovered by some one—I cannot remember who—that one of her brothers was dead, and that by his will I, as his sole heiress, inherited his money. From your point of view it would be nothing, but to me it meant a great deal. It was carefully invested, and it brings me in, in English money, just three hundred pounds a year. Of course we cannot do much with such a sum; but, as we have no expensive tastes, Madame Bernstein and I find that with it, and the sum I make by my painting, we are just able to make both ends meet.'

On hearing this Browne pricked up his ears. This was putting a new complexion on the affair.

'Do you mean to say that Madame Bernstein has no income of her own, and that all these years she has been living upon you?'

'Yes. And why not? You cannot realise what a wonderful manager she is. I should not be able to do half as much with it if I had the sole control of my money.'

'This is a matter which will have to be attended to in the near future,' said Browne to himself. Then, aloud, he added, 'Never mind, little woman; when you are my wife madame shall retire in luxury. She shall not find us ungrateful, believe me. But continue your story. Or, I fancy, you had better let me finish it for you. You have told me that you have lived with Madame Bernstein, or rather, to be correct, that she has lived with you, for many years. You have travelled from place to place about Europe; for some reason or another you have had no fixed home; then you began to paint, and during the whole time you have denied yourself all sorts of things in order that madame should live in the lap of luxury. Oh, don't dispute it, for I know what has happened as well as if I had been there to see. In the course of your peregrinations you went to Norway. There we met. Six months later you came to London, during which time I had been wondering whether I should ever see you again. Fate arranged that we should meet. I found you even more adorable than before, followed you to Paris, proposed and was accepted, and, like all pretty stories, ours must, and shall, end with the music of wedding bells.'

'Impossible,' she answered. 'From what I have already shown you, you must see that it could not be. Had my life been differently situated I should have been proud—you do not know how proud—to be your wife; but, as it is, it is quite out of the question. Some day you will see that yourself, and will thank me for having prevented you from spoiling your life by a foolish marriage.'

Browne saw that she was in deadly earnest. He was about to argue the question with her, but the look upon her face stopped him. For the moment he was frightened in spite of him-

self, and could only stammer out, 'I shall never see it.'

'You *must* see it,' she answered. 'There is a task I have set for myself, which I must finish, come what may.'

'Then, whatever it may be, I will share it with you,' said Browne. 'You must doubt my love, Katherine, if you refuse to let me help you.'

'I do not doubt your love,' she answered, 'but it is quite out of the question that I could avail myself of your assistance in this matter.'

'I will not believe it,' he continued. 'You are only saying it because you do not wish to inculcate me. But I *will* be inculcated, come what may. Tell me what it is you have to do, and I will help you to carry it through to the best of my ability; helping you where help is needed, and counselling you where you stand in need of advice. In other words, I place myself and all I have in the world at your disposal, darling, to do with as you will.'

'You are too noble,' she answered; 'too good and true. What other man would do as much?'

'Any man,' he answered, 'who loves a woman as I love you.'

'There can be but few who love so well,' she replied softly, for her heart was touched more than she could say; 'and yet, good as you are, I cannot accept your help. You do not know what I am about to attempt.'

'I do not care what it is,' he answered; 'it makes no sort of difference to my promise.'

'But it would afterwards,' she said. 'Why, do you not remember that I am the daughter of a convict; that my father was sent to Siberia to live in chains to the end of his days? He remained there for many years. Afterwards he was despatched to the island of Saghalien, where he now is. News has reached us within the last few days that he is ill, and that unless he leaves the island he will not live another year.'

'How did you hear that?' Browne inquired.

'Through Madame Bernstein,' Katherine replied. 'Ever since my father was first arrested she has managed somehow or other to obtain news of him.'

'And what is it you intend to do?'

'To help him to escape,' the girl replied.

'But it would be impossible,' said Browne, horrified at her declaration. 'You must not dream of such a thing.'

'But I do more than dream of it,' she replied. 'Remember, he is my father, my own flesh and blood, who is ill and suffering. You say you love me?'

'I think you know by this time that I do,' said Browne.

'Then what would you do if I were seized and carried away to a terrible island, where my life would be one long torture? Would you not do your best to rescue me?'

'Of course I would,' said Browne indignantly. 'You need not ask that.'

'Very well, then, you can see now how I feel. I do not say that he was right in his beliefs or in what he did; on the contrary, I think that he was distinctly wrong. The fact, however, remains that he is my father; and, however great his faults may have been, he has at least been punished for them. Can you picture what his existence must have been these many years? But of course you cannot. You do not know anything of Russian prisons. They have been described to me, however, by one who has seen them, and the account has filled me with such terror as I have never known in my life before.'

'But it would be sheer madness for you to attempt to rescue him,' said Browne. 'You could not possibly succeed. Your attempt would be foredoomed to failure.'

'It is very probable,' she answered; 'but would you have me for that reason draw back? It is my duty to make the attempt, even if I fail. You would have done the same for your own father, I know, had he been in the same position. Why should I not therefore do it for mine?'

'Because—why, because it is too preposterous,' said Browne, at loss for a better reason. 'I never heard of such a thing. You have not the least idea of the magnitude of the danger of what you are attempting.'

'Perhaps not,' she said. 'But if all those who make an attempt could foresee the result, I fancy a very small percentage would continue to strive. No; if you love me you will not try to make a coward of me just at the time when I am trying to do what I consider right.'

Browne took counsel with himself. The position was the most extraordinary he had ever faced. In his life he had met with many peculiar people, but never had he been brought in contact with a young girl who was willing to give up love, wealth, comfort, every prospect of happiness, even life itself, in order to attempt what was neither more nor less than a hopeless and impossible undertaking. And yet, short as his acquaintance with Katherine had been, he felt that he knew her well enough to be convinced that she would not abandon her purpose without a struggle. 'Loyalty before all' was his motto where she was concerned. He loved her, and if it was her desire to assist a by no means respectable father to escape from the prison in which he was very rightly confined, he must help her to the best of his abilities without considering the cost to himself. It would be a terrible business; but, at any rate, he would then be able to assure himself that she did not come to any harm.

'And you are determined to carry out this foolish scheme?' he asked. 'Is there nothing I can say or do that will be at all likely to dissuade you from your purpose?'

'Nothing at all,' she answered slowly, looking him steadily in the face. 'My mind is quite made up.'

'Very good, then,' he continued; 'in that case I will not oppose you further. Tell me how you propose to set about it.'

She shook her head. 'I do not know yet,' she answered. 'But you may be sure I will do it somehow. There must be a way, if I can only find it. At any rate, I am not afraid to look for it.'

Browne glanced at the pale yet determined face before him, and noted the strength of the mouth and chin. There was sufficient strength of mind there to carry the matter through, provided the needful opportunities were supplied. But would they be forthcoming? One thing was quite certain, she could not possibly manage with the limited means at her disposal. There at least she would be compelled to apply to him.

'Katherine,' he said at last, 'I have told you repeatedly that I love you, and now I am going to try to prove it to you. You say you are desirous of rescuing your father. Very good; then I am going to help you to do so. It will at least demonstrate the sincerity of my love for you, and will show you that all the assertions I have made are not merely so much idle chatter, but what I really feel.'

'You would help me?' she gasped, staggered for the moment at the magnitude of his proposal. 'Surely you do not know what you are saying?'

'I mean what I say,' he answered. 'If you are bent on rescuing your father I will help you. But I only offer my services on one condition.'

'And what is that?'

'That as soon as this business is finished you become my wife.'

'But I cannot let you do it,' she answered. 'Why should I draw you into it?'

'I do it because I love you, and because you love me,' he answered. 'Surely that is sufficient reason.'

'But'—

'We'll have no more *buts*, if you please,' said Browne. 'If it is a bargain, say so. This is going to be a genuine business contract, of which the terms are that I am to do my best to assist your father to escape, and in return you are to be my wife as soon as the work is completed.'

She looked at him almost tearfully. Though she felt it was her duty as a daughter to help her father, she nevertheless could not reconcile it to her conscience to draw the man she loved into danger. By this time they had risen from the seat, and were standing facing each other.

'Is it to be a bargain, Katherine?'

She did not answer, but, drawing his face down to hers, she kissed him on the lips.

'I understand,' he said; 'then we'll count it settled. I'll commence work to-day, and let you know what arrangements I am able to make. You trust me, Katherine, do you not?'

'With my whole heart and soul,' she answered. 'Who has ever been so good to me as you have been?'

'That has nothing at all to do with it,' he said. 'Now I'll take you down to the street, put you in a cab, and send you home to madame to tell, or not to tell, her, as you think best, the arrangement we have come to.'

'She will thank you as I have done,' said Katherine.

'I hope not,' said Browne, and, as he said it, he laughed.

She saw his playful meaning, and followed his example. Then Browne conducted her to the street, and, having placed her in a cab, sent her home, promising to call later on in the day to report progress. When she was safely on her way he glanced at his watch, and, finding it was not yet twelve o'clock, turned into the Amphitryon Club. He found Maas in the hall putting on his fur coat preparatory to leaving.

'My dear Browne,' he said, 'where on earth have you hidden yourself since your arrival in Paris? We have seen nothing of you here.'

'I have been too busy,' Browne replied, with an air of great responsibility. 'If you only knew all that I have gone through this morning you would be very much surprised.'

'My dear fellow,' said Maas, 'I believe I should be nothing of the kind. Vellencourt was married yesterday, and since I heard that news I am past being surprised at anything. I leave for London to-night. When do you return?'

'I scarcely know,' Browne replied. 'It may be to-day, and it may not be for a week. I am sick of Europe, and am half-thinking of arranging a yachting trip to the Farther East.'

'The deuce you are!' said Maas. 'What on earth has put that notion into your head?'

'What puts notions into anybody's head?' Browne inquired. 'I have often wanted to have a look at the Japanese Sea and the islands to the north of it. How do you know that I don't aspire to the honour of reading a paper on the subject before the Geographical Society—eh?'

'Geographical fiddlesticks!' replied the other; and, when he had shaken Browne by the hand, he bade him 'good-bye,' and went down the steps, saying to himself as he did so, 'Madame Bernstein, her adopted daughter, and the islands to the north of Japan. It seems to me, my dear Browne, that when you start upon this wonderful cruise your old friend Maas will have to accompany you.'

SOME MINOR RURAL INDUSTRIES.

I.—POULTRY-REARING FOR PROFIT.



It has again and again been stated in the public press that we import from various countries eggs and poultry which could be produced at home with vast benefit to ourselves. Few realise to what dimensions the foreign trade in eggs alone has expanded; but, without going into details, we may state that during 1897 Great Britain received from various countries eggs valued at the enormous sum of four millions three hundred and fifty seven thousand pounds sterling. And let it be observed that the quality of these goods is not above suspicion. From the near ports of France the eggs can be received in a comparatively fresh state; but from more distant countries they must be several weeks old, and thus the common term 'shop-egg' is in our great towns meant to indicate something very different to one that is new-laid. It may be truthfully said that there are thousands of town dwellers who have never had the opportunity of tasting a really fresh egg; for, even if they can afford to pay the best price and obtain one labelled 'new-laid,' the presumption is that a certain tell-tale air space at its top will hint that it was taken from the nest—possibly in Denmark or Russia—some weeks previously.

It is much the same with the imported fowls. The best foreign birds are no doubt as good as our own, but they find a ready market in the country of their origin. We get the inferior ones; and one has only to cast his eye along the counters of our big poultry markets to see what miserable bony objects pass for fowls, and how badly they compare with the plump birds from our own farms.

We see, therefore, that a strange state of things exists. There is an abundant demand in Britain for certain products that can be furnished of first-rate quality on British soil; but, owing to some defect in knowledge or organisation, we prefer to purchase from foreigners an inferior article.

This important matter has been dwelt upon at some length in the report on trade and agriculture of Cherbourg and district for 1897, prepared by our energetic consul there, Mr Gurney; and, as it is a subject of much interest to many, we propose in this article to give a résumé of his practical remarks.

Let it be understood that Consul Gurney deals not with the poultry-fancier, or with the amateur who keeps a few fowls for amusement and is glad enough if he can provide his household with the necessary eggs for breakfast. His subject is poultry-rearing as an industry that can be made to pay, and be made a distinct source of profit to an agricultural community.

It is a common thing to hear a man say that

poultry-rearing on a large scale can never be profitable in this country because the climate is too variable. 'This,' says Mr Gurney, 'is quite a fallacy. Chickens should not be pampered to the extent of making them feel a change of temperature. If rationally treated they will be sufficiently hardy to stand any degree of heat or cold.' We are glad to note that this point is thus insisted upon, for many persons have an idea that all living creatures, chickens included, should be coddled and treated generally like hot-house plants. Fowls do not succumb to climatic changes, but to improper feeding, dirt, damp, and overcrowding. Exactly the same causes which increase the death-rate of the human population in our large towns will affect a family of fowls in a back-yard. In a word, they must lead a healthy existence. 'Rear them in the open air,' says our authority, 'with dry shelter, wholesome food, without overcrowding and boxing-up at night, and the chickens will grow up as hardy as any wild-fowl. The branches of a tree in a wire-enclosed run would be a paradise to fowls compared to an expensive, overheated, draughty house.'

With regard to food, there is much to be said. Fowls that have the run of plenty of land will to a great extent be their own caterers, picking up many insects, grubs, &c., and thus doing a vast amount of good in a small way. But for all this they require regular feeding, and the general fault is to give them too much. Food left untouched about the poultry-yard is a sure sign of improper treatment: the birds should have no more than they will greedily pick up at each meal. Here is the menu as recommended by Consul Gurney: 'Breakfast—vegetable-tops, peelings, and scraps, all put to simmer together on the kitchen fire overnight, chopped up in the morning, and mixed, almost dry, with bran; dinner (midday)—green food, cabbage-leaves, or anything available, hung up in a string bag, or between two pieces of wire netting, if the fowls have no grass-land to run over; supper (before nightfall)—a good handful of corn to each fowl, or buckwheat, or Indian corn in winter; lastly, an abundant supply of fresh water. For fattening fowls for table use a soft diet is the thing. Barley meal, maize meal, and bran mixed with skimmed milk is recommended, with an occasional feed of boiled rice tailings.'

Young chickens must, of course, be more tenderly cared for, and the practice in France seems to be very different to that commonly followed in our own country; but it answers so well that Mr Gurney ventures to recommend it to all rearers of poultry. The young chicks are compelled to abstain from both food and drink for twelve hours after leaving the shell. 'Then millet and chopped

salad strewn on the sand, in the coop or run, where the hot-water rearer replaces the mother's wing. Every poultry-man should make his own rearers with a two-shilling zinc tank, a piece of flannel, an old case, and some sawdust.' Water at will during the day, but not until after the first morning meal. On the third and following days add to the salad and millet seed a meal of boiled rice tailings and a small feed of meat. At the end of a week the chickens will be ready for table-scraps and barley meal and maize meal mixed with warm skimmed milk. Let them also have once a day a feed of rice boiled in skimmed milk. At the end of a fortnight, wheat, buckwheat, or crushed maize for a last meal. 'With dry sand underfoot, cleanliness, sufficient warmth to run to when required during the day, as well as at night, added to pure air in plentiful supply, mortality will be unknown in the chicken-yard, barring accidents!'

As to breeds of poultry, it is pointed out in this report that no particular breed of fowls can be recommended for egg-laying and table qualities combined. It is therefore suggested that two distinct breeds should be reared. The Italian fowl known as the Leghorn is recommended as a prolific layer, but in this country the Leghorns have so deteriorated through injudicious crossing that it is best to get some direct from Lombardy or Tuscany, as the Belgian farmers are in the habit of doing. For table fowls nothing can beat our own native dorking, the old English game fowl, and the Langshan—the last named being the most profitable, for it is a good layer as well. As the result of experiments with brown Leghorns at an experiment station in Utah, it has been proved that the number of eggs laid in the course of a year was higher when the fowls were allowed exercise.

The whole of Mr Gurney's remarks might be gathered under the one word *simplicity*, as a text. He advises beginners to have nothing to do with expensive and elaborate appliances; to avoid patent foods and advertised nostrums of all kinds. He appeals to all poultry-rearers who value the teachings of nature not to mongrelise and ruin the qualities of their poultry by constant crossing, but to keep the breeds pure, improve them by proper selection, feeding, and care, and to steer clear of the dangers and temptations of the fancy poultry shows.

Lastly, artificial incubation is recommended as an important factor in rearing fowls for market. And although there are many excellent incubators to be purchased, Consul Gurney advises every rearer to build his own, and, what is more, most kindly offers to put correspondents in the way of doing so 'on the plan of a poultry-rearer near Cherbourg.' He then cites the cases of two poultry-keepers, one of whom started with a large number of high-priced fowls, expensive incubators, &c., and ignominiously failed; while the other, with home-made appliances, has gradually built up a successful business which has now assumed large proportions.

We fancy that we can read between the lines here; at any rate we imagine that in the one case the necessary work devolved upon servants, while the more successful rearer did the work himself. As in most other things, individual attention to details at the outset lays the foundation of future success.

According to Mr Gurney, poultry farming as an industrial undertaking cannot be profitable save under very exceptional circumstances which would tend to reduce the heavy expenditure entailed by rent, wages, and cost of food. But on the farm or on the cottager's plot or labourer's allotment it ought to be made to pay well if certain conditions be observed. First, the rearer must aim at the production of early spring and late autumn chickens and a supply of eggs in winter. In other words, he must do his best to send to market when the best prices for his wares can be obtained. Secondly, there must be dealers for the collection of eggs and poultry in the most convenient centres within easy reach of railway communication. Thirdly, the fattening of poultry should be a separate industry. These are the main recommendations of one who has for years lived in a district which makes poultry and egg production a most prosperous business.

It remains to be seen how far our own agriculturists will be able to take advantage of these hints. The main difficulty seems to be facilities for access to markets where the products will find a ready sale. The various light railway schemes which are in progress will do much in this direction, and possibly in the near future we shall see motor-cars helping in the work. Such methods of feeding our trunk lines of railway should lead to the rapid diffusion of farm produce all over the land, and give us all that almost unknown delicacy—at least unknown to dwellers in towns—a really new-laid egg. Such eggs, each bearing a reliable 'hall mark' and the date of laying, would be purchased in preference to those of foreign extraction and uncertain age. Small farmers who are complaining that they cannot under present conditions make two ends meet would do well to turn their serious attention to poultry-rearing. As a rule fowls on a farm in this country are not cared for at all. They are left to pick up their living anyhow, they are of the most mongrel kind with regard to breed, and are regarded as being hardly worthy of attention, much less of study. Such uncared-for waifs cannot be expected to yield any contribution towards the rent, for they are good neither for laying eggs nor for the table. But by judicious selection of birds, by strict attention to food and cleanliness, by a share, in fact, of the care which is bestowed as a matter of course upon other descriptions of live-stock, domestic fowls can, in farmers', cottagers', or labourers' hands, be made to yield a substantial addition to the annual income.

THE UNIQUE MRS SPINK.

V.



HE two-twenty-seven train from Waterloo (Saturdays only) deposited Mr Spink, who was looking very smart in a light-gray suit, a white waistcoat, and a straw hat, on the platform of Teddington Station, in company with a portmanteau and an attractive-looking parcel from Fuller's, the latter article designed as a propitiatory gift to his hostess.

It was a hot June day; and, knowing that the Thorneycrofts' Bungalow was some distance from the station, Albert had confidently expected to find some one awaiting his arrival.

No one was in evidence, however; so, followed by a porter bearing his traps, he proceeded to the station yard, with the intention of hiring a carriage to convey himself and his belongings to their destination. There, seated in an old-fashioned pony phaeton, was the prettiest girl, as he instantly decided, he had ever seen. She wore a natty drab driving-coat with large pearl buttons, and a smart scarlet Tam-o'-Shanter was perched on her dark curls.

On catching sight of Mr Spink her piquant face lighted up, and, waving her whip, she nodded and smiled as though welcoming an old acquaintance.

'Mr Spink, isn't it? I am Lola Thorneycroft, Mrs Thorneycroft's niece. Her groom is ill, and she could not come to meet you herself, but she thought you would not object to me.'

Object? Albert never felt so boyishly delighted in his life as, when seated by the side of this coquettish maiden, he bowed—a little slowly perhaps, for Mrs Thorneycroft's basket-carriage was a trifle rickety, and her old pony more than a shade rheumatic—along the leafy lanes.

Assuredly Mrs Thorneycroft was cunning, he thought. This girl was exactly the antithesis of the damsel he had so minutely pictured to her. Yet he could imagine no one more bewitching. Her conversation certainly revealed more of frivolity than depth; but that, too, was charming. How absurd of him to say tall, fair, intellectual, when ten minutes of this tiny dark girl's society had conclusively proved that he appreciated the direct opposite!

Long before they arrived at the Bungalow, Albert had surrendered his mature but still virgin heart. And when their hostess, on hearing the carriage drive up, ran round to the side gate to welcome her guest, he greeted her with a grateful smile and a warm pressure of the hand, wherewith he endeavoured to express his heart-felt thanks.

'Well,' said Mrs Thorneycroft as, Lola having left them to take the trap round to the stables,

they walked together down the long narrow path leading to where the river bordered the lawn, 'you are going to be very pleased with me, Albert. I have managed to secure precisely the girl you wish, and you are to have no rival till Monday.'

'I can never repay your goodness,' Albert responded, his voice husky with emotion. 'I only hope'—

'Hush!'

A turn in the path had brought them to an arbour cunningly placed at the water's edge. Inside it a slender young lady sat reading. Her abundant flaxen hair was brushed smoothly back from a sweet, thoughtful face, and *pince-nez* shaded her large, short-sighted gray eyes.

'Let me make two of my chosen friends known to each other,' Mrs Thorneycroft said, introducing them with all *empressement*. 'Amy dear, may I introduce Mr Albert Spink? You have heard me speak of him. And, Albert, this is Amy Tyrell.'

Mr Spink made the polite observations necessary, but his attention was elsewhere. And while, in company with his hostess and Miss Tyrell, he chatted and looked at the river, which was in its Saturday afternoon state of gaiety, he could not help casting stray glances round the end of the rustic summer-house in quest of his charioteer.

'Why, where has Lola got to?' Mrs Thorneycroft at length exclaimed. 'And we will have some tea at once. You must be dreadfully thirsty, Albert, travelling from town in this heat.'

Even as she spoke a maid appeared with the tea-things, and at her heels came Lola.

'It was so hot, I waited to put on a cooler frock,' she explained as she joined them.

At the beginning of that week, had any one told Mr Spink that its close would witness him gazing with fervent admiration at a coquettish maiden with dark curly hair and a yellow muslin frock, he would without hesitation have given him the lie direct. Yet, truth to tell, when, with a swirl of lace petticoats, Lola had subsided into a chair, leaving her slender ankles and feet, encased in black silk open-work stockings and dainty slippers with scarlet heels, greatly in evidence, for the life of him Albert could not detach his attention from her charms.

Miss Tyrell was disposed to be modestly reticent, but Mrs Thorneycroft, taking the conversational reins in hand, had cleverly guided them to congenial subjects, and she was conversing of German literature to Albert's deaf ears.

The package from Fuller's had followed the tea service; and Lola, with many exclamations of joy at the number and variety of its contents, was unpacking it hap-hazard on the grass.

'Mr Spink, you are a *dear*,' she interrupted Miss Tyrell's measured eulogy on Goethe to remark. 'If I'd had any idea what lovely things you had concealed in that parcel I would have made love to you—yes, I would, Aunt Gertrude—nothing flabby either, but regular hot, impassioned love—when we were driving up together.'

'Oh, you naughty child!' expostulated Mrs Thorneycroft. 'Mr Spink will be horrified if you are so silly.'

'Put me out of my misery, Mr Spink,' implored Lola, sinking on her knees before his white canvas shoes, and raising her hands in mock appeal. 'Is it really too late? Will a lifetime of repentance not suffice to wipe away the bad opinion wrought by my foolish words, and induce you to reinstate me in your good graces and to buy me also sweets?'

Day had waned. Dinner was a meal of the past; and after listening to a little Wagner music, interpreted with both skill and expression by Miss Tyrell, the little party had strolled out on the starlit lawn. By dint of some subtle manœuvring, Mrs Thorneycroft succeeded in drawing Albert aside.

'Well?'

He answered the question her tone conveyed.

'My dear friend, I can never thank you enough. She is *perfect*—simply and absolutely perfect.'

'I knew you would say so. I was passing all the girls I knew in mental review, when she flashed upon me like a revelation. I felt certain that whenever you saw her you would recognise your ideal woman.'

'She is so lovely, so piquant'—

'Do you think so?' There was a note of surprise in Mrs Thorneycroft's voice.

'Ah yes! And her ways are so winsome, so unaffectedly gay.'

'There is no doubt about her musical ability, is there?' responded the puzzled lady, anxious to get on safer ground. 'Don't you think she played that Parsifal music perfectly?'

'She—why, who?'

'Albert, whom have you been talking about?'

'Miss Lola, of course.'

'But it was Amy Tyrell I asked you specially to meet!'

'No one could look at another when she is here. She is'—

'But you told me you wished your wife to be fair and tall, and intellectual and musical'—

'Oh, forget all that folly. I had not met Lola then.'

'But, Albert, Lola is *married*.'

'Married!' So great was Mr Spink's stupefaction that he could but echo her word vacantly.

'Yes. She married Charlie Thorneycroft, Henry's nephew—you remember him as a boy—last autumn. You seemed to be such good friends

coming up in the phaeton that I suppose I forgot you were strangers, and did not introduce you.'

Poor Mr Spink! The opening chapter of his romance had ended abruptly.

VI.



EARLY next day Lola Thorneycroft left the Bungalow to fulfil sundry engagements in town; and after the withdrawal of her fascinating presence Mr Spink resolutely set himself to admire Miss Amy.

The task proved easier than he had anticipated. She was gentle and gracious in manner, and though wholly lacking that witchery which in the lively Lola the bachelor had found enchanting, she had a sweet womanliness which speedily influenced the willing wooer.

Mrs Thorneycroft, gratified at the turn things appeared to be taking, gave them ample opportunity of becoming better acquainted, making a slight headache from which her husband was suffering her excuse for leaving them to entertain each other.

So it came about that when, prior to seeking his chaste couch, Mr Spink took the flower from his coat and placed it tenderly in his pocket-book, the blossom he treasured was not the moss-rosebud wherewith in the morning Lola had decorated him, but the cluster of forget-me-nots which Amy Tyrell had at his request bestowed upon him that evening.

On Monday the Bungalow was once more resigned to the temporary occupation of its caretaker, and the little company travelled back to town together. Before the final adieux were said the ladies had accepted Albert's invitation to 'do' a theatre with him on the forthcoming Thursday, and Mrs Thorneycroft had secured the promise of both her guests to accept her hospitality for the following 'week end.'

Probably it resulted from Mr Spink's thoughts constantly straying to the gentle, gray-eyed girl; but when the time arrived for his return to Teddington he had almost succeeded in imagining himself in love.

To his delight, Miss Tyrell, who was looking sweeter than ever in a white frock, accepted his attentions gracefully; and Mr Spink was not experienced enough in affairs of the heart to note the entire absence of that self-consciousness so precious in the eyes of a more adroit lover.

They were sitting close together in the arbour overlooking the river on Sunday evening. Amy had been dreamily quiescent all day, and Albert fondly flattered himself that he was advancing by strides in her affections. The moonlight cast a romantic glamour over the beautiful scene. A skiff was slowly drifting down the river, some one in it singing a sad love-song to the harmony of a guitar. Mr Spink felt his heart throb under his *piqué* waistcoat. The sense that now was an

auspicious time to indicate the state of his feelings overcame his timidity.

'On such a night as this,' he began, unwittingly plagiarising Shakespeare, 'a man is apt to wish for the society of one to whom he can unreservedly speak all that is in his heart.'

'Ah, yes!'

'When the surroundings are so beautiful one is apt to feel lonely, and to realise that if only some one were near to whom one was all in all, the earth would be transformed into Paradise.'

'Yea.'

Amy was listening to him intently, her eyes filled with sympathetic tears.

'But, Miss Tyrell, you are crying!' he exclaimed.

'Am I? I did not know. I think it must be because your words expressed my thoughts.'

Something in the veiled sadness of her tone made Albert feel as though some impenetrable barrier had arisen between them.

Rising from his seat beside her, he leant against the side of the arbour and looked down at her.

The lovely gray eyes, the tears trembling on their long lashes, were gazing wistfully across the

water to where, from the boat moving slowly down-stream, came the tender, hackneyed refrain:

Do you remember the time of the roses?

Where in the old days we two used to meet?

'What grieves you? Won't you tell me?' There was a note of concern in Albert's voice—concern more for himself than her, had she but known it—which touched her.

'I shall tell you, Mr Spink. It will do me good to confide in you. There is somebody I love—have loved for years. He went abroad to try to make money, and riches have not come quickly. And sometimes I weary, and long for him to come back, so that I could tell him how gladly I would share a crust with him.'

'Will you never marry any one else?'

'Never!' Amy answered decisively. 'I never cared for another man, and never shall.'

'Next time we must both be certain of our premises,' said Mrs Thorneycroft when Albert confided in her that this affair also had ended in a *cul-de-sac*. 'Last time you were mistaken; this time it is I. Next time we must make sure! But the unique Mrs Spink is hard to seek!'

THE COCOS ISLANDS.



Far away in the eastern seas, some six hundred miles south-west of Java, and remote from the course of ships, rises 'an island-speckled ring of coral, holding its own against the waves.' The Cocos Islands, though discovered nearly three centuries ago, owe what fame they possess to Darwin's treatise on coral-reef formations; and though they were made known to a wider circle of readers by Mr Forbes in his popular *Naturalist's Wanderings in the Eastern Archipelago*, it may safely be said that they were scarcely known to the general public until they emerged quite recently into the half-light of a parliamentary blue-book. From that half-light it is the design of the present article to bring them into a broader day; for their interest is remarkable and uncommon. In their history may be seen the colonising and governing instincts of the greatest colonising and governing race the world has yet known, exercised on a small scale, it is true, but undisturbed by the so-called 'imperial idea' or by the cruder forms of self-seeking and the *auri sacra fames*. And they have, too, that interest for their own sakes which everything that is picturesque possesses—in their flora, the coco-nuts that shrink and wither in the light of the full moon, and the strange and not even indigenous species of plants wafted to their shores by ocean streams from far Australia; in their animal life, the brilliant fish, the queer land-crabs that plough up the soil with pincers strong enough to break

a man's arm, and the pretty white tern that nests on the bare leaf of the coco-palm and deposits its egg in the angle of the leaf and the trunk, watching times and seasons so carefully that if the leaf fade and drop in the afternoon the young bird is sure to have been hatched in the morning! The configuration of the islands themselves is notable. Mr Spicer, a naturalist who was there some years ago, thus describes it: 'They form a roughly-broken circle nearly approaching the horseshoe shape common to coral atolls. The islands are of varying size, some being from one to seven miles in length, and others a few hundred yards; while the smallest are simply mounds of coral sand crowned by a few coco-nut palms. . . . The appearance of the exterior and of the interior of the islands is strikingly different. Towards the ocean the heavy surf breaks over the jagged rocks and washes large pieces ashore. The interior shores are quietly washed by a clear-green, shallow sea, and the smooth sandy beach forms a pleasant contrast to the green vegetation above it. The circle of the islands bounds a lagoon for the most part of very shallow water, with pits of varying depth. . . . The resemblance of the whole to a giant crater is very striking.' In such surroundings have the family of J. Clunies-Ross, the 'king of the Cocos Islands,' made their home for seventy years.

The Cocos Keeling Islands were discovered in 1609 by the 'right worthy William Keeling, Esquire, Groom of the Chamber to our Sovereign Lord King James, General for the Hon. East India Adventurers,

where he was thrice by them employed ;' so runs his epitaph in Carisbrooke Church :

A merchant fortunate, a captain bould,
A courtier gracious.

Keeling's was one of those adventurous careers in which the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were so rich. It was on his second voyage, and probably on his way home, that he hit upon this little group of coral reefs. He had sailed from England in 1607, calling at Sierra Leone to act (according to a possibly unauthentic document) *Hamlet* on 5th and 31st Sept. (*sic*), and *Richard II.* on 30th Sept., arrived at Bantam in 1608, and was back again in England in 1610. After a third voyage in 1615 (on which he was not allowed to take his wife, but received in her stead two hundred pounds compensation), he was made Captain of Cowes Castle in 1618, and died there in 1619 at the early age of forty-two. 'Faith'—says his loving and sorrowful wife, Anne Keeling—

Faith served for sails, the sacred word for card,
Hope was his anchor, glorie his reward ;
And thus with gales of grace, by happy venter,
Through straits of death, heaven's harbour he did enter.

The history of the islands for the next two centuries is a blank. In 1825, however, they were rediscovered by J. Clunies-Ross, the grandfather of the present proprietor, who was so pleased with them that he returned to his native Scotland to try to persuade his friends and relations to come and colonise them. He was successful in his efforts ; but when he arrived at Cocos, in 1827, he found that he had been anticipated. One Alexander Hare (so the story was told to the government inspecting officer in 1885 by Neh Basir, the oldest inhabitant, then in his eightieth year), an adventurer of more than doubtful character who had been wandering about the archipelago for many years, was on his way back from a voyage to the Cape in a vessel commanded, oddly enough, by Ross's own brother, when he too lit upon the islands, and determined to stay there with his followers and harem. The two parties lived side by side for some years on the worst of terms ; for Ross and his people were law-abiding, hard-working Scotsmen, and Hare was a semi-orientalised idler, who posed as king and kept a mock royal court. Moreover, the two had opposite political tendencies—the former appealing to Great Britain, the latter to the Netherlands, for annexation. But the struggle for existence was, as usual, finally decided in favour of the fittest : Hare's followers—Neh Basir was the foremost of them—deserted him, and he himself eventually left and went to Singapore, where he died a few years later. Thus Ross, with his wife and six children, and twelve Englishmen, were left in sole possession.

But the first years of the Ross administration were not very happy. Nor is this altogether surprising. To begin with, Cocos in a state of nature was not a very habitable spot. Its flora consisted almost solely of the tree from which it takes its name, and the fauna entirely of fish and sea-birds : everything else had to be imported. To make it habit-

able labour was necessary ; but that was to be had only in the form of Javanese convicts or persons who had made the neighbouring Dutch colonies too hot to hold them. Crime of all kinds was rife—incendiarism especially a constant danger in a place where all the buildings were made of the highly-inflammable material supplied by the coco-palm. Even Mr George Ross, the present proprietor (a man of sixty), says that in his earlier days 'he lived with his life in his hand ; and though disdaining to have watchmen or guards, lest such protection should be ascribed to fear, he was himself ever on the alert, and compelled to sleep in short snatches only.' As it was, an attempt was made to kill him in his bed. It is not, therefore, surprising that the account of the conditions of existence in Cocos which Darwin gives in his *Journal of Researches* (April 1836) is not very cheerful.

Nevertheless the family held their own without the help of police, and gradually succeeded in getting rid of the criminal class and obtaining a better type of Malay coolie. In 1854, on the death of Ross the elder, his son, Mr J. G. Ross, assumed charge, and in 1857 occurred an important event in the external history of the islands. It has been mentioned above that overtures had previously been made to both British and Dutch Governments for annexation ; but neither had responded. Cocos vessels trading with Batavia, however, flew the Dutch flag, and Mr J. G. Ross was a naturalised Netherlands subject. But the Dutch flag is said never to have been hoisted on the islands themselves ; and in 1857 their fate was finally settled by the arrival of H.M.S. *Juno* with Captain Fremantle, who formally took possession of the group in the name of the British Government, Mr Ross being appointed Superintendent. According to Forbes this was a mistake ; Captain Fremantle thought he was annexing one of the Andaman Islands of the same name. However that may be, and the Colonial Office not unnaturally do not throw any light on the point, the British flag was saluted there soon after by a Russian man-of-war, and has continued to fly ever since, except when cyclones have blown the flagstaff down. For in 1862 a cyclone raged over the islands, undoing the work of many years, and making it necessary for Mr George Ross, the superintendent, who was then studying engineering at Glasgow, to return hastily to help his father in the management, to which he himself succeeded at the age of thirty in 1871. He has been in London this year, having made the journey thither in his own private steam-yacht.

Under his superintendence an era of prosperity seemed to be dawning for the settlement. But once more the malignity of nature had to be reckoned with. Between the 25th and 29th January 1876 the islands were again visited by a terrible storm, of which a vivid account is given by Forbes, who saw many traces of it even at the end of 1878. Nearly all the trees were destroyed, and every building above a foot high was levelled to the

ground. But the most curious phenomenon attendant on the storm was the sudden rising of a spring of dark and putrid-smelling water beneath the lagoon on the eastern side, which, within twenty-four hours, poisoned every fish, coral, and mollusc in that part of the water. 'So great,' says Forbes, 'was the number of fish thrown on the beach that it took three weeks of hard work to bury them.' This phenomenon was repeated in similar circumstances—Mr Ross reckons on one cyclone every ten years—in the early part of 1896; and Mr Keyser, who was there in June of that year, says that they could still see patches of white water thick with decaying fish.

With the indomitable perseverance which he has shown in the face of all adversity—whether nature destroyed his produce, or pirates captured his vessels, or his business agents failed—Mr Ross set to work to repair the harm done in 1876, and in the ten following years great progress was made in the material prosperity of the islands.

It was in 1885 that they received the first of the annual visits of inspection by government officers, which have been carried on up to the present date, and the record of which is contained in the above-mentioned blue-book. Things had indeed changed since Darwin's days. Instead of chain-gang men from Java, Mr Birch found a thriving, if not altogether homogeneous, population of five hundred and sixteen souls (not including the nine members of the Ross family), which has increased steadily to five hundred and ninety-four last year. The bulk of it is Cocos-born, but about one-third consists of Bantamese coolies imported under agreement, and anxious to return to Java as soon as they have saved enough money to make it worth their while. Between these two sections there is a cleft, for the Cocos-born Malay looks down upon his Bantamese brother as an inferior animal. Not altogether unnaturally; for, though the coolie is a great improvement on the Malay of the Straits—Mr Ross, for example, has taught him a certain measure of cleanliness, and compels him to ventilate his house—he is still very far below the social level of the Cocos Islander, whose house is scrubbed, and his clothes washed, starched, and ironed every Saturday; who sits on a chair instead of cross-legged on the ground, and eats with a knife and fork instead of with his fingers. Not only is his house clean, but he adorns it with pictures from *Vanity Fair*, and his womankind (who no longer veil their faces) have learnt from Mrs Ross the thousand little domestic daintinesses which go to make up the art of living. The superiority of the women is, indeed, a very marked and peculiar characteristic of a society which, in its religious observances, is still Mohammedan. The letter of the Mohammedan marriage law remains, but Mr Ross's influence has succeeded in destroying its spirit. 'Polygamy,' writes Mr Clifford, 'is unknown on the island, at any rate among the Cocos-born Malays, and public opinion on the subject is sufficiently strong to

induce any Bantamese who has more than one wife to dispense with this superfluity.' Similarly, divorce is scarcely ever heard of, and only permissible in a case of proved adultery. The woman is thus given a status such as she has in very few other Mohammedan countries, and she avails herself of it to the full. If it does not suit her to give her husband a meal, she sends him off to dine with a neighbour, and the neighbour who would refuse to entertain him 'would thereby incur popular displeasure, and be boycotted by all for several days.' As for the husband, he dare not resist, for there is scarcely a man who can be said to be head of his own household. Mr Ross ascribes this to the fact that he has abolished wife-beating, which was the usual practice when he first succeeded to the charge of the island; but it is more probably due to the whole set of circumstances alluded to. And it has its unbeautiful side; for the Cocos mother neglects her children shamefully, with the result that infant mortality is so high and is attended by such remarkable features as to suggest to one inspecting officer that there may be something worse than mere neglect behind it. It is devoutly to be hoped that this suspicion is ungrounded, for one of Mr Ross's most splendid achievements is that, without police and without written law, he has kept the island absolutely free from crime for fifteen years.

It is noteworthy that among the means by which this extraordinary result has been attained education is not included. An admirable practical education, indeed, the islanders have always received. A practical man himself, Mr Ross has insisted on all the boys passing through the workshops, and he and his men build their own ships (a home-made schooner of theirs was classed A1 at Lloyd's for eighteen years), build their own piers, and lay down their own steel tram-lines. 'Every man on the island,' it is said, 'is a good carpenter and blacksmith, and all know how to make use of drawings, plans, and scales. But in literary education the islands, at all events till quite recent times, have been lacking.'

The true explanation of the innocence of our islanders is as curious as it is suggestive. It lies in a subordination of the acquisitive instincts of human nature so abnormal as to seem almost unnatural to those in whom excessive competition and the unconscionable struggle for existence have overstimulated them. This is partly due to the circumstances of the island, partly to Mr Ross's careful calculation. In the first place, every man has practically everything that he wants given to him. When he marries he receives a plot of three acres of land and building material for his house; he may fish where and when he pleases (and fish is the staple food), and pick coco-nuts for himself at any time between noon on Saturday and sunset on Sunday. And, in the second place, there is no metallic currency in the island. It was found necessary to exclude it in 1837—in the old days of

convict labour; and Mr Ross has strongly and successfully resisted the suggestions of some of the inspecting officers who would have reintroduced it. 'I feel certain,' he writes, 'should metallic currency be introduced, the peace and content of the people at present in these islands would be a thing of the past; in its place gambling, stealing, and other crimes would follow.' The monetary system consists of parchment notes, registered with the value and the owner's name in such a way as to make theft almost impossible. These notes are cashed either by Mr Ross or by his agents in Java if any of the inhabitants wish to leave the island.


What will be the future of this little community? The health of the island is good. That mysterious and deadly illness *beri-beri*, which was a scourge up to 1888, has disappeared; and now, except when some stray ship brings influenza, or the wind blows fevers across from Java, illness is rare. The very high infant mortality has been mentioned above. It has been suggested that the lack of milk—for there are no cows—and milk-producing diet has something to do with it, while others have hinted at a possible deterioration of the race from too close intermarriage. At all events at present it shows no signs of dying out, and the physique of the people is well spoken of. But in every other respect than that of vitality, the settlement appears to be entirely dependent on Mr Ross. Not only do they respect and love him as the father of his people, who has studiously endeavoured to break down all barriers between himself and them, but with that inertia which is the unfavourable side of the lack of acquisitiveness, they prefer to take what he gives and to have things managed for them rather than do anything for themselves. The question therefore is, How long will the Ross family be able to maintain their present position? So far as that position is based upon difference of race,

not, perhaps, for very long. Most of the brothers and sons have married Cocos-born wives, and of the thirteen female members of the family only four can even speak English. But ultimately the question is one of finances, and the financial situation does not seem to the outsider very promising. The imports of the island are necessarily many—rice, flour, sugar, tea, and tobacco are the chief—and it has only one export, copra, a preparation of coconut, in which a considerable trade is done with this country and the Continent; for the Cocos Island product fetches a higher price than that from any other part of the world, and brings in on an average about £10,000 per annum. Nor have the islands many other resources. Something may be done with *bêche-de-mer*; but the labour is wanting to work it. And the little colony at Christmas Island (see *Journal*, January 28, p. 144—for Cocos is itself a mother-country) may eventually, with coffee plantations and guano, contribute something to the common stock. But there is at all events the possibility that the next generation, or the next but one, may not find it worth while to keep the business going; and, whatever steps the Colonial Office might then take, a relapse into barbarism would be almost inevitable.

These things, however, lie on the knees of the gods; and at present we may be content to echo the personal admiration for Mr Ross expressed by the British Resident at Pahang after his visit to Cocos in 1894: 'The work he is doing is a good work, and it is done in a manner that few could emulate; and to one who, like myself, has himself lived among and attempted to manage Malays for a considerable time, the methods which Mr Ross adopts in the management of his island, and the results thereby attained, were at once the most interesting and the most instructive thing to be witnessed in this interesting and curious place.'

MAJOR MARR'S YARN.

SOLITUDE AND SNAKES.

O, boys,' said Major Marr, 'you may haver about solitude in big cities, and drivell about being alone in crowds; but that's because you don't know any better. For real, downright, God-forsaken solitude, there's nothing on earth can compare to the prairie. Once, boys, if you'd like to hear this yarn—once I was down on my luck, so low down that I was glad to take the offer of the N.W.Y. Railroad of a situation as telegraphist at the Tombstone Depôt. They only offered it me because they could get nobody else to take it. Along the line it was a hundred miles from the next human dwelling-house, and the only reason for its existence was the Morgan gold-mine, seven miles behind it. I was glad of the offer when I boarded the train;

but when I got to the place—ugh! but I could hardly nerve myself to get off. It was just a little tin matchbox of a hut up against the side of a big hill. Not another house or human being was to be seen.

"Here's your sticks and grub," said the conductor, with a grin, as I stood paralysed on the platform. "You'll not be so lonely after all, mate; so cheer up. There's four trains pass during the day and night; and, if you want anything, just wire to the man at Wigmouth, and we'll bring it along. Ta-ta."

'And the train moved off and left me to my misery. I tell you, boys, the first month I spent there nigh drove me mad; and then, curiously enough, I got to like the place.

'The man at Wigmouth and I used to tell each

other yarns and jokes along the wire, and generally every day he made up a packet of newspapers and gave it to the conductor to fling out to me; and after I had read them we used to discuss and argue about politics. There was nothing to do at the depôt six days out of seven, except once in a while switch one train off to let another train by, for it was a single line. Once a week a box of gold-dust would be brought down from the mine, and I would wire for the train to stop and pick it up. My only other traffic was from a curious sort of cuss called "Snake" Rome. Some learned professor in New York paid him for collecting snakes, and every now and then he used to leave a box with me for despatch.

"Ain't you afraid to tackle them kind of beasts?" I said to him one day, but he just laughed.

"There's no harm in them when you know them," he says.

"Ay; but," I says, "when a man gets to know them he generally dies soon after. It'll be a pecky long time afore I try to make their intimate acquaintance."

"I tell you, boys, you get that sick to talk and hear another man talk in these districts that you'd speak to anybody."

"Well, on the day that I was about to tell you of, I was just cleaning up the place, and had swept out the strong-room. By the way, boys, don't go away with the idea that this strong-room was a safe or anything like that, for it wasn't. The hut was built against the side of a steep hill, and it consisted of one room, which was dining-room, bedroom, and office to me. At the end of this room was a door leading into a little cave that had been dug out into the side of the cliff, and that was the strong-room. How much real strength there was in it you can guess."

"Well, I had just been cleaning up, when "Snake" Rome came in with a box over his shoulder, and he dabbed it down. Then he mopped himself with his handkerchief."

"By James! that was a heavy tott, you bet," he said.

"Snakes?" I asked, with a look of disgust at the box.

"You bet," he said. "The best haul ever I made. I say, Marr, that box is just jammed full of them—fine big rattlers all of them. I bet there'll be nearly a hundred of them there."

"Well, every man to his taste," I said. "But I bet I would see them farther afore I would touch 'em."

"He laughed at me and my fear; then he said, "Say, Marr, have you seen those tough-looking chaps hanging about here?"

"No," I said. "How that?"

"Oh, I don't suppose it matters much," he said. "But I noticed them as I was coming along, and they seemed to be watching this place. Tough-looking chaps they were, too."

"Some tramps that are waiting to board the

train probably," I said. "They'll have to wait a good time, anyhow."

"Well, so long, Marr. You'll get my box off first chance."

"All right, I will. So long." And "Snake" Rome sauntered away. By-and-by up came some men with a box of dust from the mine in an awful hurry.

"Say, Marr, there's to be a dog-fight at the mine. Are you coming up?"

"Wish I could; but I can't now," I said, pointing to the box.

"So long, then," they said as they rushed off again.

"I hauled the box into the strong-room, and then somehow what "Snake" Rome had said about the tough-looking chaps came back into my mind, and I got mighty nervous all of a sudden. I felt somebody was near me, and, turning suddenly, I saw a tramp looking in at the door."

"What do you want?" I cried angrily; for he had given me a start.

"Say, mister, when's the first train west?" he says.

"At ten o'clock to-night," I answered; and then I could have bitten my tongue out for telling him, for that was the train the gold was to go by.

"Thank'ee, mister," he said civilly enough, and then he went away.

"I cursed myself for a nervous fool; but I could not get rid of the sight of the man's face, and I suddenly made up my mind that I would leave the box of dust lying carelessly about in the office and put the box of snakes in the strong-room. They were both about the same size; but the gold-box was heavier than the other."

"By the time I had got dinner past, the day was getting into dusk, and I sat down by the telegraph instrument to have a talk with my partner. I was just getting interested, when the door of my office was flung open and three masked men stood in the entry, pointing their pistols at me. Now, boys, as some of you know, I have a little nerve, so I let on not to see them, but worked away at the telegraph, sending this message along the wire: "Held up. Send help quick!"

"Hands up, there," said one of the men to me; and I meekly obeyed.

"Now, mister, where is the gold?" said one of the men.

"I'm not going to tell," I answered. "You got the draw on me, and I'm not fool enough not to know it; but if you want the gold, you'll just have to find it out yourself."

"None of your cheek," said one of the men. "Here, help me to tie him up."

"Get the key of the room out of his pocket," said one of the others; and, having tied me up, they took the key and unlocked the door. It was dark by this time, and one of the men cried to the others to bring the box out into the office.

"We'll unpack it here," he said, shutting and locking the outer door of the hut. "As for you, mister, you move yourself into the other room."

'By James! I was glad of the chance, and went. Then, as full of glee as schoolboys, they produced a number of small sacks in order to divide up the dust into convenient quantities. With poker and hammer they tore off the lid of the box— And then there was a wild yell, for about fifty ugly snake-heads appeared standing straight out of the box, and about the same number of rattles went off. I tell you, boys, the din was something awful. With one jump the men sprang for the door, but they had locked it, and in their terror could not take time to turn the key. The snakes were flowing out of the box quickly, and they were in a rare temper. Then, with a wild cry, the three men sprang past them into the strong-room, and slammed the door after them.

"Lord help us!" cried one of them. "What a fright I got! Where are you going, Bob?" he added, as one of his companions left his side at the door. The room was dark now, for they had left the lamp in the other room.

"I'm going to wring that chap's neck," said Bob viciously, moving towards me.

"No, I guess you're not," I said. "If you come a step nearer me I'll fire. I've got my hands unloosed now, and I'm ready with my gun." This was a lie, but a pretty needful one for a lie.

"Let him alone, Bob," said his companion. "What do you want with him, anyhow?"

"What did he tell us the gold was there for, then?"

"I didn't tell you the gold was there," I retorted.

"Where is it, then?" he asked angrily.

"In the office," I said. "You can get it there, if you want it."

"Among these rattlesnakes," he cried. "No thank'ee."

"For about an hour they argued among themselves what they should do, and once or twice they opened the door to make a rush for the other one and escape, but the floor of the office seemed to be carpeted with snakes now.

"By heavens! I'll not risk it," said Bob, shutting to the door again.

'At last the longed-for whistle came to my ears, and I knew that I would not be a prisoner much longer. It startled the three tramps into action again, and Bob opened the door and ran with the key in his hand across to the outer one. He was in a deadly funk, and though he tried to nerve himself, he could not keep his hand from shaking. After about half a minute his courage fled, and he jumped back into the room, and again the door was shut.

'The roar and rattle of the engine was plainly to be heard now, and by-and-by it drew

up, and we heard the noise of many feet on the platform. They came up to the door of the office and tried it.

"Hey, Marr! let us in, man," they cried.

"Look out," I cried. "The room is full of rattlesnakes."

"What?"

"Rattlesnakes," I repeated.

"And what about the toughs that held you up?"

"They're in here," I cried. "I'm covering them with a pistol."

"Good man," they answered. "But how are we to get to you? Are there many rattlesnakes? How on earth did they get there? You're not trying a game on us, are you?"

"No," I answered. "And there's about a hundred snakes; and the safest plan for you is to dig us out. Get up on the roof and make a hole in at the side."

"All right, Marr," they cried. "We'll be with you in a jiffy." They went back to the train and brought out what tools they could find, and soon had made a hole big enough for us to creep through. I made the three fellows go first, and then I asked one of the train men to come down and unloose me.

"But you said you were covering them with a pistol?" he said in astonishment.

"Have you never told a lie in your life before?" I asked as I got on the roof.


'The three men were carried away to jail in the train, and I slept that night at the mines; nor would I go back to the office till "Snake" Rome had captured every one of these serpents. I disliked but I did not hate them, for they had done me a very good turn. The mine and the railway company came down handsome for what they called my courage, and I soon left Tombstone, for I had had quite enough of solitude to last me my lifetime. No, boys; it may be philosophical to talk of solitude in a crowded city; but if you want to sample the real brand, you just take a situation at a place like Tombstone.'

IN FEBRUARY.

TO-DAY I saw a single snowdrop peep
Upon the world—frail, pale, yet venturesome—
As I have seen a little damsel come
Confidingly, despite frowns that would keep
A woman far away. From winter sleep—
While mavises were yet morosely dumb,
And hungry sparrows wrangled o'er a crumb—
This fragile flower arose for faith to reap.

It may be that our land is gaunt and gray,
And still half-friendly toward frost and snow;
It may be that the sun has gone astray
In this veiled town. But now we surely know,
As love knows love, that Spring is on her way,
That Winter soon must break his heart and go.

J. J. BELL.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE AND ITS MEMBERS.

IT was in 1792 that twenty-four New York stockbrokers stood under a buttonwood-tree in front of what is now 60 Wall Street, and there solemnly agreed to organise the New York Stock Exchange. Prior to that date business in public stocks had been transacted at the Tontine Coffee-House, a favourite resort of merchants and down-towners of those times, where Holland schnapps and business went hand-in-hand. When business was brisk a great deal of schnapps was drunk, and it was because so much schnapps had a tendency to fuddle the brain that the twenty-four founders of the present Exchange decided to constitute themselves an organisation, meeting regularly and in rotation in the members' offices. To-day the association numbers eleven hundred full-fledged members, owns the two million dollar building in which it is housed, and pays out yearly two hundred thousand dollars in salaries.

The membership list has long been full. Aspiring candidates must therefore wait for the death or withdrawal of a member to open the gateway to them. Even then all is not plane sailing. Applicants for admittance to membership are first publicly announced on the floor of the Exchange, together with the name of the member nominating and the name of the member seconding the application. The nominators are then asked in committee if they would accept the candidate's uncertified cheque for twenty thousand dollars. This is the crucial test. The applicant is then required to state what his business has been, whether he has ever failed, and if so, the cause of his failure, the amount of indebtedness, and nature of settlement. He must also produce the release from his creditors. He is further asked if his health is uniformly good, whether his life is insured, and if not, why not; these last questions bearing on the insurance which membership in the Exchange carries with it, and which will be referred to again in the course of this article.

Once fairly elected, the new member signs the

constitution and by-laws, pledging himself to abide by them in terms as solemn as 'till death us do part,' and pays an initiation fee of twenty thousand dollars. If admitted by transfer (and all new members are now so admitted) he pays one thousand dollars in addition to the price of his membership. To become a broker on the 'floor' of the Exchange, it will be seen by this, entails a considerable initial expense. It is much greater now than formerly. In 1823 it was only \$25; in 1827, \$100; in 1833, \$150; in 1840, \$350; in 1862, \$3000; and in 1866, \$10,000, at which figure it stood until 1879, when it was raised to \$20,000. On January 13, 1899, a membership seat was sold for \$31,000. Half of this large amount, however, may be said to represent reserve capital, for each membership ticket is an insurance policy for ten thousand dollars, payable at the member's death to his heirs, from whom it cannot by any process be diverted.

Strangers are never admitted to the floor of the Exchange, except by courtesy. There is, however, what is known as the subscribers' room—a strip of floor divided from the main floor by a railing—and admission to this, the 'rail,' as it is called, costs one hundred dollars a year. Brokers on the 'floor' are full-fledged professionals; those outside the 'rail' are known as 'rail birds.'

Dotted over the vast area of the main floor there are many pillars, each bearing a sign-board at its top, the first effect of which on the spectator is to suggest the showroom of a finger-post manufacturer in a large way of business. These sign-posts, however, are not intended to indicate direction—unless it be toward fortune or ruin—but rather to blazon the name of the stock dealt in at that particular point. Brokers with orders to buy or sell a certain stock always seek customers in the group gathered round that special pillar; and it is an easy matter for the uninitiated to pick out the ruling stocks of the day by noting the size of the groups collected about the sign-posts.

Situated at a conspicuous point, in view of every man on the floor, is the great enunciator, a gigantic checker-board, whereon from time to time appear apparently purposeless numbers. Each number, however, has a direct mission. It corresponds to the name of some member of the Exchange, and signifies, 'You are wanted.' For example, you wish to see John Smith. He is somewhere on the floor, but mixed with a crowd of, perhaps, one thousand other brokers, who are all talking and laughing at once. No messenger could find him easily in the swarming throng, nor could his name be called above the deafening uproar; yet John Smith comes to you almost instantly. In the midst of a roaring story, perhaps, he has cast a quick glance at the enunciator, and the tale has stopped dead. For your broker is always alert even in his moments of wildest frivolity, and it is no detraction from his pragmatic sagacity to say that when business is slack he gets into play with a jump.

They are a free-and-easy set, these stockbrokers, with a fondness for knocking off one another's hats and jostling each other. Generally their fun is good-natured enough now, but in the old days, and indeed until recently, differences 'on 'Change' were frequently settled by man's most primitive methods. During the panic of 1884 there was a week when a rough-and-tumble fight occurred on the floor every day. This, however, was due to the strain of intense excitement rather than to an excess of corporate bad temper, for a better-natured, more cheerful, philosophic, fun-loving body of men does not exist than that known as the New York Stock Association.

This being the case, one is somewhat surprised to find superstition rife among them, until one recalls the part luck plays in their lives. Friday, for instance, is a black day. Men hesitate about beginning a big operation on a Friday, and will suffer considerable financial inconvenience and even loss rather than do so. Other men who can lose a fortune without turning a hair will grow pale if, while commencing a big deal, they remember that they forgot to tip the beggar on the Exchange steps that morning. Others, again, would have indigestion for the rest of the day if before sitting down to luncheon they had forgotten to walk around their chair. Then, too, almost every broker has his own pet unlucky number, while not a few carry mascots. One man in particular, so his friends say, carries the tail of a pet bulldog in his pocket whenever he contemplates going in for a big operation; while another wears a lady's hat-pin, stuck inside the breast of his coat, as a phylactery. In no other business is luck, pure and simple, regarded as such a vital

factor; and among no other class of men are its strokes, for good or ill, regarded with such sensible philosophy.

To the lay reader the vocabulary of Wall Street is jargon. Even an acute intelligence cannot easily grasp the essentials of a transaction where a 'put' or a 'call,' a 'straddle' or a 'spread,' is involved. And when it comes to 'ballooning' and 'gunning,' 'hypothecating' and 'kite-flying,' 'dead ducks' and 'lame ducks,' and a certain pastoral operation known as 'milking the street,' the average man gives up in despair. He can comprehend the significance of 'selling stock in a sick market,' and infers that the process of 'watering stock' is akin to that of watering milk; but most of the agricultural, sporting, and aerial nomenclature of the street is to him as a sealed book.

Here are a few of the most common and obscure terms, with the significance of each:

A 'put' is a contract given to receive and pay for stock at a price below the current market value, for a cash consideration—say one per cent. A 'call' is the reverse of a 'put.' A 'straddle' is a dual privilege, either to receive or deliver stock at a price above or below the market figure; while a 'spread' is a privilege in two separate contracts, one a 'put,' the other a 'call.' The object of these contracts is to ensure speculators against loss in their operations in the market.

'Ballooning' is the act of working up a stock far above its intrinsic value; 'gunning' is trying to force it down when a certain house is known to be a heavy holder and financially unable to resist attack. 'Kite-flying' is expanding one's credit beyond its limits; and 'hypothecating' is generally a supplement to this, meaning 'to put up security,' or, as it is technically called, 'putting up collateral.' A 'lame duck' is a broker who has failed to meet his engagements; a 'dead duck' is one whose failure is absolute. 'Milking the street' means the process of alternately lifting and depressing the price of certain shares, for the purpose of collecting all the floating money in the market. 'Washing stock' is the fictitious engagement of one broker to buy the stock offered by another, that it may be stimulated to a high figure; and 'watering stock,' as every one knows, is increasing the quantity without improving the quality. In this particular department of finance the modern manager of stock companies has, in the expressive parlance of the poker-player, 'seen the milkman and gone him ten better.'

On January 23d of the present year all previous records were broken in the amount of business done on the New York Stock Exchange. The transactions in shares were computed at 1,555,000.



THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XIII.

IT may very safely be taken for granted, I think, that the happiness or unhappiness, success or non-success, of one's life is brought about not so much by deliberate education or design, if I may so express it, as by some small event, the proper importance of which is far from being recognisable at the time. For instance, had Browne not undertaken that yachting cruise to Norway when he did, it is scarcely probable he would ever have met Katherine Petrovitch. In that case he would very possibly have married the daughter of some impecunious peer, have bolstered up a falling house with his wealth, have gone into Parliament, received a title in due course, and would eventually have descended to the family vault, in most respects a mediocre man. But, as Fate willed, he *did* go to Norway—met Katherine, fell in love with her, and now— But there, with such a long story before me, it will scarcely do for me to risk an anti-climax by anticipating. Let it suffice that, after he had said good-bye to Maas, he lunched at the club, deriving a considerable amount of pleasure meanwhile from the knowledge that he was engaged in a business which, should it become known, would undoubtedly plunge him into a considerable amount of hot water! And when you come to think of it, how strange is the pleasure the human mind finds in the possession of a secret! In our childhood it is a joy second only to the delight of a new toy. Anarchism, Nihilism, Fenianism, and indeed the fundamental principle of every order of secret society, is the same thing, only on a larger and more dangerous scale, carried out by perverted imaginations and in the wrong direction. The fact, however, remains that Browne, as I have said, derived a considerable amount of satisfaction from the feeling that he was, in a certain sense, a conspirator. Plainly as he had expressed himself to Katherine, however, it is extremely doubtful whether he himself realised how difficult and dangerous the task he had taken upon himself was likely to prove. The Russian Government, at the best of times, is like dynamite, a thing to be handled carefully; and one minute's consideration was sufficient to show him that the work he had pledged himself to undertake was not one that, in the event of things going wrong, would entitle him to the sympathy of his own Government. He thought of the Duke of Matlock, and wondered what he would say if it should ever become known that he, John Grantham Browne, had assisted in the escape of a Russian Nihilist from the island of Saghalien. He could very well imagine the pious horror of the Duchess

when the various rumours, which would be certain to go the round of the clubs, should reach her ears. And this suggested a still more unpleasant reflection. What if he should fail in his attempt to rescue the man, and should find himself in the clutches of the Russian Bear? What would his fate be then? His own country could scarcely demand his release, seeing that he would, in all probability, be caught red-handed. He put the thought away from him, however, as having nothing to do with the case. It was Katherine's father who stood in need of assistance, and it was Katherine's happiness which was at stake. That was enough for him. With the remembrance of her gratitude, and of the look he had seen in her face when he had promised to help her, still fresh in his mind, such a thing as counting the cost was not to be thought of. Having finished his lunch, he returned to his hotel, to find a note upon his sitting-room table. It was from Katherine. He opened it, with a feeling that was half eagerness and half fear in his heart, and read as follows:

DEAR LOVE,—How can I make you see how good I think you are, and how little I deserve such treatment at your hands! There is no one else in the world who would do what you have done, and I shall thank God always for sending you to my assistance. Believe me, I know how much you are risking, and how much you are giving up, and are willing to give, for my sake. Oh, if I could only repay you as you deserve! But, come what may, you will always have my love and my lifelong gratitude. To-night an old friend will be with us, who in happier days knew my father. Will you not come and let me introduce you to him?

The letter was signed, 'Your loving Katherine,' and to Browne this seemed to be the pith and essence of its contents. How different was it from the note he had received that morning! They were as different as light and darkness, as black and white, as any simile that could be employed. In one she had declared that it was impossible for her ever to become his wife, and in the other she signed herself, 'Your loving Katherine.' Of course he would go that evening, not because the old man had been acquainted with her father, for he would have gone just as willingly if he had had a bowing acquaintance with her grandmother. All he wanted was the opportunity of seeing Katherine, of being in the same house and room with her, and of watching the woman he loved and who had promised to be his wife.

Accordingly, that evening after dinner, he hailed a cab and drove to the Rue Jacquarie. As he passed along the crowded thoroughfares he could not help contrasting the different occasions on which he had visited that street. The first time had been on the night of his arrival in Paris,

when he had gone there in order to locate the house; the next was that on which he had repaired there in response to the note from Madame Bernstein; then, again, on the morning of that happy day they had spent together at Fontainebleau; while the last was after that miserable letter he had received from Katherine, in which she bade him give up the idea that she could ever become his wife.

On this occasion it was indeed a happy young man who jumped out of the vehicle and nodded to the *concierge* as he passed her and ran up the stairs. When he knocked at the door of madame's sitting-room, a voice from within told him to enter. He did so, to find Katherine, madame, and an old gentleman whom he had never seen before seated there. Katherine hastened forward to greet him. If he had not already been rewarded for all the anxiety and pain he had experienced during the last few days, and for the promise he had given that morning, the look upon her face now would have fully compensated him.

'I thought you would come,' she said; and then, dropping her voice a little, she added, 'I have been watching the hands of the clock, and waiting for you.'

But, even if Katherine were so kind in her welcome to him, she was not destined to have the whole ceremony in her hands, for by this time Madame Bernstein had risen from her chair and was approaching him. Browne glanced at her, and his instinct told him what was coming. Knowing the lady so well, he felt convinced she would not permit such an opportunity to pass without making the most of it.

'Ah, Monsieur Browne,' she began, her voice trembling with emotion and the ready tear rising in her eye, 'you cannot understand how we feel towards you. Katherine has told me of your act of self-sacrifice. It is noble of you; it is grand! But Heaven will reward you for your goodness to an orphan child.'

'My dear Madame Bernstein,' said Browne, who by this time was covered with confusion, 'you really must not thank me like this. I do not deserve it. I am not doing much after all; and besides, it is for Katherine's sake, and that makes the difference. If we succeed, as I hope and trust we shall, it will be an adventure that we shall remember all our lives long.' He stopped suddenly, remembering that there was a third person present who might not be in the secret. Being an ingenuous youth, the thought of his indiscretion caused him to blush furiously. Katherine, however, was quick to undeceive him.

'You need have no fear,' she said; 'we are all friends here. Let me introduce you to Herr Otto Sauber, who, as I told you in my letter, is an old friend of my father's.'

The old man, sitting at the farther end of the room, rose and hobbled forward to take Browne's hand. He was a strange-looking little fellow.

His face was small and round, his skin was wrinkled into a thousand furrows, while his hair was snow-white, and fell upon his shoulders in wavy curls. His age could scarcely have been less than seventy. Trouble had plainly marked him for her own; and if his threadbare garments could be taken as any criterion, he was on the verge of actual poverty. Whatever his nationality may have been, he spoke French, which was certainly not his mother-tongue, with considerable fluency.

'My dear young friend,' he said as he took Browne's hand, 'allow me, as an old man and a patriot, to thank you for what you are about to do. I sum up my feelings when I say that it is an action I do not think you will ever regret.' Then, placing his hand on the girl's shoulder, he continued: 'I am, as I understand Katherine has told you, an old friend of her father's. I remember him first as a strong, high-spirited lad, who had not a base thought in his nature. I remember him later as a man of more mature years, whose whole being was saddened by the afflictions and wrongs his fellow-countrymen were suffering, and still later on I wished him God-speed upon his weary march, with his brother exiles, to Siberia. In God's good time, and through your agency, I look forward to welcoming him among us once more. Madame Bernstein tells me you love the little Katherine here. If so, I can only say that I think you are going the right way to prove it. I pray that you may know long life and happiness together.'

The old gentleman was genuinely affected. Large tears trickled down his weather-beaten cheeks, and his voice became thick and husky. Browne's tender heart was touched by this unexpected display of emotion, and he felt a lump rising in his throat that for a few seconds threatened to choke him. And yet, what was there to account for it? Only a young man, a pretty girl, a stout middle-aged lady in a puce gown, and a seedy old foreigner, who, in days long gone by, had known the young girl's father. After this little episode they quieted down somewhat, and Madame Bernstein proposed that they should discuss the question they had so much at heart. They did so accordingly, with the exception of the old gentleman, who sat almost silent. It was not until he heard her expound the subject that Browne became aware of the extent and thoroughness of madame's knowledge concerning Russia and her criminal administration. She was familiar with every detail, even to the names and family histories of the various governors and officers; she knew who might be considered venal, and whom it would be dangerous to attempt to bribe; who were lenient with their charges, and who lost no opportunity of tyrannising over the unfortunates whom Fate had placed in their power. Listening to her one might very well have supposed that she had herself travelled every verst of that weary road. Plan after plan she propounded, until Browne felt his brain reel

under the strain of it. A little before midnight he rose to leave, and Herr Sauber followed his example.

'If Monsieur Browne is walking in the direction of the Rue de l'Opéra, I should be glad of his company,' he said. 'That is to say, if he has

no objection to being hindered by a poor old cripple who can scarcely draw one foot after the other.'

Browne expressed the pleasure such a walk would afford him; and, when they had bidden the ladies good-night, they set off together.

(To be continued.)

A DIVER'S PECULIAR DANGER.



DIVER lays himself open to many dangers in the carrying out of his peculiar work; although the most serious are probably not those generally regarded as such in popular estimation. The strange adventures one reads of now and again as having been met with under water have the colour, as a rule, so thickly laid on that a very strong measure of doubt is apt to creep in as to whether they are true or not. I will not say that in tropical waters a diver may not occasionally have run across a fierce or strange inhabitant—shark, devil-fish, or what not—and been rescued from determined attack at the last extremity by means as unexpected as the appearance of the enemy itself; but I must confess that I would believe the more readily if I heard the account from the lips of the man who had had the experience. I have worked myself in many parts of the world, occasionally under unusual circumstances, and have been in danger several times; but it has always been of a far more prosaic type than any such as those referred to. In laying courses of masonry, for instance, under water, in connection with the harbour works at P——, I had my foot and leg badly crushed by the fall of a large block of granite through the snapping of a clip holding one end in the process of lowering. Fortunately it was a glancing blow, and the stone, striking against the top of the foundation already laid, fell into deep water alongside. Had it caught my foot squarely and held me fast there would probably have been one diver the less in the country, for I was the only one at work on the job. As it was, I only just managed to send up the signal to be raised before fainting from the pain, and when I came to myself I was on the staging erected over the work with helmet off, and my helpers dashing water over my face. For an accident, decidedly a lucky one, although it meant a subsequent six weeks in bed.

One great diving danger in popular estimation—and naturally enough on the face of it—is that from a breakage of the air-pipe, and the consequent overwhelming and fatal rush of water into the helmet and dress. But nothing of the kind would happen; for the inlet-valve in the headpiece is so constructed that, were the pipe accidentally broken, the valve would immediately

close, and prevent any water getting in. The worker might get smothered from lack of air; but if working 'free'—that is, with open water above—he would have an ample supply to last him until he got above the surface, provided he promptly signalled to be raised, which it is needless to presume he would do. Were he working in a sunken vessel matters would, of course, be complicated, and on the wrong side; but such great care is exercised in turning out first-rate apparatus that the risk of anything breaking is comparatively remote. A far more serious one, more likely to happen, and quite independent of excellence of material and workmanship, is that of the entanglement and choking of the pipe; and the closest shave I ever had was due to this very cause. Something had gone wrong with the big inner doors, or gates, between B—— Dock and the lock opening into it, and I was engaged to see what was amiss, and to right it. The doors are necessarily heavy, massive structures, weighing many tons apiece; for, working in halves from each side, and meeting in the centre of the lock, they have to keep back the weight of the dock-water in the process of letting a vessel in or out—how strong and heavy can be judged from the fact that when closed they are broad enough to form the familiar foot-bridges so commonly used in crossing narrow waterways about all docks. Upon examination I had found that the reason for their not making a sufficiently tight fit of it when closed was that a band of iron at the bottom of one had got torn from its fastenings; and this defective band I had been for some days, or during such portions as my work was practicable, engaged in removing, and replacing with a fresh one.

The work being upon the point of completion, I wished to see—or feel rather, for seeing was decidedly out of the question with over twenty feet of dirty dock-water between one and the light—how it stood the test of the ordinary closing; and I had arranged a signal before descending upon this particular occasion to have the doors closed when I was below. When ready I sent up the agreed-upon signal, and in a few moments felt the gate upon which my hand rested begin to slowly move. I was not long, however, in realising that I had made a serious mistake; for as soon as the huge masses were in motion I

was gently lifted off my feet by the swirl of water produced in the narrow lock—the easiest of matters it is to upset a diver's balance under water, in spite of the heavy weights he carries—and irresistibly sucked towards their meeting-point. I made desperate efforts, by clutching at and pressing against the gate surface, to prevent being carried between; for, caught there, I would certainly be crushed to death. Failing, however, to get a fair grip at anything, I was drawn into the now rapidly narrowing gap, and, luckily, through; but it was so close a matter that I distinctly felt a leg knock against each gate-end as I passed between. Once on the other side, I was immediately pulled up by the life-line or air-pipe tightening against the end of one of the gates, and was just congratulating myself upon my narrow escape, when it suddenly flashed across my mind that the pipe was still between the closing masses at my side. A death hardly less horrible after all, and more long drawn out, than the one I had so barely escaped; for, with the pipe crushed flat when the meeting came, I would be held a prisoner until smothered from lack of air. Had I a knife I might have cut line and pipe, slipped off my weights, and trusted to the chance of a shoot upward. But as the work required no use of a knife, I had not one with me. I had, however, what proved better, in a hammer slung to my wrist by a lanyard tied to the handle, and a lucky inspiration as well as to using it; for, instinctively gripping this, I thrust it between the now almost meeting gate-ends. In the very nick of time, too, for almost immediately I felt them jar upon it; and as at the same time there was no stoppage nor diminution of the inward rush of

air into the helmet, I knew that the hammer-head had taken the strain, and saved my frail connection with the living world above. Before I had made up my mind what to do next—if, indeed, I could do anything—I felt the hammer loosen in its position—I had taken care not to let go the handle—and the gates began to open again. As they opened I was again carried through by the current, now set up in the contrary direction, to the side I was originally on, and the right one for me, when, after being floated back beyond the immediate flow of water, and regaining something of a steadier position, I hurriedly sent up the signal to be hauled up, and was soon thankfully at the surface and in the punt. My men, I learnt a little later, fearing something to be wrong from the movements of the pipe and line, though they failed to guess the immediate danger, had called to stop the gates closing, but, on the lower level of the water, had failed to attract in time the attention of the dockman at the handle, placed well back from the edge of the quay, that set the hydraulic machinery in motion. For greater convenience I had also been working with the gates but a third open, which still further cut into important disposable time. Upon thinking the matter out afterwards, I saw I might possibly have signalled to be hauled up, when I was just lifted off my feet, but I was then exclusively bent upon fending myself off with both hands in the turmoil from the impending crush. Most fortunate of all, perhaps, it was that my attendants had not obeyed a natural impulse to haul me up, for had they done so it would in all probability have meant my being drawn back into the crush I had so narrowly escaped.

THE UNIQUE MRS SPINK.

VII.



FOR or three weeks had passed without bringing any apparent prospect of the fulfilment of Mr Spink's quest. He had gone about with an open mind—had even paid ceremonious calls upon sundry old acquaintances who he knew had marriageable daughters. But all was in vain. No one he met impressed him as being exactly what he sought.

At this juncture the kindly Mrs Thorneycroft, undaunted by her failures, again sent for him. The language of the note wherein she invited him to dinner was discreetly veiled; but by reading between the lines Albert gathered that this time Mrs Thorneycroft believed there could be no possible hitch.

It was with significant agitation that Albert found himself standing on the Thorneycroft door-

step in company with a tall lady and a small gentleman, who had alighted from their brougham just as he sprang out of his hansom.

'That was dreadfully stupid of you, father. You should have told him to return at ten-thirty. If necessary, he could have waited,' the daughter was saying sharply as he joined them.

'Well, well, my dear, well, well, eleven o'clock is not really late, and you know Mr Thorneycroft always likes a game of whist,' the father was saying apologetically, when the door opened and they were admitted.

Two other guests were present, but as they were already wed, no especial astuteness was necessary to enable Mr Spink to guess whom his hostess expressly wished him to meet.

He took Miss Van Horlock in to dinner, and found her eminently sensible. Her views of life

were in no way influenced by sentiment. She balanced the issues frankly.

She did not read many novels. She thought fiction wasted time, and gave one a false idea of things. She did not cycle, esteeming walking healthier and less dangerous. Finding her household duties occupied much of her time, she rarely went to places of amusement.

After dinner she performed on the piano, thumping out a show-piece over the mastery whereof many of her girlhood's hours had been spent. Her execution was perfectly correct, if quite expressionless, and Albert was sorry, later, that he had not been able to put more enthusiasm into his thanks.

'A most sensible girl,' Mrs Thorneycroft whispered as Albert took leave. 'Such a splendid manager. She arranges everything. Mrs Van Horlock says she might be living in a hotel, she has so little trouble about house-keeping.'

Mr Spink tried conscientiously to admire the young lady. There was positively no reason why she should not attract him, yet he did not feel drawn to her. On several subsequent occasions he met her at the Thorneycrofts'; and, later, went to an admirably arranged but exceedingly dull dinner-party at her house.

Finally, after much inward communing, he decided that she would make a perfectly suitable wife for him; that he might search a long time before finding any one so desirable.

It was with an unpleasant sensation of being voluntarily about to take the first step towards relinquishing for ever his freedom that he invited Mrs Thorneycroft and Miss Van Horlock to tea at Fairweather Villa. He had a queer fancy to see his future spouse in his house before committing himself.

The day of their visit came, and Mr Spink, who during several preceding days had been perturbed, became more so. He did not go into town in the morning as usual, but, remaining at home, fussed about and nearly drove poor Elizabeth distracted by issuing contradictory orders.

Everything was looking its best, and Jonathan had secured a half-holiday, that he might be free to take the babes out in their mail-cart while the visitors were there. But, somehow, from the first, Albert saw that Fairweather Villa did not 'fit' Miss Van Horlock.

Mr Spink had a great affection for his house. There was a snug feeling of homeliness, born of old association, about it which appealed to his most sacred feelings. Yet when Miss Van Horlock sat rigidly upright in an arm-chair, with her somewhat large feet, in low-heeled boots, planted before her, and cast an appraising eye over the heavy, old-fashioned furniture and faded carpets, a chill seemed to encompass her host, freezing the warmth of his nature. She had an air of appropriation, too, as though, mentally, she saw herself

rearranging his establishment and mode of life, which jarred upon her host. Without saying anything absolutely disparaging of Ballham, she hinted that she deemed the locality undesirable, and marvelled that Mr Spink had resided there so long.

Strumming a moment on the yellow keys of his mother's piano, she suggested the necessity of a new one; adding incidentally that she knew of a firm who allowed quite a good sum for an old instrument if deducted from the price of a new one.

The entrance of the tea-tray led to her mounting her special hobby, whereon she discoursed volubly regarding the iniquitous demands of retail merchants, and the enormous advantages of dealing exclusively with the stores—thereby annoying Mr Spink, who, from matters of principle, was opposed to all great monopolies, and one of whose firmest tenets was that it is only just to patronise local shopkeepers.

When tea was over, the tactful chaperon suggested an adjournment to the garden; and Albert, hailing with relief the notion of a move, led them forth into his little parterre. Somehow the brightness had gone out of the day, and as Miss Van Horlock cast a critical glance around, Albert distinctly felt the lawn shrink from the spacious dimensions he had from childhood believed it to own.

'How dreadfully those trees overshadow your little garden, Mr Spink! You should certainly have them lopped.'

Recollecting how his father used innocently to boast about the height and magnitude of those trees, which, on buying Fairweather Villa, he had planted with his own hands, Albert choked a little, and failed to make his usual polite response. Even Mrs Thorneycroft appeared to feel the withering sense of disappointment under which their host suffered. Miss Van Horlock alone was complacently oblivious of the chilling effect of her dictatorial manner and remarks.

After his guests had gone Mr Spink retired to his snuggery and pondered deeply. Matrimony, he concluded, was too elusive a thing to be managed as a matter of convenience. Love was a will-o'-the-wisp, and every attempt to capture it merely led the unwary pursuer into bogs and morasses.

Acting on his resolution, he wrote to Mrs Thorneycroft, and, while thanking her for her great kindness, hinted that he had concluded to relinquish his chase of coy Cupid, and was determined to wait until that fickle boy sought him.

'Well,' remarked Mrs Thorneycroft to her spouse as she read the note next morning at breakfast, 'I am a foolish woman. Worldly wisdom ought to have taught me to save myself all that trouble. I might have remembered that no man ever marries a woman whom his friends think suitable;

no matter how many nice girls he meets, he always ends by choosing some absolutely incongruous person, and Albert Spink is just like the rest of his sex.'

'Umph!' was Mr Thorneycroft's only reply.

VIII.

BY-AND-BY a new housekeeper was engaged, and the Lophams—Elizabeth in tears—burdened with a medley assortment of bag and baggage, left Fairweather Villa.

As he watched the departure of the little *cortège* Mr Spink became conscious of a painful tightening of his heart-strings. The stillness of his deserted house negatively troubled him. The parent Lophams were quiet, refined people, whose presence never jarred upon him. To the tuneful prattle of their children he had grown gradually accustomed; and after the exodus the house felt dull and empty.

According to the manner of her kind, the new housekeeper at first appeared a treasure. But as the months wore on, Albert, who had been accustomed to dealing with a woman on whose veracity and fidelity he could implicitly rely, began to be assailed by doubts respecting Mrs Beccles's honesty. His household expenses seemed weekly to demand a larger cheque. Sounds of strange masculine voices occasionally caught his ear, and the odour of plebeian tobacco pervaded his dwelling. Suspicions once aroused, he speedily exchanged Beccles for a worthy dame whose chief recommendation was her extreme probity.

Regarding economy, the new treasure was scrupulous to a fault. In her desire that nothing should be wasted, the smallest and hardest scraps of bread returned again and again to confront Mr Spink at the breakfast-table, until, in self-defence, he was obliged to parcel them up and furtively drop them in the street. Her cooking was rudimentary, moreover, and under her auspices an unvarying flavour of soot haunted the viands.

Afraid of changing for the worse, Mr Spink bore with this good body for a space, until she providentially developed rheumatism, when her place was filled by a highly efficient person, whose main characteristic was a mania for cleanliness; an enthusiast who enshrouded the furniture in stiffly starched swaddling-bands of holland, and looked askance if sitting-room fires were mentioned between March and October.

She had a squint, too, a defect which annoyed her master, who could discover no valid reason for dispensing with her services. It is difficult to discharge a servitor for over-assiduous attention to her duties; so, through many bleak evenings, Mr Spink smoked his pipe by a cold hearth, remembering regretfully how, on the slightest appearance of cold or damp, Elizabeth was wont to have a cosy fire awaiting his return. He often looked back to the kindly and placid reign of

the Lophams with regret; now that he had experienced a sterner rule, he would gladly have welcomed their return, babes and all!

On a sweet June morning, nearly three years after Mr Spink had abandoned his matrimonial intentions, he awoke with the echo of children's laughter in his ears. The fancied sound brought with it a keen sense of pleasure. In his drowsy brain he congratulated himself that the intervening years had been but a dream, and that matters were still on their old footing. But as he lay contentedly, half-asleep, the strident voice of Markwell as she scolded a recalcitrant milk-boy brought him hurriedly back to reality; and hearing the clock strike, he made haste to rise, for on more than one occasion Markwell, who was a rigorous church-goer, had shown silent displeasure if he tarried in bed of a Sunday morning.

Actuated by the desire to pass as little time as possible in the cramping atmosphere of the frigid dwelling which he could no longer call home, Mr Spink had started cycling. This summer afternoon his ride extended far into a little-known by-way of Surrey, where a tiny village and a quaint church nestled among pleasant green pastures.

The day was warm, Mr Spink's figure was somewhat portly, and the inviting aspect of the cool churchyard suggested rest and a peaceful smoke. Dismounting, he wheeled his cycle within the precincts, and, seating himself on a flat-topped tomb, lit his pipe and enjoyed the tranquil influences of his surroundings.

The afternoon hush lay over all. Save for a woman in widow's dress, who, accompanied by a little girl, was placing flowers—the fragrant blossoms of a rustic garden—upon a modest grave, the place was deserted.

Something in the contour of the black-robed figure seemed familiar, and at the moment when, turning, she saw her old master, Spink recognised Elizabeth.

'I have often wondered how you were, Mr Albert, and hoped you were getting along comfortably,' she said as, preliminary greetings over, they sat side by side chatting.

'Well, just so-so, I'm afraid. But what of yourselves? I inquired after you at Torrybins', but all they could tell me was that Lopham had fallen into bad health, and that you had all gone out of town.'

A shadow fell on Elizabeth's comely face. 'It's nearly a year and a half now since Jonathan died, sir. He had never been strong, as you know, and soon after we left you he took a bad chill through getting wet at a funeral. It went to his lungs, so he came home here; it was his native village. That's his grave over there.' She pointed to where the child sat on the grass picking daisies.

'And you, Elizabeth—how do you manage with the children?'

'There's only two; the last baby died. Little Jonathan—you remember him, sir?—he's at school now, and gettin' on splendidly; and Lucy there. We live with Jonathan's mother; she keeps the shop and the post-office here. And she's so proud of little Jonathan she wouldn't part with him, no, not to the Queen herself!'

Her soft voice recalled much of his dear old life, which lately seemed to have slipped entirely from his grasp. Even the name of her child Lucy—called after his mother, whose last illness Elizabeth, then a young girl, had nursed—touched a chord of memory. She had known his father, also, and for many years her life had been passed under the same roof as his own. Elizabeth was one of the few people to whom he could say, 'Do you remember?'

'And the old cherry-tree over the arbour, does it always have as many cherries? I do hope none of that beautiful china has got broken.'

Her interested words recalled his prison-house, and suggested an easy and agreeable way of breaking the fetters which so long had enchained him.

'I haven't had a day's real comfort since you left, Elizabeth. I sincerely wish you would come back again. You could have a strong maid to help you, and, of course, bring the children. Do come.'

Elizabeth's face clouded. 'I'm afraid I can't, Mr Albert. You see, Jonathan left me quite comfortably off. He had always been a

saving man, and his life was well insured. And when he was dying he made me promise never to go back to service.' She spoke with evident reluctance; her heart had never left Fairweather Villa.

Looking into her wistful gray eyes, Mr Spink noticed that Elizabeth was still a winsome woman. Her country sojourn had brought a softer curve to her form, a richer colour to her cheek. As he saw the prospect of happiness again eluding his grasp, Cupid—who had not really deserted the forlorn bachelor, but had merely been biding his time—from where he lurked behind Jonathan Lopham's tombstone, sped an arrow right through the breast of Mr Spink's tweed cycling suit.

With the birth of a new emotion the scales fell from his eyes, and he saw that Elizabeth was still young, and, while not classically beautiful, her appearance was pleasing and attractive. Her range of intellect, he knew, had not led her far into the prickly paths of learning, but it had approved her an admirable director of a household. Though her musical training was *nil*, her voice, both in speech and song, was tuneful; and, best of all, she had always shown a sympathetic regard for himself and a whole-souled devotion to his interests.

A moment later the vigilant Cupid chuckled, and little Lucy, looking up from her daisy-chain, became wide-eyed with astonishment to see that the strange gentleman's arm tenderly encircled her mother's waist.

The Unique Mrs Spink was found!

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A SPLENDID SCHEME.



IR SANDFORD FLEMING has recently advocated a system of State-owned electric cables to connect all parts of our vast Empire, so that London shall be in ready communication with every place on the globe where Britannia holds sway. The idea is a grand one, and, what is more, it is feasible at a comparatively low cost—namely, five or six millions, the price of half-a-dozen battleships. It is true that most of our possessions are in touch with the mother-country already; but the cables are not owned by the State, and many of them run through foreign territory. In the new proposal every cable would find its shore-end on British ground, and each point touched would be in connection with every other point by two routes, extending in opposite directions. The importance of such a means of communication in time of war cannot be overestimated, and would put us in a position which would be quite unattainable by any other nation of the

earth. More than this, the realisation of the project would do more than anything else to add to the unity and solidarity of the Empire. There is every likelihood, too, that the enterprise, vast as it is, would represent a paying concern from its start; for, if communication between the various parts of our immense Empire could be made at a cheap rate, thousands would exchange telegrams with distant friends and relations who never think of sending a 'wire' now, except in cases of emergency. As an additional and most important aid to national defence, the new cable-scheme should act as the harbinger of peace.

MOTOR VEHICLES.

As much ignorance about, and not a little prejudice against, motor vehicles still exists in this country, we are glad to note that the Automobile Club—which was established to develop the use of this kind of vehicle, and to promote improvements in its construction—has decided to hold an exhibition at Richmond (London) in June next. The principal object is

to ascertain the best kind of motor-carriage suitable to English requirements and tastes; and there will be trials of various kinds, not as to speed as in France, but with regard to hill-climbing, and other competitions. The proposed exhibition is supported by many well-known names, and a guarantee fund has been started, to which there are already many subscribers. The club does not aim at making money by the enterprise, but hopes to clear all expenses by small charges for space and admission to the exhibition.

A FOREST OF PIGMIES.

Mr Albert B. Lloyd, a young explorer, who has recently reached England after a remarkable journey in the western province of Uganda, has related some interesting experiences which he met with while traversing the great forest inhabited by pigmies, which was described by Stanley some years ago. The journey may be quoted as an instance of British pluck, for it was mainly through a country inhabited by cannibals. Mr Lloyd was the only white man of the party, and that party merely consisted of two Baganda boys, who acted as his personal servants, and a few native carriers. He coolly speaks of the performance as being 'somewhat risky,' and proudly says that he never had to resort to the use of arms. He was twenty days walking through the great forest inhabited by the pigmies, a forest so dark that in many places it was impossible to read even at noonday. The pigmies were fairly intelligent, and peacefully disposed, although their arrows were tipped with deadly poison. They had a frightened appearance, and covered their faces, like shy children, when spoken to. The forest was alive with elephants, leopards, wild pigs, buffaloes, and antelopes. After leaving the forest Mr Lloyd came to one place where he took the opportunity of screwing together the bicycle which he had brought with him. A spin on the machine brought out thousands of men, women, and children from their villages; and they danced and yelled with delight at seeing, as they expressed it, a European riding a snake.

AMERICAN LOCOMOTIVES FOR BRITAIN.

The recent disastrous strike in the engineering trade has caused such arrears of work in our different locomotive workshops that when the Midland Railway Company wanted thirty engines built they could not get them made in this country. They have, therefore, placed the order with two American firms, and for the first time in the history of railway enterprise we shall presently see foreign engines running on British rails. The excellence of American engines, and indeed of all that pertains to railway work, is well known, and the Midland Company will have no reason to regret that circumstances have forced

them away from the English market. We have already taken useful lessons from our American cousins in the matter of Pullman-cars and the Westinghouse brake; and it will now be a very interesting thing to compare the behaviour of American locomotives with those of our own workshops. It is said that the cost of the new engines will be about a quarter less than if they had been built on this side of the Atlantic.

FILBERT-CULTURE IN ITALY.

It will surprise many to hear that in certain districts of Italy the filbert crop rivals the produce of the vine in commercial importance. These delicious nuts are grown on bushes or shrubs, which are arranged in groups that are from fifteen to twenty-five feet apart, so as to ensure the access of plenty of light and air. They thrive best in a deep clayey soil, and the planting takes place during November and December, of slips from the mother-plant. Seeds could be used, but the growth would be too slow to be profitable. As it is, the shrubs do not bear fruit until the third year, any blossoms appearing before that time being removed, so that the plant shall not be impoverished. The plants are periodically pruned, when any slips which have failed to sprout are removed and replaced by others; so that there are plantations which remain in full growth although nearly a hundred years old. The filbert is not subject to the diseases common to other crops, but it suffers severely from hailstones and from cold winds. Other particulars concerning the filbert-culture may be found in the *Society of Arts Journal*.

SEAGULLS IN LONDON.

A very curious and beautiful thing is to be seen on any wintry day upon the ornamental water of St James's Park, London. Every year an increasing number of seagulls take up their quarters here, among the ducks and swans who may be described as the freeholders of this piece of water; and it may be surmised that they are not altogether welcome guests, for, with their superior powers of flight, they catch in the air the food thrown by passers-by, and annex many a dainty morsel which would otherwise fall to the permanent residents. These gulls, which thus find their way to a feeding-ground in the very heart of a big city, fifty miles from the sea, are of great interest to naturalists, one of whom has recently pointed out that, in the absence of a sandbank for a quiet nap, the birds have taken to perching upon the trees. Another, while calling attention to the circumstance that the seagulls at Scoulton Mere, Norfolk, a celebrated inland breeding-place, twenty-eight miles from the sea, also use the trees as perches, suggests that the gulls at St James's Park might be induced to

make the lake there a permanent abode. He believes that if the authorities were to make an artificial swamp, about twenty yards square, on the south of the island, where the birds now take refuge, and were to plant the ground with sedges and rushes, and provide it with a wire fence to keep out intruders, the gulls might be induced to nest there, and so form a permanent attraction to the Park.

CAST-STEEL ORDNANCE.

Dr Gatling, of machine-gun fame, has constructed a cast-steel weapon which, it is hoped, will possess all the good qualities of a gun made on the present built-up principle, at about half its cost. This is not the first attempt to simplify the art of heavy-gun making by doing away with the hooped construction, which is responsible for the expenditure of so much time and money. Only three years ago Maxim made a gun in one forging, cooling it from the interior by blowing through the tube a stream of coal-oil, which was so efficient that it withstood a pressure of 50,400 lb. without injury. Another gun made in one forging was designed by Captain Hobbs of the Ordnance Department, United States army; and this also stood a pressure of almost equal amount. Dr Gatling aims at doing away with the forging operation entirely. The metal used is a special steel alloy, and is run direct from the cupola to the mould, the latter being in a vertical position, with the muzzle end downward. The casting is cooled from within, and devices are adopted to give the metal a fibrous character. It remains to be seen whether the gun will withstand the pressure-test demanded from modern ordnance, and whether it will survive the three hundred rounds to which it is to be subjected under Government (U.S.A.) auspices.

BOILER EXPLOSIONS.

Deaths and injuries from the explosion of boilers have happily been greatly reduced of late years, owing to wise legislation; but occasionally a disaster occurs with fatal and terribly destructive results. Such accidents would be rendered impossible, and will probably become so in the near future, by the substitution of the common cylindrical form of boiler of the water-tube type, such as is now in use on modern warships; for when the old-fashioned boiler explodes it behaves like a huge bomb, portions of its iron walls being blown in every direction. But in the case of a water-tube boiler, should the pressure become too great, the weakest tube among the number of pipes of which the apparatus is composed bursts, and the mischief can be quickly remedied by screwing in a new tube. A correspondent of the *Times*, in drawing attention to the superiority of the water-tube boiler for factory use, in view of the terrible explosion which recently occurred at

Barking, Essex, says that the new form of boiler is yet in its infancy. Many manufacturers are quite unaware of its features, and the press will be doing a great service to humanity by making it better known.

MILITARY SURGERY.

The great benefits arising from the employment of the Röntgen ray apparatus on the field of battle is again borne witness to by Major J. Battersby, who recently lectured on the subject before the Röntgen Society. The lecturer had charge of this latest contribution by science to the surgeon's instrument-case during the trouble in the Soudan, and was therefore well qualified to speak as to its merits. After the battle of Omdurman, he tells us, there were one hundred and twenty-one British wounded in hospital, and among these there were twenty-one cases in which the bullet that had caused the wound could not be traced by any of the ordinary methods at the disposal of the surgeon. In every case but one the position of the bullet was infallibly detected by the Röntgen rays, and this without the pain of probing or other instrumental interference. The amount of suffering thus saved to the patient was immense; and no doubt remains of the splendid assistance afforded by the X-rays in the military hospital, where bullet wounds and fractured bones are common. The only difficulty which presents itself is in the generation of the necessary electric current. Primary batteries are most inconvenient, and in the Soudan a small dynamo driven by a tandem bicycle action was tried with success; but the apparatus was difficult of transport. The lecturer believes that a Wimshurst machine will ultimately be found to be the best generator to employ, its use tending to considerably simplify the arrangements.

PEAT-SEWAGE MANURE.

A correspondent of the *Scotsman* is loud in his praises of a system of using fresh sewage sludge as a manure, which has been tried for some years at Killin, Perthshire, and at Congleton, with the most gratifying results. The fresh sewage is mixed with peat which has been chopped fine and dried, by which treatment it is not only deodorised, but it retains all the ammonia and phosphates which are of such precious value to the soil. It is far better than any artificial manure, probably as good as guano, at one-third the cost; and its application to the land adds bulk, porosity, and consequently promotes aeration of the soil. At Congleton, it is said, one ton of this form of manure has proved equal to six tons of farm-yard refuse; and when two tons per acre have been put on the land the crops have been doubled in quantity. Peat is cheap—it can be procured in unlimited quantities both in Scotland and Ireland—and the manure formed

by its aid is of a dry nature. It is pointed out that this dryness is a valuable property of manure in a wet climate, the irrigation system being only suitable for countries where there is little rainfall.

A RAILWAY CYCLE.

A new departure in the matter of railway appliances is found in the 'Hartly and Teeter Inspection Car,' which is made by the Railway Cycle Manufacturing Company of Indiana. This car is a cycle-built vehicle which has four flanged wheels to adapt it to an ordinary railway, and it has for some time been in satisfactory use both in America and on the Continent. It can be easily lifted on and off the rails by one person, and supersedes the use of a locomotive for inspection purposes, and saves the cost of one, which amounts to about five pounds a day. The cost of the new vehicle does not exceed the average price of the ordinary road-cycle; it can be driven at a speed of from fifteen to twenty miles an hour, and will easily run up a gradient of 1 in 20. The agent for this country is Mr J. Milliken, 2 Bank Chambers, Belfast.

CATCHING COLD.

A recent writer in the *Spectator* has drawn attention to the fact that there are places in the world where it is impossible to catch a cold, simply because there are no colds to catch! Nansen and his men during the three years they spent in the Arctic regions never caught a cold, although often enough wet and fatigued, and at times saturated with perspiration which caused their clothes to freeze into a mass of ice. Nansen's own statement is: 'There is, of course, no doubt that cold is an infectious disease. We had none during our journey, and we all got it (very badly, too) at the very moment we reached Norway.' Neither did the members of the Jackson-Harnsworth Expedition catch cold; nor Sir Martin Conway while exploring Spitzbergen, though frequently wet through; nor while among the Himalayas. As soon, however, as Conway and his men came down from the mountains to a European settlement they all took colds. A St Kilda cold comes with the steamers from the mainland apparently; at least, whenever a ship arrives all the inhabitants have a seizure. This is said to apply to boats from Harris particularly. From the way that cats and horses are affected, the writer further concludes that 'cold is a specific infectious disease, and that without the possibility of infection it is impossible to catch it. That is to say, that it is due to a micro-organism, and that without the presence of this micro-organism the disease cannot be contracted, be the exposure what it may.' That is one side of the question, and these facts may prevent some people from coddling too much. This was fully brought out in the article on 'Open-air Treatment of Consumption' (*Journal*, January 28, 1899).

Many a one, however, feels that he has caught cold on being exposed to a draught which has played on one part of the body, although the same individual may be able to wander with impunity in a night-dress about the house at nightfall and expose the whole body to the atmosphere. Benjamin Franklin was aware of this, and sometimes took an air-bath, sitting in his chamber perfectly nude, and in this way would court sleep which would not otherwise come.

'THE NEW TELEGRAPHY.'

In the article on this subject in our December number, the writer pointed out that even if the application of so-called 'wireless telegraphy' be limited to communication between the shore and the lightships, and between ship and ship, something of practical value will have been attained. We have not had long to wait for an attempted realisation of this idea, it having been announced that Signor Marconi is about to experiment with his apparatus between the South Foreland Light-house and the Goodwin Lightship, a distance of several miles. The dangers of 'the Goodwins' are well known, and although they are amply provided with the means of raising an alarm and conveying a general idea that something is wrong, it will be a great advantage to be able to state exactly what is wrong and what assistance is needed. The distance is not great for the experiment, which is to be conducted under Signor Marconi's personal superintendence; and, if a sufficient 'base area' can be constructed on the lightship, there seems no reason to doubt an equal amount of success with that obtained elsewhere under somewhat similar conditions. But it is always useful to bear in mind that prearranged experiment is one thing and practical everyday working is another; and a good deal of patience will have to be exercised before 'spacial' telegraphy has become a thing of practical commercial value. No doubt, as Mr Preece puts it, there is one universal conductor, the all-pervading ether; but that is so general that the difficulty is to attract the particular message to the particular instrument for which it is intended. Scientists are nothing if not sanguine, and Mr Preece does not despair of the day when we shall hear on this earth of ours a thunderstorm in the sun! Whether we shall be the happier for such a 'dispensation' is doubtful, just as it is doubtful whether we should be the wiser for the ability to communicate by telephone with the planet Mars.

A ONE-RAIL RAILWAY.

Single lines of railway are common enough, but a line with a single rail will be something of a novelty, in this country at least. Such a line is destined before long to be in operation between Liverpool and Manchester, the distance of thirty miles being covered, so it is anticipated,

in 'twenty minutes at the outside,' or at the rate of ninety miles an hour! The 'mono-rail system,' as it is called, consists of a single rail elevated about four feet from the ground, and supported on 'A'-shaped steel trestles fixed about three feet three inches apart. At each side there are fixed laterally two rails, one about thirteen inches above the other, designed to increase the stability of the system and to engage the thirty-two horizontal guide-wheels with which the car is fitted. The car will have wheels along the centre, and will 'ride' on the single rail, so to speak, depending on either side, and presenting an appearance not unlike that of the saddle-packs borne by the camel, the backbone of the animal being the rail, as it were. Electricity will be the motive-power, and the cars, each of which contains four electric motors, will pick up current from an electrical conductor alongside. The inventor, Mr F. B. Behr, built a 'mono' line at

the Brussels Exhibition in 1897, and it is said that a car capable of holding a hundred persons was propelled over it by electric traction at a speed of ninety miles an hour, which could have easily been increased had more current been available. Mr Behr is of opinion that, when once he has built the Liverpool and Manchester line, the railway companies will come to see the advantages of the system for express passenger traffic; and he proposes that single-rail lines should be built alongside the great trunk lines, and that these should be kept exclusively for express trains at a speed of one hundred to one hundred and fifty miles an hour, the existing lines being used for slow trains and goods service. If this comes about we shall have a 'Flying Scotsman' in fact as well as in name; and the poor things that dawdle along at the rate of sixty miles an hour will be as the 'crawlers' of London to the nimble hansom!

MY FRIEND JACK.

By GEORGE MANVILLE FENN.



AH! Gahn, yer parley-voing idjit! Don't talk to me.'

'Hah!' said Jack, giving his head a side-wag in the direction from whence the above words had come; 'we are still within the

wide circle of civilisation, my son.'

'Hang such civilisation!' I growled. 'That's that howling cad in the blue-and-yellow blazer, who came to the hotel the night before last. Why, in the name of thunder! couldn't he stop in Whitechapel and spend his money at music halls, instead of coming here?'

'Can't say, my son,' replied Jack, frowning over his work, as he devoted his six-feet of brawny strength to the task of carefully filling his meerschaum pipe. Then, striking a match, he leant forward, enclosing pipe-bowl and light between his great hands, as he puffed away and surrounded himself with smoke.

'Jack,' I said, in allusion to his raised hands, 'the foreign element will think you are saying your prayers.'

'Yes,' he growled, 'worshipping my idol. Hah! it draws better now. Bit of a row on in the hotel,' he continued as excited voices reached our seat, down by the rushing waters of the exit of the lake. 'Yes; seems rum for a fellow like that to take it into his head to come to Switzerland.'

'And degrade us as a nation,' I said indignantly. 'I felt as if I could have kicked the brute yesterday.'

'Did you?' said Jack, in his big, slow, bull-like—John-Bull-like—way. 'That's rum. Now,

do you know, my big-toe of the right foot itched horribly, and that either means chilblains or kicking.'

'Well,' I said, with a laugh, 'it has been ninety in the shade to-day, so it could not have been chilblains.'

'No,' he said, exhaling a thick cloud of smoke, and twitching his ear as the disturbance went on; 'kicking.'

'There, never mind 'Arry,' I replied impatiently. 'Go on with what you were telling me about *La Belle Americaine*. You said you met her at Geneva last year, were desperately taken with her, and at last proposed.'

'I didn't say at last,' grumbled Jack slowly; 'couldn't have been, because she was only at the hotel one day.'

'That's the regular length of an American tourist's stay anywhere,' I said. 'Well, go on. You told me you proposed to her.'

'Yea.'

'Well, what did she say?'

'Nothing; only smiled. A heavenly smile, old man. Ah! I was regularly gone there.'

'Hercules and Omphale!'

'Yes, if you like, old chaffwax. I've fallen in love a good many times, but never like then. If she had only kept silence it would have been all over with me, old man.'

'Then she did say something?'

'Yes; when I tried to take her hand. Then I was disillusioned. It was like the touch of a discharging-rod upon a Leyden jar. Yes, I shall never forget that night. The moon was silvering the lovely lake, and—Hullo! off?'

'I am if you are going to Wegg. You know I can't stand poetry.'

'Sit still,' he cried, seizing me in his powerful grip and dragging me back. 'I've done.'

'Not till you have told me what the lady said to disillusionise you. What was it—married already?'

'No.'

'That she was engaged?'

'No.'

'A widow?'

'No.'

'Then what did she say?'

"Paws off, Pompey!" Hah! The angel fled at those words, old man, and there was only a commonplace Yankee gal sitting there.—Seems getting warm in yonder. Wonder what's the row?'

'Bah! never mind that,' I cried as the voice of my fellow-countryman reached our ears, his speech containing more adjective than noun. 'I say,' I continued—alluding to a member of a North British family who had been staying at the hotel ever since we came, a whole week, during which I could not get Jack to stir from the lake—'what do you think of Miss Macpherson—the fair Flora?'

'Won't do,' said Jack slowly. 'Too old: a cold, stony sort of woman. I like maidenhood in the bud—fresh and flowery. Not fossil Flora.'

'Then the lady from the Land of the Leek?'

'Tempt me not by parading the beauties of the hotel, old man. "Paws off, Pompey!" she said. Hah! I shall never marry now.'

'Bosh! The Welsh maiden is attractive, and I heard it whispered that she has coin.'

'Toss for either, yourself, old man. I am wedded to my pipe. Look at the colouring coming—the creamy brunette of its complexion.'

'Look at the warm brown on Miss Price's,' I said. 'Why, she is a lustrous pearl,' I cried warmly.

'A pearl beyond price, eh?' he said slowly. 'No, she may suit you; I call her odd-looking—bizarre.'

'A fancy fair, Jack?'

'I said *bizarre*, not *bazaar*, my son.'

'So-ho, old boy; don't be cross,' I said; and he sat up and scowled at me.

'Don't,' he growled. 'We are old friends and schoolfellows, and we have done Switzerland together for a month without a quarrel; but if you try to be funny, old man, we must part at once, to save me from committing homicide. If you only knew what an intense desire I felt just now to chuck you into the lake, you— Why, hallo! they're chucking 'Arry.'

We both started up together, for the disturbance at the entrance of the hotel had culminated. There was a crowd gathering; a couple of the Swiss police were beneath the portico, and on the highest step stood the hero of the blazer,

gesticulating in a way that eclipsed the movements of the excited officials of the hotel; while his voice, florid with East-end argot, was heard above all.

'A true-born Briton in trouble,' said Jack, in his heavy, deliberate fashion. "'My soul's in arms, and eager for the fray.'" Come on, my son. One moment,' he continued, deliberately taking out a morocco case, in which he carefully placed his pipe. 'Lie there, in thy satin bed, my fair one. It would be madness to expose thee to the tender mercies of a mob. Now then, come on.'

'Nonsense. Stop here. The blackguard has been misbehaving himself, and they are turning him out. Good job, too.'

'Well, my son, let us see how they turn out blackguards in the Land of Tell. Come on.'

The next minute we were at the edge of the crowd, which made way for my stalwart companion, and we reached the hotel steps in time to hear:

'Why, you set o' blooming cuckoo-clock makers, if yer lay a 'and on me I'll have the British hambassador about your ears. Touch me if you dare!'

'Mais, messieurs,' cried the hotel manager, with his shoulders to his ears and his hands extended palms upwards, as he addressed the British visitors staying in the place in a mixture of French, German, and English; 'de mann ist von schwindlair—a sheat.'

'Call me a swindler, yer wretched little penny icer, and I'll make it 'ot for yer!'

'What's the row?' said Jack gruffly; and as he towered above the little crowd he seemed naturally to occupy the position of a judge among them; and in quite a chorus all turned to him at once, but with the most unsatisfactory results, the blending of English, French, German-German, and Swiss-German forming a polyglot combination that no man could understand.

Then, in a momentary pause, the hotel manager dashed at Jack.

'A tousan' pardons, m'sieu,' he cried, while 'Arry shook himself free from those who had seized him, and stood in a defiant attitude, picking his teeth with one of the hotel splints. 'You will see, milor' Anglais, that it is pénible.'

'I dare say it is,' growled Jack; 'but what's the matter?'

'Ah, sare! C'est une affaire terrible, m'sien. Cet homme—dis mann—come to my hotel; he eat himself and drink himself grandly, sare—table d'hôte, vins de pays, ze champagne, ze Angleesh port-an-sherry vine, ze sodaire brandee—all ze day long, and cigarre de cinquante, soixante, many time.'

'Arry uttered a sneering laugh, and looked round at his audience, as if saying, 'Do you hear the contemptible foreigner?'

'Den, saire, ze head-waiter—ze chef des

garçons—come to me at ze bureau. He speak me, "I like not ze appearance of ze visiteur in ze habit bleu et jaune"—ze blue-an'-yellow, m'sieu.'

'Oh yes, I understand,' growled Jack.

'Cut it short, old garson,' cried 'Arry.

'Yais, saire,' cried the hotel manager indignantly; 'I appeal to milor' Anglais, ici, and I go to cut your stay here vary short, and your libairtay and your hair in ze prisonne, saire.'

'Look here,' growled Jack, 'you mustn't threaten English visitors because your head-waiter does not like them and their coats.'

'No, saire—milor—it ees not zat; but my waiter of head present ze leetle accompte because he make himself to go, and he tell him to aller to ze diable. My waiter head—ze chef garçon—he come to me instead, and I say, "Arrest his baggage."

'What! has he got a woman with him?' cried Jack.

'Pardon, m'sieu—his what you call luggage; but ze waiter head say he have one petit satchel, behold all; and, my faith! at the moment come ze advice from ze pollice—take yourself care of one who go and stop at hotel and nevaire pay. He is Angleesh.'

'Pay? No!' shouted the hero of the trouble. 'I ain't going to pay their blooming charges. Hotel's a regular swindle, and I'm jolly well off.'

'You stop where you are,' growled Jack fiercely as 'Arry made a step or two forward; police, hotel manager, and all standing supine and as if the matter were now in my companion's hands for settlement.

'Stop?' cried 'Arry. 'Not me! Don't ketch me putting up with none of their swindling games.'

'Stay where you are, sir!' thundered Jack, with a frown which cowed 'Arry for the moment; and the hotel manager cried 'Aha!' and rubbed his hands, while a low murmur of satisfaction ran round the crowd gathered beneath the light of the electric lamps in the linden-shaded portico.

'So he would not pay?' said Jack, turning to the hotel manager.

'No, saire; and with the most profound regret I send for ze police.'

He waved his hand toward the two officials as he spoke, and they took a couple of steps forward with military precision.

'Humph! I see.'

'Vis ze most profound regret, milor,' continued the hotel manager, 'for we hafe ze most grand respect for ze English nationne; but ze man is hotel robbaire, scoundrailes, sheat.'

'D'yer want me to knock yer ugly 'ead off?' cried 'Arry viciously.

'No, saire; it is enuff you knog ze nose off my waiter head; you knog me in ze middle; you tear ze habit noir of two of ze garçon.'

'Yes; and I'll do it again. I'll show some of you what it is to insult an English gentleman.'

'Aha! If you are gentilhomme anglais, saire, you pay ze bill.'

'Didn't I tell you I'd run short of cash, and was waiting for a remittance?'

'No, saire; no, saire.'

'Why, I'—

'Hold your tongue!' growled Jack.

'If you are gentlemans anglais, saire, and messieurs around say it is that, I make ze profound apology. You give me your carte, saire; that will suffice.'

'Oh, I'll soon give you a blooming bit o' paste-board,' cried 'Arry, with a sniggering laugh; and as he foraged his pockets the manager went on, addressing the visitors gathered around:

'Ze m'sieus anglais come and stay at ze hotel, and zey pay ze accompte with ze anglais billet de bank, or ze sovereign anglais, and we are glad. Zey are good. Anozer time a monsieur say he spend all ze monnais. "You will take my sheck?" I say, "Avec ze plus grand plaisir, m'sieu," for it is ze sheck of ze grand nation anglaise, and I know it ees all right as ninenpence or ze trivette. Anozer time a milor' anglaise say, "I am clear out at ze green table; you will lend me ze coin to take myself home?" I say, "Oui, oui, m'sieu," and I lend him—prêter—ze louis, and des écus of silvaire. Et pourquoi, messieurs? It ees because he ees Anglais, an Angleeshman of ze great nation who pay toujours his debts like ze tromp. I ayve lend monnais dwenty, dirty time to ze visiteur, and take ze sheck. Do I lose myself? Nevaire, messieurs. I respect ze grand nation anglaise. But ici, monsieur, you tell me he is gentilhomme, and he give me his carte.'

'There you are!' cried 'Arry. 'My cart, old hoss.'

The manager took the card and read aloud, 'Mr Henry Schmid, Upper Street, Kentish Town.'

'Smith, you duffer; 'Ennery Smith. Here, some of yer, tell him it's all right. I want to get out of this.'

But no one spoke, and the manager looked round with the card held between his fingers, and shrugged his shoulders.

'I'll send him his bill when I get home, of course. Been going it a bit. I don't want to cheat him, though he has charged twice as much as I could get the grub for in the Strand. Now then, don't all speak at once.'

'Come on, Jack,' I whispered. 'Let them hand the brute over to their police.'

'No,' growled Jack. 'Hold your tongue, and let me alone.'

'Arry looked round at his compatriots, and to a man they did as I did—averted their gaze.

'And yer call yerselves Englishmen!' he cried.

'Yes, of course,' said Jack quietly; 'it's all right, Mr Smith. Here, Monsieur Alhof, let me have Mr Smith's bill. He's strange to the country, and does not speak the language.'

'Not me,' cried 'Arry; 'and blest if I ever try.—I say: are you going to pay?'

'Yes; hold your tongue!'

'If m'sieu guarantee ze payment'—cried the manager apologetically.

'Yes, I'll pay,' said Jack. 'He will remit me the cash. Come along to the bureau, Mr Smith.'

'Well, you are something like a trump,' cried 'Arry. 'Give us yer cart, as they call it; I'll stand drinks. Hi, garson!'

'Will you hold your tongue!' growled Jack. 'This way.'

We then entered the bureau, and Jack put a crisp ten-pound note on the desk, receiving a few francs change, tendered in the manager's most deferential manner.

'I say, yer will 'ave a drink?' cried 'Arry.

'Will you keep your confounded tongue within your teeth!' said Jack fiercely.

'Oh, if you're going to ride the 'igh 'orse—Look here, guv'nor,' he cried, turning to me, 'you'll have a drop?'

'Why, you insufferable swind'—

'Shut up!' growled Jack. 'Now, you, sir, you were off to the station, weren't you?'

'Yes,' said the man surlily.

'Where for?'

'Bairn, as they call it, if you must know.'

'Then you are not going to Berne. I'm coming to the station with you. Have you a return ticket?'

'No! Look here, guv'nor, you've no right to cross-examine me.'

'Eh? That's the hall-mark of your class, man,' cried Jack sharply. 'I thought you were a swindler; now I know it. Then you have been cross-examined before now, and I'll be bound to say have been in the dock.'

'Look here'—

'Hold your tongue!' cried Jack in a tone which suggested that if the fellow did not he would knock him down. 'I shall pay your fare to London.'

'Who wants to go to London?'

'You do,' cried Jack; 'and I shall give such hints at the station as will make them telegraph on and see that you don't leave the train. In other words, I shall tell them to see you on board. They do that sort of thing well on the Continent, my lad; and if you attempt to skip out anywhere they'll arrest you.'

'Oh, I say!'

'Come along.—Here, send for a carriage.'

A Swiss cab was fetched, we were driven to the station, and Jack bought the fellow's ticket.

'Yer might ha' made it fust-class,' he grumbled. 'But look here, guv'nor, yer don't mean this about having me seen on board? I ain't a criminal.'

'You are, and of a bad type, sir. I do mean it, as you'll see.'

He did mean it, and after giving the man the change he had received from the ten-pound note,

in response to an appeal about being 'ard up,' we saw him into a compartment. Then the station-inspector was spoken to, and the agent of the S.E.R. taken into consultation; the train steamed out of the place, and the telegraph-men set to work.

'Now,' said Jack, 'I think I deserve a smoke,' and he tenderly took out the brunette.

'Smoke?' I said. 'Why, Jack, you must be mad. How you could be such a fool as to waste hard cash on saving that miserable, swindling hound'—

'My son,' he said as he struck a light, 'I'd have given double sooner than have our grand old English credit dragged in the mud.'

'By a howling cad,' I said, as I looked with fresh respect upon the big typical Briton I had made my friend.

His pipe was by this time well alight, and his face all aglow, as he turned and saw me watching him.

'Scribe, my son,' he said, with a laugh, 'isn't it time we had that drink? Tell you what—we'll make it fizz.'

'We will,' I said; 'but it's my turn now.'

Two minutes later: *Pop! Ciss!*

'Here's Old England, Scribe.'

'Aforesaid.'

SNOWDROPS.

Nor from green meadows prodigal of flowers.

Where merry brooks run singing all the day;

Not through the opal gleams of April showers,

Nor when the leafy woods are white with may;

But under branches bare and tempest-tost

You smile at me, dear nurslings of the frost!

Your delicate bells, with clappers of pure gold,

Make softest music on the wintry air;

In keen east winds your silken leaves unfold—

Oh! not because they are so passing fair—

Nay, but to show what gracious things may bloom

In spite of bitter cold and sunless gloom.

And, stooping 'mid the fierce wind's stress and strife

To touch your stainless blossoms as they blow,

I think—though Death, alas! must shadow Life—

Yet even in the clouded paths of woe

The snow-pure flower of heavenly peace may rise,

Like you, beneath the gray inclement skies.

E. MATHESON.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

ONLY A DOG: AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

By HERBERT PRESKIN.

PART I.



YOU see, boys, though Jock is only a little dog, still he is the undoubted cause of my ever having got hold of this yarn, if, indeed, he may not fairly lay claim to being its hero. So you will just have to put up quietly with a few words about him, without which I don't really see how you can ever get the proper hang of the story.

Jock is a stumpy-legged, rough, gray Scotch terrier; his leading characteristics are faithfulness, crabbedness, and cheek (spelt with a big capital C). He has taken complete charge of me for some time past during my rather erratic wanderings, and even old Chieftain, my staunch old gray nag, has long since yielded submission to him.

Under no circumstances will he admit of any advances of a friendly nature from any one but myself and perhaps my wife, whom, considering she reared him by hand, he gravely tolerates, provided she doesn't want to wash him, a proceeding which he indignantly resents. All blandishments, such as calling him a nice wee doggie, with offers of caressing pats, he nips in the bud with such unmistakable flashes of white grinders and snarls as to convince the most sceptical that he is not built that way—in fact, is not a dog of that sort.

I was gradually making my way home by easy stages from nowhere in particular, when I came to the branch roads, and hadn't the least idea of taking the right-hand one through Simpson's Flat. No! I rather fancied the other by the lower crossing of Oakey Creek. There's a big water-hole at the rocks just below the crossing, where, two seasons ago, I caught a thirty-pound cod. I always carry a hook and line in my swag, and if I could get two or three fat grubs, or a frog, for bait, I could spare an hour or so to have a try for another. But Jock settled the matter off-hand by flicking away down the Simpson's Flat

track at a smart trot, and old Chieftain, as usual, followed his lead.

Well, it didn't matter much, for, though I had been about these regions two or three times, I had never gone to the Flat, so I might as well have a look at it. But if I had no idea of going through Simpson's, I had much less of stopping there for the night. The sun was still two hours high, and I meant to go on to the accommodation shanty at the Oakey Creek upper crossing. Mr Jock had other views, and just as we came in sight of the camp on the Flat he began to exhibit most ridiculously overdone symptoms of fatigue, lying down and panting, holding up first one paw and then the other, licking them with a desolated, broken-hearted expression of face to show me how sore they were, then hobbling along on three legs, &c., being all part of a pantomime with which I was quite familiar whenever my gentleman thought he had come across a snug camp for the night.

Something in the look of the place, however, attracted me; it seemed so easy and prosperous. I might just as well stop there after all; it wouldn't make much odds; though I knew well that, as far as my poor suffering dog was concerned, once he saw the saddle off old Chieftain's back all signs of footsoreness, weariness, &c. would disappear as if by magic, and he would be actively promoting a good, free, go-as-you-please, all-round dog ruction—a pig hunt down the creek, or some other light and refreshing kind of entertainment.

Simpson's is as pretty, cheerful-looking a place as ever you saw—quite a model place. The Flat itself, just a little tributary of the Oakey's, is not more than three miles long from its junction to where it branches off in little gullies up into the range, which here comes down in rounded, sheltering ridges, shutting in the Flat on both sides and sending off gentle swelling spurs here and there to

the creek. All this was covered with the most brilliant vegetation. Such grass on the Flat, so green and lush and juicy! Along the creek, with its rippling stream (never dry, they say), the old paddocks on the banks and creek workings, the mounds of headings and tailings, were all covered with rich greenery—pumpkins, melons, vines, and wild cucumbers running riot over them, and here and there flashing up their rich yellow blossoms. Where the creek makes pools in the old workings there were flocks of geese and ducks paddling and quacking away in the water.

Some sleek old milkers standing in the water were lazily picking off here and there a juicy morsel from the banks. Well, it's getting on for milking-time, but they haven't heard the children yet coming home across the ridge from school, who will drive them on their way, and with merry shouts and laughter give them a race home. Even the tinkling of horse-bells down the Flat helps to make as pretty and peaceful a scene as ever I met with in my many wanderings. From where I stopped old Chieftain to have a quiet look at the scene, you can see the whole of what they call the lower camp. Across the creek some little way ahead were a few buildings pretty close together—one the public-house with some out-buildings, the other the store no doubt. Then along the creek were just ten others—four on the store side of the creek and six on this. Then in between were plots of cultivation ground with such rich crops of big green maize rustling its shining leaves and flaunting its silver tassel banners, of green lucerne and potatoes, of pumpkins and melons.

'There's no mistake about it,' I said to myself as I rode up the creek-bank; 'Simpson's knows how to take care of itself.'

But what about population? Once or twice I had caught the flutter of a petticoat round the homesteads, but never a sight of a man or even of a good-sized boy.

I crossed the creek, splashing through the shallow stream, and drew up in front of 'The Simpson's Flat Hotel,' a tiny little bush public-house, but, like all the rest of the Flat, a picture of tidiness and comfort, with such a garden at the back, all glowing with roses and bright homely flowers and fruit. I was received by the landlady, a smart, bright-faced woman. 'Could I stop there for the night?' 'Certainly. Would I come in? There was a neat little parlour, with a couple of tidy bedrooms leading off from it—which would I like? Some supper or dinner? Well, in an hour's time she would have something ready for me.' Then at last in came her boy Tommy, the first male so far on the Flat. 'Tommy had been kept from school; he had hurt his foot. He would give Chieftain a feed of corn, and then put him into the old cultivation paddock—any amount of feed there. Her husband and elder sons were away. Oh

no, not far; only up the Flat fossicking in the gullies.'

True to his old tricks, no sooner was Chieftain unsaddled than Jock discarded all signs of weariness, and gave chase in great form to a couple of young pigs, during which he unfortunately ran against the hotel dog and a black-and-white friend from the store who had just dropped across to hear the news. They made it very lively for poor Jock, and rolled him over in the dust, from which he escaped very dirty, panting, and highly indignant.

After a bit I strolled over to the little store. Mrs Storekeeper, another hearty, jolly little woman, was there to serve me with some tobacco and matches, and ready for a little chat. 'Yes; she had been there nearly all her life.' 'Dull?' 'No; she didn't find the Flat dull.' 'Her children?' 'Oh, the younger ones hadn't come from school yet. The children from the Flat go to the half-time school at the upper crossing, about three miles distant. They should be showing up by this time. Her eldest daughter was over at the head station.' 'Whose station?' 'Why, Mr Drummond's, of course. Mr Storekeeper and her son were just up the Flat fossicking in the gullies.'

Then I found out from her that all the male population of Simpson's were just up the Flat fossicking in the gullies. 'There are sixteen homesteads at Simpson's altogether, besides the hotel and store—ten on the lower and six on the upper camp; all married people with families, except at this camp nearest here—that belongs to Jim Morris. His wife lives with and attends on Mrs Barton, Mr Drummond's favourite niece, a young widow; but Jim is a tenant all the same.'

So I learnt from Mrs Storekeeper that all the land here for miles round was Mr Drummond's freehold property, and all the settlers on the Flat his tenants. He would issue no private mining rights except on terms that involved taking up and cultivating a certain portion of land, building substantial cottages, and a lot of other conditions, on top of which was a nominally enormous fee for the mining right, a fee which he remitted to his settlers. By this means he had kept away a crowd from ever rushing the ground. The settlers must be married men; many of them were shearers, and in the season worked at Mr Drummond's shed and at a neighbouring squatter's. As the young folk grew up and married, other homesteads would go up; there was room for a good few yet at Simpson's. There is generally, even in such a small community as Simpson's, some element of discontent, some discord in the general harmony. I could detect none here. Mr Drummond appeared to be respected—I may say loved—by all hands, and his wise regulations cheerfully observed. It seemed a regular happy valley. The Jim Morris mentioned before was the only man without a

family here; but though he was quite a privileged person with Mr Drummound, he had built and cultivated a garden like the others.

'Talking of Jim,' said Mrs Storekeeper, 'I can see him coming down the Flat now.'

I looked up, and saw some one walking along the creek-bank.

'You may notice,' she added, 'that he is a bit lame. He had one foot badly injured some years ago, and I believe there is a terrible story connected with the accident. He will be here directly, and can tell you more about the Flat than anybody.'

So I sat down under the little veranda, filled my pipe, and pulling out my pocket-book, jotted down a few notes about the day's journey, &c., to which you are indebted for the flourishing account I have just given you of Simpson's Flat.

While thus engaged I heard the sound of voices, and a man passed through the store. He looked at me as if to speak, but seeing I was engaged writing, went to the end of the veranda and sat down. I glanced at him, and saw a smart, active man, say a trifle the wrong side of forty, with a hearty bronzed face, lit up by a pair of good, honest blue eyes.

'So you're Jim Morris, eh?' I said to myself. 'Well, just hold hard till I finish this note, and I'll tackle you, my lad.'

But that note was never finished, for something happened. Now, what happened may seem a very trifling thing to you, but as for me, if an earthquake had swallowed up the half of Simpson's I might have been more frightened but not more astonished. At the first sound of a man's step coming through the store Jock jumped upon the bench beside me with symptoms of the acutest hostility, as usual; but no sooner had Jim passed along the veranda and Jock had caught his wind than he jumped down, stood sniffing for a minute with a kind of puzzled look, then crept cautiously up to the stranger, and after smelling round his feet and legs, drew back, had another good, steady look at him, began to wag his tail, came closer, put his paws up on the man's knees, and licked his hand. Down dropped note-book and pencil.

'Well, I am blessed if'—

I hadn't time to finish the sentence before Jock was upon the chap's lap trying to lick his face—I couldn't stand that.

'Look here, mate,' I cried out; 'I don't know whether you put any particular value on a dog's good opinion, but if you do you ought to feel just the proudest man this day in Australia. Never since Jock's eyes were opened has he ever let a stranger lay a hand on him; and as to licking his face, why, the idea— Well, I'm too demoralised to talk about it.'

Jim's hand was resting gently on Jock's head.

'Is that so, little doggie?' he said. 'Well,

you've got a wise wee face of your own. Is his name really Jock?'

'It is,' I replied, 'and I believe this dashed place is enchanted or that dog is bewitched.'

Jim lifted Jock down, stood up, and came towards me.

'You asked me, boss, just now, if I valued a dog's good opinion. Well, if I didn't, and more particularly when that dog's name is Jock, I should be the most ungrateful man alive in the colony. For if it had not been for the good opinion a dog, and a dog called Jock, too, had of me, I shouldn't be alive here to-day, but have been foully, treacherously murdered years ago. Ay, murdered; not put out of my agony swiftly in one act, like, but left to a slow, awful, lingering death that I shudder even now to think of, and don't care to dream about at nights.'

For the life of me I couldn't help glancing at his left foot, which I could see had been badly injured and was crushed out of shape.

'Had that anything to do with the accident to'— I stopped.

'To my foot, you mean,' he said, with a laugh. 'Who told you about that?'

I just nodded towards the store.

'Oh, I see—Mrs Storekeeper, eh? Well, I hope she hasn't been giving me a bad name.'

'Jim Morris—that's just all the name she gave you.'

He laughed. 'Well, yes, it had all to do with my lame foot. Poor old Jock saved my life, but he wasn't in time to prevent that.'

'Now look here, Jim Morris, I'm not in the least bit inquisitive—in fact, rather— Well, see here, the long and short of it is I want most particularly to hear all about that business; and seeing that my little Jock has brought us together in such a queer fashion, if there's nothing private or likely to hurt your feelings, I really think you might spin me the yarn.'

'And so I will and welcome, boss; but it's close on tea-time now.'

'See here, the landlady promised to get me something for tea or dinner; it should be ready soon now. Come and have a snack with me, and then after tea, with a pipe and a glass of grog, we can deal with the story. I can't vouch for the grub, you know, but such as it is'—

'But I can vouch for it, and beforehand, too,' said Jim, 'and guarantee Mrs Jones won't starve you. All right, I'm agreeable. I'll just take a run over to my camp for a bit of a clean-up, and be down at the hotel in a minute or two.'

I watched the dog carefully as my new acquaintance turned away. Jock never offered to follow him, but jogged along with me back to the hotel the same as usual; but when, a short time after, Jim came in, looking after his clean-up just what he was—a most respectable and superior man—Jock greeted him in the most lavish manner. Jim was

right, too, about the tucker, for a better dinner—a *dinner*, mind you, not a feed—I never sat down to in the bush. Dinner over, our pipes loaded, and Jock fixed up on a chair between us, Jim cleared for action and started his story somewhat in the following fashion:

‘Well, to begin with, boss, I was reared on the Mudgee side, where father had a bit of a farm near to Mr Oxley’s head station. Every one knows Mr Oxley, the great squatter that was—he’s dead now. He married Mr Drummond’s (our boss here) sister; and my wife—I’ve been married this fourteen year: she was reared on the Oxley estate—is now living with and looking after Mrs Barton, their daughter and a young widow. Poor soul! That’s why, when I come down here to do a bit of fossicking—and very good fossicking it is, too—they call me the grass widower. I was about sixteen when the goldfields broke out in Australia up our way at Summerhill Creek; then came the “Meroo,” the “Ophir,” the “Turon,” &c.—you know the old story—and I took to the diggings from the start. Like many other youngsters, I had great luck at first, which made a confirmed digger of me. Well, I went first to one rush and then to another for the next year or two, never very far from home, giving them a look in now and then, till father met with a bad accident, and I had to come home to look after the old place. It was a good twelve months before I was able to get back to the pick and shovel.

‘It wasn’t time wasted, for it was then I got hold of my old dog Jock, and had to train him. Young Mr Oxley had been back from the old country about twelve months when I got home; he’d been away at college there, and then he had travelled about a lot, for he was a great sportsman. He brought a lot of dogs out with him. One of them was a great, rough, wiry dog, called a wolfhound, pretty smart, and very strong and savage, but not quite fast enough for kangaroo in the open. Father had a fine cattle or sheep slut of some English breed—a long-haired, shaggy kind, much bigger than a collie and wonderfully clever. Old Jess could do almost anything short of talking. These two were Jock’s father and mother. The knowing ones said the cross would

be mongrels, not fit for anything, but the young boss he had more sense.

“‘I’ve seen cross-bred dogs,” he said, “smarter in all ways than many pure-bred ones.”

‘So he kept two dog pups; he called them Roy and Jock. Father was to have one; so when I got home we drew lots, and Jock fell to me; and a lucky draw it was, too, for me. They were about eight months old, and young Mr Oxley had started already to train them. He had brought home some new way of training to the sound of a loud metal whistle, one of which he gave me. It ought to have been a horn by rights, he said. Some foreign huntsman, in Germany, I think, had taught him. Everything was done to certain calls on the whistle, and we taught those pups all kinds of tricks, for they trained wonderfully easy. By the time I left home again there wasn’t two finer dogs to be found anywhere; they were even then quite as big as the wolfhound, but stronger; savage too, but wiser-like, taking after the old slut. I spent another few months after leaving home round the “Louisa” and the “Turon,” and then made tracks for the Victorian side. I fetched up in the Ovens district; this was, I think, in the beginning of 1857, when I was about twenty-two years old. I had rattling good luck at first all round that quarter. Now, I dare say you will remember, boss, what a terrible lot of talk there was at that time about Gippsland. Not being very well known then, all sorts of yarns sprang up about the Gippsland mountains. There were chaps away there in the ranges said to be making gold by the bucketful. Of others it was said that, after making huge piles, they had perished in the bush; for there is no doubt of it, some of that country is as rough as it’s made anywhere. Then a report was spread that the bodies of three miners had been found in the ranges starved to death, and that by each body was a swag of gold as much as a strong man could carry. Then, a while after the adventure I am going to tell you about, came all the excitement about the Omeo rush and Livingstone Creek—how the prospectors had been tracked for miles through the mountains and found at last, with, it was said, tons of gold.

THE MARBLE QUARRIES OF CARRARA.

By the MARCHESA CERESA VENUTI.



N travelling along the coast-line of Tuscany, and emerging from the Pisan pine-forests, who is there that does not turn his eyes from the sea, in order to rest them on the masses of stone that lie by the side of the railway, waiting to take artistic or useful form, and to lift them to the overhanging mountains of

Luni, with their sides rent by glistening wounds, like so many heaps of snow? Those mountains are all of marble from base to summit; and twenty centuries of work have scarcely left a trace of the hand of man. They form the chain of the Apuan Alps, which is distinct from the Apennines and the Alps themselves. Its naked sides, its riven crags, its airy, pointed peaks bear too clearly for

mistake the Alpine stamp, entirely different from the lesser chain, which is characterised by soft, round hills, by mud and clay, and by a luxurious vegetation. The Apuan Alp is bounded by the rivers Aulella and Serchio, and by the Tyrrhenian Sea. It occupies the country formerly called Versilia, and now Garfagnana. Its framework is composed of wonderful chalk-banks, which crop out even at the very highest peaks, and of which there are many different varieties.

The traveller who wishes to visit the quarries ascends one of the streams which form the river Carrione; on its banks is situated the town of Carrara, once the chief place of the duchy ruled by Eliza Baciocchi, the sister of Napoleon Bonaparte. Of the valleys which are scattered confusedly between the ridges of the mountain, some are inhabited and soft in aspect, others deserted and savage. The valley of Arni, which is the queen of all, is still untouched by the hand of man, so that when standing in it one hardly perceives that one is in the world, so rarely is the human voice heard there. It contains, however, enormous wealth, though the road that leads to it is exceedingly rough and impracticable. It is like a vast crater with an inverted brim. The torrents which descend from the surrounding rocks, as long as they are isolated, run roaring and foaming down, but before they arrive at the bottom of the basin they are lost to sight without ever encountering one another. In place of a river or lake there is nothing but a dry bed, with blocks of white marble scattered over it, which, like an enormous sponge, sucks in all these waters by a thousand apertures between dispersed débris, so that the meeting of the waters takes place underground. At some points there are caverns and grottos which rival the most famous on record, and some of which were the dwellings of man in the prehistoric period. Amongst the most remarkable are those of Aronte, Colombara, Bignone, that of the sorceress Feronia and the hundred chambers, the Buca d'Equi, and that of Tanone, of which Spallanzani said that it is 1300 metres long, and branches out into many minor grottos, sometimes compressing itself into narrow pathways, and sometimes widening out into spacious halls. It contains an immense number of water-stones of every size, form, and kind; and in the live rock, a long way down, it shows the nature and variety of the strata of which the mountain is itself composed. To surmount the dangers that meet one here it is necessary to be tied to a rope, and in this way to be transported over abysses and precipices. If the sight of these threatening crags and sharp-pointed pinnacles raises the mind to the poetic contemplation of Nature on the one hand, on the other the thought of the inexhaustible treasure of which she is here so prodigal awakens calculations of profitable industrial undertakings.

The Apuan marble excels the Parian, Pentelic,

and Hymettian marble for fineness of grain, ease in working, and for the size of its monoliths, and was substituted for the Greek marble at the very time when the Greeks ceased and the Italians began to produce their masterpieces. Providence, who transferred the primacy of the arts from the country of Phidias to that of Michelangelo, had planted near at hand the material for the new artists' use. Authors, backed by the authority of Pliny, who speaks of the marble of Luni as recently discovered, placed the period at which our marble began to be excavated in the later days of the Roman Republic; but the date is now carried much farther back. When the great captains brought back to Italy as trophies the statues by famous Greek chisels the artistic sentiment revived, and a great taste for marbles sprang up. The period in which the trade reached its greatest prosperity was during the reigns of Trajan and of Marcus Aurelius, and these emperors issued several laws relating to the quarries. From the valleys the marble was carried to the port of Luni. There it was shipped for Ostia, and after ascending the Tiber, was deposited at the Marmorata, a place close to where the Basilica of St Paul now stands. Every piece had the consul's name engraved upon it.

After this the devotion to the liberal arts became very much weakened among the Italians, and we look in vain for memorials of the quarries until the eleventh century. Barbarossa ceded Carrara, with its quarries, to his faithful Bishop of Luni in 1183; and in the following centuries Carrara had for its lords many Italian princes.

In 1500 Carrara saw within its walls the sculptors Bandinelli, Ammanati, Giambologna, together with the divine Michelangelo. He suffered here not so much by the labour of climbing the hard mountains as by the dishonesty of his fellow-men, as may be seen from his original letters, preserved in the British Museum. The traveller stops with respect before the house where the author of the 'David' and the 'Moses' dwelt. It seems that in the seventeenth century the marble industry had very much deteriorated; it assumed a new vigour again in the eighteenth century; and in 1769 Maria Teresa founded in Carrara an Academy of Fine Arts, from which so many eminent men have issued; this small town has been the cradle of Maffiolo, Baratta, Finelli, Raggi, and Tenerani. At the breaking out of the Napoleonic wars the industry suffered very considerably, for the great despot laid his tyrannical hand even on the humble quarrymen. It is reviving now, and good is in store for the industrious people of Carrara. The number of quarries is about seven hundred, but more than three hundred have not yet been exploited. At Massa there are about two hundred, of which forty-five alone are worked; and there are one hundred and fifty others abandoned in the Versilia. From this we may conjecture what

enormous wealth lies buried in the heart of this beautiful mountain.

The different kinds of marble are not arranged in layers, but blend with one another, like the colours of the rainbow. A light sandy coating covers the blocks, and divides them from one another. It is noticed that where marble is exposed to the sun it becomes harder; where it is placed in the shade it becomes finer and softer. From an admixture of metallic substances, the marbles are sometimes marked, speckled, veined, and spotted, and these defects make them less valuable to the sculptor. Though the marbles are of great variety, they may all be reduced to threefold classifications of *brecciati*, *bardigli*, and *bianchi*. Although the elegant *brecciato* is much liked for ornaments, and the flowered *bardiglio* is useful, still it is the *bianco* which is of the greatest importance, and the white statuary marble is the noblest of all. It has many varieties. Sometimes it is of dazzling whiteness; sometimes it inclines to blue, sometimes to flesh-colour, as is the case with the *crestola*, which is by far the most beautiful. It rises in value in proportion to its freshness, its tint, its crystallisation, and the size of the piece. Its freedom from impurities is also a matter of much consideration. Woe to the artist if, as he sees the thought he has long been meditating emerging from the precious block, he suddenly espies a knot, a speck, a vein showing itself under the strokes of his chisel! Dupré, in his *Memoirs*, states that while he was sculpturing the 'Giotto' for the Uffizzi Palace he found a hair, which split the marble right through, and he had to make a reproduction of the statue. To Canova, as his friend Antonio d'Este tells us, it was torture to see black or livid spots; and accordingly, by the advice of chemists, and especially of the celebrated Davy, he made use of various preparations for taking them out. One day, while he was making this experiment, the chemicals took fire and went off like a volcanic eruption. He was thrown to the ground, and had a narrow escape of his life.

Our statuary marble, like the Parian of old, may well be called splendid. It is delicate, and shows an antipathy to everything that is not also white. Touch it with quicklime and it will be tinged with blood-coloured spots, with red wine and it becomes violet, with oil and it turns pale, with the moisture that comes from the chestnut and it grows black. By its means the 'Graces,' the 'Hours,' the 'Charity,' the 'Psyche,' the 'Fame,' the 'Abel,' which have immortalised Canova, Finelli, Bartolini, Tenerani, Rauch, and Dupré, assumed their divine forms, so full of comeliness and charm. Nor is it only into statues, veiled in the most exquisite modesty, or expressing the warmth of the affections, the sighs of melancholy, and the mysteries of the human heart, that it is wrought; but it lends itself also, in the hands of Michelangelo, to fashion sweet instruments—spinets,

guitars, and violins—the last so light as to be capable of being slung across the shoulder. Amongst the other statuary marbles, the *crestola* is the choicest of all, either on account of the beauty of its surface-covering, or because, from being less liable to chip, it can receive from an expert hand more finely chiselled and delicate features. A beautiful proof of the excellence of this marble has been given by the sculptor Moli in his 'Pompeian Mother,' now in the possession of Mr Mitchell Henry, Stratheden House, Hyde Park, London. The woman, flying with her child from the disaster, tries to shield herself from the burning rain with some drapery, or a sheet, which she holds high above her head. The air which she displaces in running swells the folds of the drapery, which, owing to the masterly way in which these folds are executed, and the delicacy of the work, is so light that it seems as thin and transparent as if it were of linen.

The most colossal monuments, however, the loftiest columns and the most sumptuous vestibules, are made of *bianco-chiaro*. Vasari assures us that the block of *bianco-chiaro* given by the Grand-duke Cosimo I. to Ammanati for the statue of 'Neptune' which is in the piazza of Signoria, in Florence, was six metres high and three wide. It was so superb that, from its not having been given to him, Benvenuto Cellini, as he himself says, turned so ill that he suddenly fainted.

The struggle of man with Nature is keen on the slopes of the Apuan Alps, and the echo of the labour is given back from the mountain. Here are blocks which appear to have been hurled down from dizzy heights; terrible explosions occur at which the earth seems cleft in two and tottering to its base; gangs of men are occupied in loosening great slabs between the enormous rocks, or in taking off the ragged corners of the marble, or rough-hewing it, or sanding it, or rubbing it with pumice-stone, or carrying it away. Forty-two sawing establishments, provided with two hundred appropriate implements, stand on the banks of the Carrione; and there are one hundred and fifteen sculptors' studios and manufactories of ornaments in the industrious little town of Torano. The quarries belong to one hundred and twenty-five men of business. The transport is made by four hundred and fifty persons, three hundred pair of oxen, and four hundred and twenty-five four-wheel and three hundred two-wheel carts. Three thousand people work at the quarries; about a hundred women are told off to carry water for the use of the quarrymen; five hundred and fifty persons are employed in the workshops and laboratories. These workpeople know, and scent out by instinct, the marble better than any mineralogist; the very lads are clever at carving it in sport, and make very useful articles of it. The export to all the countries of Europe and America amounts to one hundred thousand tons a year. If, however, at the foot of the Apuans there were a

handful of enterprising Englishmen or Americans, numerous lines of rail would soon wind up those delicious valleys, the waters of the Carrione and the Frigido would turn countless machines, and instead of one hundred thousand tons a million would be taken away every year, so that there would be some ground for the fear of Pliny, Ovid, and Juvenal that the mountains would be destroyed.

It cannot be doubted that there is much room for improvement, both in instruments and methods for the transport of the marble, and in the condition of the workers. On account of the imperfection of the machinery, the marble leaves Italy in the rough, and actually comes back dressed from abroad. Surely it would be possible to show a little more activity and skill at home, and to adopt new systems of mechanism, especially in the method of detaching monoliths from the mountain.

The blasting of the mines still makes many victims. It is easy to imagine what prodigious effects are produced, when one knows that two thousand pounds of powder are lodged at the depth of nearly twenty metres. The sound of a horn gives notice when an explosion is going to take place; the men, warned by it, run for shelter to some cave, and a formidable discharge of débris passes over their heads. Sometimes masses of stones come rolling down of themselves on the top of the casual passenger. At one time it was the custom to sound a bell inviting to prayer, according to Catholic usage, every time that there was a dead or dying man at the quarries. Not a day passed without its mournful notes being heard; but, as it spread terror and anguish among hundreds of aged fathers and mothers and children—amongst all the inhabitants of the town, since all had some relation at the quarries—its tolling was forbidden.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

By GUY BOOTHBY.

CHAPTER XIV.



NCE in the street the old man slipped his arm through that of his companion and hobbled along beside him. 'My dear young friend,' he said, when they had been walking for some few minutes, 'we are out of the house now, and able to talk sensibly together without fear of making fools of ourselves or of being overheard. First and foremost, tell me this: Have you any notion of what you are doing?'

'Of course I am not very well up in it,' Browne replied modestly; 'but I think I know pretty well.'

'Then, let me tell you this, as one who is probably more conversant with the subject than any man living: you know absolutely nothing at all!'

After this facer Browne did not know quite what to say. Herr Sauber stopped and looked at him.

'Has it struck you yet,' he said, 'that you, a young Englishman, without the least experience in such things, are pitting yourself against all the organisation and cunning of the Great Russian Bear?'

'That point has certainly struck me,' Browne replied.

'And do you mean to say that, knowing the strength of the enemy you are about to fight, you are not afraid to go on? Well, I must admit I admire your bravery; but I fear it is nearer foolhardiness than pluck. However, since you are determined to go on with it, let me give

you a little bit of advice that may be of service to you. I understand you have not long enjoyed the honour of Madame Bernstein's acquaintance?'

Browne stated that this was so, and wondered what was coming next. He was beginning to grow interested in this queer old man, with the sharp eyes, who spoke with such an air of authority.

'Before I go any farther,' continued the old gentleman, 'permit me to remark that I yield to no one in my admiration for the lady's talent. She is an exceedingly clever woman, whose grasp of European politics is, to say the least of it, remarkable. At the same time, were I in your position, I would be as circumspect as possible in my behaviour towards her. Madame is a charming companion; she is philosophic and can adapt herself to the most unpleasant circumstances with the readiness of an old campaigner. In matters like the present, however, I regret to say, her tongue runs riot with her, and for that reason alone I consider her little short of dangerous.'

This may or may not have been the exact thought Browne had in his own mind. But the woman was Katherine's friend; and, however imprudent she might be, that circumstance alone was sufficient, in a certain sense, to make him loyal to her. Herr Sauber probably read what was passing in his mind, for he threw a glance up at him in his queer sparrow-like way, and, when he had eyed him steadfastly for a few seconds, continued what he had to say with even greater emphasis than before.

'I do not want you to mistake my meaning,' he said. 'At the same time, I have no desire to see the mission you have taken in hand turn out a failure. I have been acquainted with Madame Bernstein for more years than either she or I would probably care to remember, and it is far from my intention or desire to prejudice your mind against her. At the same time, I have known Katherine's family for a much longer period, and I must study them and their interests before all.'

'But what is it of which you desire to warn me?' Browne inquired. 'It seems to me that Madame Bernstein is as anxious to assist Katherine's father to escape as any of us.'

'I sincerely believe she is,' the old man replied. 'In spite of the life she has led these twenty years, she still remains a woman, and impetuous. You must see for yourself that in a matter like the present you cannot be too careful. Let one little hint reach the Russian Government, and farewell to any chance you may stand of effecting the man's escape.'

'But what am I to do to prevent her from giving them a hint?' asked Browne. 'She knows as much as I do, and I cannot gag her!'

'But you need not tell her of all your plans,' he answered. 'Tell Katherine what you please; she has the rare gift of being able to hold her tongue, and wild horses would not drag the secret from her.'

'Then, to sum up what you say, I am to take care that, while Katherine and I know everything, Madame Bernstein shall know nothing?'

'I do not say anything of the kind,' said Herr Sauber. 'I simply tell you what I think, and I leave it to your good sense to act as you think best. You English have a proverb to the effect that the least said is the soonest mended. When the object of your expedition is accomplished, and you are back in safety once more, you will, I hope, be able to come to me and say, "Herr Sauber, there was no necessity to act upon the advice you gave me;" then I shall be perfectly satisfied.'

'I must confess that you have made me a little uneasy,' Browne replied. 'I have no doubt you are right, however. At any rate, I will be most careful of what I say and how I act in her presence. Now, perhaps, you can help me still further, since you declare you are better acquainted with the subject than most people. Being so ignorant, I should be very grateful for a few hints as to how I should set to work.' In spite of the old man's boast, Browne thought he had rather got the better of him now. He was soon to be undeceived, however.

'You intend to carry this through yourself, I suppose?' asked his companion. 'If I mistake not, I heard you say this evening that you proposed to set sail at once for the Farther East. Is that so?'

'It is quite true,' Browne replied. 'I leave

for London to-morrow afternoon, and immediately upon my arrival there I shall commence my preparations. You will see for yourself, if the man is so ill, there is no time to waste.'

'In that case I think I can introduce you to a person who will prove of the utmost assistance to you; a man without whom, indeed, it would be quite impossible for you to succeed in your undertaking.'

'That is really very kind of you,' said Browne; 'and, pray, who is this interesting person, and where shall I find him?'

'His name is Johann Schmidt,' said Sauber, 'and for some years past he has taken up his residence in Hong-kong. Since we are alone, I may as well inform you that he makes a speciality of these little affairs, though I am not aware that he has done very much in that particular locality in which you are at present most interested. New Caledonia is more in his line. However, I feel sure that that will make little or no difference to him, and I do not think you can do better than pay him a visit when you reach Eastern waters.'

'But how am I to broach the subject to him? And how am I to know that he will help me? I cannot very well go to him and say straight out that I am anxious to help a Russian convict to escape from Saghalien.'

'I will give you a letter to him,' replied Herr Sauber, 'and after he has read it you will find that you will have no difficulty in the matter whatsoever. For a sum to be agreed upon between you, he will take the whole matter off your hands, and all you will have to do will be to meet the exile at a spot which will be arranged and convey him to a place of safety.'

'I am sure I am exceedingly obliged to you,' said Browne. 'But will you answer me one more question?'

'I will answer a hundred if they will help you,' the other replied. 'But what is this particular one?'

'I want to know why you did not tell us all this when we were discussing the matter at the house just now.'

'Because in these matters the safest course is to speak into one ear only. If you will be guided by me you will follow my example. When no one knows what you are going to do save yourself, it is impossible for any one to forestall or betray you.'

By this time they had reached the corner of the Rue Auber. Here the old gentleman stopped and held out his hand.

'At this point our paths separate, I think,' he said, 'and I have the honour to wish you good-night.'

'But what about that address in Hong-kong?' Browne inquired. 'As I leave for England to-morrow, it is just possible that I may not see you before I go.'

'I will send it to your hotel,' Herr Sauber replied. 'I know where you are staying. Good-night, my friend, and may you be as successful in the work you are undertaking as you deserve to be.'

Browne thanked him for his good wishes, and bade him good-night. Having done so, he resumed his walk alone, with plenty to think about. Why it should have been so he could not tell, but it seemed to him that since his interview with the old man from whom he had just parted, the whole aspect of the affair to which he had pledged himself had changed. It is true that he had had his own suspicions of Madame Bernstein from the beginning, but they had been only the vaguest surmises and nothing more. Now they seemed to have increased not only in number but in weight; yet, when he came to analyse it all, the whole fabric tumbled to pieces like a house of cards. No charge had been definitely brought against her, and all that was insinuated was that she might possibly be somewhat indiscreet. That she was as anxious as they were to arrange the escape of Katherine's father from the island upon which he was imprisoned was a point which admitted of no doubt. Seeing that Katherine was her best friend in the world, it could scarcely have been otherwise. And yet there was a nameless something behind it all that made Browne uneasy and continually distrustful. Try how he would, he could not drive it from his mind; and when he retired to rest, two hours later, it was only to carry it to bed with him and to lie awake hour after hour endeavouring to fit the pieces of the puzzle together.

Immediately after breakfast next morning he made his way to the Gardens of the Tuileries. He had arranged on the previous evening to meet Katherine there, and on this occasion she was first at the rendezvous. As soon as she saw him she hastened along the path to meet him. Browne thought he had never seen her more becomingly dressed; her face had a bright colour, and her eyes sparkled like twin diamonds.

'You have good news for me, I can see,' she said when their first greetings were over and they were walking back along the path together. 'What have you done?'

'We have advanced one step,' he answered. 'I have discovered the address of a man who will possibly be of immense assistance to us.'

'That is good news indeed,' she said. 'And where does he live?'

'In Hong-kong,' Browne replied, and as he said it he noticed a look of disappointment upon her face.

'Hong-kong?' she replied. 'That is such a long way off. I had hoped he would prove to be in London.'

'I don't think there is any one in London who would be of much use to us,' said Browne, 'while there are a good many there who could hinder

us. That reminds me, dear, I have something rather important to say to you.'

'What is it?' she inquired.

'I want to warn you to be very careful to whom you speak about the work we have in hand, and to be particularly careful of one person.'

'Who is that?' she inquired; but there was a subtle intonation in her voice that told Browne that, while she could not, of course, know with any degree of certainty whom he meant, she at least could hazard a very good guess. They had seated themselves by this time on the same seat they had occupied a few days before; and a feeling that was almost one of shame came over him when he reflected that in a certain measure he owed his present happiness to the woman he was about to decry.

'You must not be offended at what I am going to say to you,' he began, prodding the turf before him with the point of his umbrella meanwhile. 'The fact of the matter is, I want to warn you to be very careful how much of your plans you reveal to Madame Bernstein. It is just possible you may think I am unjust in saying such a thing. I only hope I am.'

'I really think you are,' she said. 'I don't know why you should have done so; but from the very first you have entertained a dislike for madame. And yet, I think you must admit she has been a very good friend to both of us.'

She seemed so hurt at what he had said that Browne hastened to set himself right with her.

'Believe me, I am not doubting her friendship,' he said, 'only her discretion. I should never forgive myself if I thought I had put any unjust thoughts against her in your mind. But the fact remains that not only for your father's safety, but also for our own, it is most essential that no suspicion as to what we are about to do should get abroad.'

'You surely do not think that Madame Bernstein would talk about the matter to strangers?' said Katherine a little indignantly. 'You have not known her very long; but I think at least you ought to know her well enough to feel sure she would not do that.'

Browne tried to reassure her on this point, but it was some time before she was mollified. To change the subject, he spoke of Herr Sauber and of the interest he was taking in the matter.

'I see it all,' she said; 'it was he who instilled these suspicions into your mind. It was unkind of him to do so; and not only unkind, but unjust. Like yourself, he has never been altogether friendly to her.'

Browne found himself placed in somewhat of a dilemma. It was certainly true that the old man *had* added fresh fuel to his suspicions; yet he had to remember that his dislike for the lady extended farther back, even as far as his first meeting with her at Merok. Therefore, while in

justice to himself he had the right to incriminate the old man, still he had no desire to confess that he had himself been a doubter from the first. Whether she could read what was passing in his mind or not I cannot say; but she was silent for a few minutes. Then, looking up at him with troubled eyes, she said, 'Forgive me; I would not for all the world have you think that I have the least doubt of you. You have been so good to me that I should be worse than ungrateful if I were to do that. Will you make a bargain with me?'

'Before I promise I must know what that bargain is,' he said, with a smile. 'You have tried to make bargains with me before to which I could not agree.'

'This is a very simple one,' she said. 'I want you to promise me that you will never tell me anything of what you are going to do in this matter that I cannot tell Madame Bernstein. Cannot you see, dear, what I mean when I ask that? She is my friend, and she has taken care of me for so many, many years, that I should be indeed a traitor to her if, while she was so anxious to help me in the work I have undertaken, I were to keep from her even the smallest detail of our plans. If she is to be ignorant let me be ignorant also.' The simple, straightforward nature of the girl was apparent in what she said.

'And yet you wish to know everything of what I do?' he said.

'It is only natural that I should,' she answered. 'I also wish to be honest with madame. You will give that promise, will you not, Jack?'

Browne considered for a moment. Embarrassing as the position had been a few moments before, it seemed even more so now. At last he made up his mind.

'Yes,' he said very slowly; 'since you wish it, I will give you that promise, and I believe I am doing right. You love me, Katherine?'

'Ah, you know that,' she replied. 'I love and trust you as I could never do another man.'

'And you believe that I will do everything that

a man can do to bring about the result you desire?'

'I do believe that,' she said.

'Then let it all remain in my hands. Let me be responsible for the whole matter, and you shall see what the result will be. As I told you yesterday, dear, if any man can get your father out of the terrible place in which he now is, I will do so.'

She tried to answer, but words failed her. Her heart was too full to speak. She could only press his hand in silence.

'When shall I see you again?' Browne inquired, after the short silence which had ensued. 'I leave for London this afternoon.'

'For London?' she repeated, with a startled look upon her face. 'I did not know that you were going so soon.'

'There is no time to lose,' he answered. 'All our arrangements must be made at once. I have as much to do next week as I can possibly manage. I suppose you and madame have set your hearts on going to the East?'

'I could not let you go alone,' she answered; 'and not only that, but if you succeed in getting my father away, I must be there to welcome him to freedom.'

'In that case you and madame had better hold yourselves in readiness to start as soon as I give the word.'

'We will be ready whenever you wish us to set off,' she replied. 'You need have no fear of that.'

Half-an-hour later Browne bade her good-bye, and in less than three hours he was flying across France as fast as the express could carry him. Reaching Calais, he boarded the boat. It was growing dusk, and for that reason the faces of the passengers were barely distinguishable. Suddenly Browne felt a hand upon his shoulder, and a voice greeted him with, 'My dear Browne, this is indeed a pleasurable surprise. I never expected to see you here.'

It was Maas.

WARKWORTH CASTLE AND HERMITAGE.

By SARAH WILSON.



ORD WARKWORTH, M.P., now Earl Percy, the accomplished grandson of the late Duke of Northumberland and of the Duke of Argyll, took his title from the pleasant village of Warkworth, on the Coquet. The beautiful river, when it has arrived from its source among the heather-clad hills to within a mile or so from the sea, makes a large, sweeping, circular curve, and enrings with its silvery waters about fifty acres of land. As long ago as the days of our Anglo-Saxon forefathers a church was built in the limited district of country thus

encompassed by the river. The walls were made four feet thick, that they might endure; but it was taken down and another built on a larger scale in Norman times. A castle was also erected within the same environment in the period of Norman rule. In Plantagenet days a bridge was thrown across the river and fortified with a tower; a little later a hermitage was hollowed out of a sandstone cliff on the outer bank of the winding stream; and a market-cross was also erected. The wide, sloping road between the castle and the church was gradually lined on both sides with stone houses of different degrees of accommoda-

tion; and thus, as the centuries came and passed, and left their work, Warkworth has become the attraction that we find it at the present day.

A few years ago, in the course of repairs, the floors of the church were taken up to a sufficient extent to uncover part of the foundations of the original Saxon building. Those who were present turned with quick curiosity to the recess in the low corner-stone in which deposits are usually placed by founders; but former explorers had left it void. The lengths of foundations exposed were all within the walls of the building, showing that the Norman masons made their church on a larger scale than that of the earlier builders. The Norman chancel, with its stone-groined roof, and the north and west walls of the Norman nave are still standing with calm continuance. But built up close against the west wall is a strong, stern Plantagenet tower, twenty-three feet square, erected, probably, as a place of safety some time after the terrible massacre of the inhabitants that took place in the course of the invasion of William the Lion, King of Scotland, in 1174. The south wall of the Norman builders was taken down in Tudor times, and a light, wide, spacious aisle of gracious aspect thrown out, which has now become, like the rest, ashen-gray with its years. There are several other items of interest in the church: a fragment of a Saxon cross carved in the characteristic manner that Saxon illuminations in manuscripts have made familiar to us; a porch with a chamber over it, once used as the village schoolroom, and furnished with a turret staircase to give access to it; traces of an anchorite's cell; and an effigy of the knight who gave the common to the inhabitants. The porch, as Mr Tomlinson remarks in his excellent *Guide to Northumberland*, is 'well peppered on the outside with bullet-marks.' Here is laid the opening scene of Sir Walter Besant's story, *Let Nothing you Dismay*.

Though Warkworth is mentioned by the Venerable Bede as having been given by King Ceolwulf to the community he joined at Lindisfarne when he resigned his crown, it is Jordan Fantosme who has painted for us the first word-picture of the castle, the 'worm-eaten hold of rugged stone' that Shakespeare has made so interesting to us all. In trouvère fashion, he related metrically how William the Lion set out to ravage Northumberland, and went first to Wark Castle, where the custodian arranged a postponement of hostilities till he could receive instructions from headquarters as to whether he was to defend it or give it up. In the course of the necessary days of waiting, the Scottish king decided to proceed to Alnwick, where he hoped to make similar terms with the son of De Vesci, who was in charge of the castle there; then, he said, he would go on to Warkworth; and though Roger, the son of Richard, was a valiant chevalier, he would not be able to withstand him, as castle, wall, and moat were all 'fiable'—not dreaming that the day was near at hand when he was to be taken

prisoner at Alnwick, and led to Henry the Second at Northampton with his legs bound under his horse's body.

The Norman knight who built the castle in the first instance has been ascertained to be the Roger Fitz-Richard thus mentioned by Jordan Fantosme. He enclosed about two acres of land around his keep, with a curtain-wall in which he built a great gateway-tower, portions of which are still standing. After six generations had enjoyed its ownership, the last representative died without male issue, and left his possessions to his sovereign, Edward the First. The grandson of this monarch conferred Warkworth upon Henry de Percy, in consideration of certain services and payments. After the attainder consequent upon the fate of the fourth Lord Percy of Alnwick, King Henry the Fifth restored the Percy possessions to the son of the celebrated Hotspur, to whom the erection of the present noble and impressive keep is attributed.

Experts aver that it would be difficult, even at the present day, to devise a more convenient and compact residence: 'a very proper howse' it was called in a survey dated 1538. Mr Freeman says that, though of less historic fame than Alnwick, it 'is in itself a more pleasing object of study. It stands as a castle should stand, free from the disfigurement of modern habitation.' It is of a quadrangular form, with a bold projecting bay from base to summit in the centre of each of its four faces. The angles of the bays and of the square are all canted or cut off, which gives the mass the outline of an assemblage of towers; and above all rises a tall, slender turret for observation. All the requisites of a nobleman's house in old times are within: a guardroom with a dungeon below it, a banquetting-room with dais and music-gallery, a chapel and oratory, private chamber, kitchen and buttery, and the necessary staircases. In the centre of all, to get additional light, is a well or lantern, called in the old survey mentioned 'a place voyd.' Here is laid Scene iii. Act 2 of Shakespeare's *Henry IV*.

It is the delight of antiquaries to pick out the works of Roger Fitz-Richard and his descendants from the more important additions of the Percies. They conclude that these chieftains retained the original curtain-wall of Roger, as well as his gatehouse, hall, and kitchen near it; and that they took down his small keep to erect their own more convenient and imposing building. They point out corbels that carried projecting defences over the gateway, and look for recesses in the walls left in other portions of the masonry for the insertion of beams whereon to carry the wooden galleries with which walls were often defended in times of siege; they count the curious oilets, or loopholes, and note that they are unusually elongated; and they mark that the portcullises must have been wider at the top than they were below, because the grooves in which they work do not touch the ground, but finish in a projecting

shoulder. Those who have not the particular kind of learning that lights up these points of interest, that makes a panel carved with heraldic symbols as easy to read as a book, a length of moulding as full of testimony as a tale, or a fragment of tracery as convincing as a document, must nevertheless admire the fine mellow mass of proud masonry three stories in height, pierced with mullioned and traceried windows, and capped with its commanding turret, that stands looking out, high above the frayed curtain-wall and its crumbling towers, upon the aslant and stony village, the winding river fringed with greenery, and the distant sea. When the crannies are jewelled with wallflowers in the spring-time a fairer scene is far to seek. In our own time a few of the chief chambers in the keep have been put into repair for occasional use. These are filled with ancient tapestry and carved oak furniture in keeping with the traditions of the stronghold; but the sky looks down upon the hearthstones of most of the others, and the winds sweep in and out of the gracefully proportioned chapel through its glassless windows.

The mediæval bridge is another archæological treasure. The tower with which it is defended was probably part of the general scheme of defence. This is kept in fair repair, though it may be less than its full height in its best days. It is described in the survey made for the Percy family in 1567 as being then without roof or cover, and in much need of repair. 'Yt shall be therefore very requisite that the towre be with all speed repaired, and the gates hanged up, which shall be a great savety and comoditye for the towne.' Those who had to draw up and wait in their vehicles whilst others passed through the archway in the centre of it, however, scarcely considered it as a commodity to the town, and were as grateful to the County Council for making a new approach to the bridge recently, so that they need not thread the arch, as antiquaries were for its preservation. We may see the grooves for the portcullis; the two small strong doorways within the gate, one on either side, that give access to the stairs leading to the upper story; the loopholes on the lower story, the larger lights above, the discs of lichens here and there lighting the dove-coloured tint that Time has given it. The bridge consists of two noble ribbed arches, with a sharp angular projection, rising from a pebbly islet between them, that is carried up to the level of the roadway, and forms a recess on both sides for foot-passengers to take refuge in whilst horses and vehicles pass. Many a dainty demoiselle and fair lady have come ambling across it; many a messenger has galloped over it to take important news to the great castellans; many a clump of spears has glittered upon it, and many a trumpet sounded there, we may be sure. It was in Warkworth that the Pretender was first prayed for and avowedly proclaimed king of Great Britain, when

General Forster and his company of Jacobites arrived here, October 7, 1715.

The hermitage is of still more interest. It is hollowed out of a sandstone cliff that is embowered in foliage on the outer bank of the river at no great distance from the castle. On crossing (there is a boat not far off for the purpose in the summer-time), a flight of steps gives access from the pathway by the water to the doorway. On entering you find yourself in a chapel twenty feet long, composed of three bays, with a groined roof. At the end is an altar, and by the side of it a recess with the full-length effigy of a lady in it. In the north wall, opposite the entrance, is another doorway leading into a smaller chapel or cell; and on the same side is a very handsome hagioscope, whereby those in the smaller chapel may see the altar in the larger one; and there is also another opening filled with tracery. There is a third small chamber at the end of the chapel opposite the altar, of which the outer boundary has fallen away, which has four narrow slits or windows in the dividing wall that are precisely similar to those that light the little chamber in the parish church which, it is thought, was once an anchorite's cell. It has also traces of a doorway that must have communicated with a kitchen, now standing roofless, at a lower level. This kitchen is of wrought masonry; the chapels and chamber adjoining them are hewn out of the coarse-grained solid rock; and they are hewn not grudgingly or of necessity, but with lavish care. There is a seat recessed in the sandstone on either side of the doorway; above the door is carved a legend, now difficult to decipher, because of the disintegration of the surface of the rock, but known to have been the Latin wording of 'My tears have been my meat day and night;' over the second doorway is another inscription that has become quite illegible; there is a piscina; and there are carvings representing the Crucifixion and the emblems of the Crucifixion on a shield.

The effigy of the lady whose unfortunate fate has been so fully told by Bishop Percy in the ballad has an angel at its shoulders, a bull's head at its feet, and a demi-figure of a knight guarding it. The surroundings are of the utmost sylvan beauty and enchantment; nevertheless, the hermit must have had his tribulations; for every now and then, though at long intervals, the erstwhile placid river overflows and rises nearly to the full height of the great arched fireplace in his kitchen. For many years at a time, however, it passes serenely on its way, reflecting the trees, shrubs, and water-weeds at its edges and the stately castle on its bosom. It is nearly forty miles long, and, before it passes round Warkworth, winds through a country studded with castles, peel-towers, and battlefields. It is pebble-paved for the most part, and its waters are of exceptional clearness; some authorities assert that there are more trout in it than in any other half-dozen streams in the

north of England. One of the Percy owners of Warkworth Castle allowed the hermit to take a draught of fish from the river every Sunday throughout the year, to be called the 'Trynete draught.'

The keynote of Warkworth sounds like a reverberation from years long past. In the village, among the better houses and inns, are primitive

hostelries where horses to be put up have to be led through their doorways and past their parlours into the cobble-paved stable-yards in their rear. Some of them must have seen the day when Travers brought the news to the Earl of Northumberland that young Harry Percy's spur was cold.

THE ANTHROPOLOGIST'S COAT.

By W. E. CULE, Author of *Lady Stalland's Diamond*, &c.



T frequently gives one a shock of surprise to observe what small and even ridiculous matters serve to influence a man's development and success in life. Peter Sand, Master of Arts and Fellow of St Gaston's, was dim-sighted, and failed on one occasion to distinguish between a black cloth and a dark blue. In this fact lies the secret of his subsequent development and prosperity.

Three years ago Peter's development had apparently ceased. He lived entirely at the university town of Durbridge, was known as a Fellow of St Gaston's, and occasionally lectured on anthropology. His friends had once expected a great deal from him, but had for some time abandoned those expectations. One or two articles in scientific magazines formed the sum total of his contributions to the press, and the first portions of his great work on *The Epoch of the Mastodon* had been written only to be thrown aside. The income from his Fellowship was more than enough for his comfort, and he had never liked society. Gradually he had withdrawn farther and farther into himself, until at the age of thirty-three he looked ten years older, and was a willing and contented recluse. His enemies called him 'The Fossil,' and he was familiarly known among his friends as 'Little Peter.'

His usual course of life received an interruption one day in the form of a letter from Barron, an old schoolfellow who had kept a distant but kindly eye upon Peter for some fifteen years. The Fellow of St Gaston's read the letter several times before he could comprehend it fully. Barron was about to be married, and wished his old friend to attend him as groomsman.

A notification that he would be expected to act as bridegroom could scarcely have caused Peter more distress. He a groomsman—at a wedding! It was ridiculous—impossible! To refuse Barron's request, however, seemed also impossible, for he was the last of that almost forgotten circle of early friends. After long and troubled consideration he sent an urgent note, asking the bridegroom to come up to Durbridge and explain.

Barron came, a big fellow with a large heart, which even his work as a country solicitor had not succeeded in warping. He was one of those

who had respected Peter's learning, and had hoped for great things from him. His disappointment was extreme to find shrinkage instead of expansion, retreat instead of attainment.

'Dear me, Sand!' he cried; 'what's wrong with you? You look so old, and so very gray! Do you go out much?'

'Never,' answered Peter. 'Why should I?'

'Why, because you are becoming a fossil, man,' was the candid answer. 'You must wake up—you ought to marry.'

'What!' exclaimed Peter, astounded; 'and lose my Fellowship?'

Barron sighed, and felt sorry that the Fellowship had ever been gained. Then he set himself to persuade Peter to run down for the wedding, and to undertake the duties of groomsman. It was to be a very quiet affair, he explained, and the responsibility was simply nothing. Peter listened, and gradually gave way. To the bridegroom's amusement, he then began to make exhaustive notes in a pocket-book, so that he might not forget any of his duties.

'Since you don't care for going about much,' said Barron, 'you needn't come down until the day before. That will be time enough, and you won't require so much luggage.'

'Just my things, I suppose?' said the Fellow. 'It's lucky that I've had a first-rate new coat lately. It's a blue one.'

'Blue?'

'Yes, dark blue. I intended to get black, but I am short-sighted, you know, and when the patterns were submitted I chose blue by mistake. But it's a splendid thing, and my landlady tells me that it looks very well. I should like to do you credit at the wedding, old fellow.'

He uttered the last words so kindly, and his confidence in the blue coat was so touching and child-like, that Barron could not speak the protest which rose to his lips. Besides, if Peter had to exert himself to order and fit a new coat he might rebel, and give up the project altogether. So he held his peace, reflecting that there might be no law against blue after all. He did not know how criminal his silence was, for he was but a man, and had never been married before.

When he reached home he found cause to

regret his silence. The bride-to-be was supported by the presence of her sister, who had given up a position of ease as a countess's companion to fill the vacant place in the family circle. She had bright eyes and a quick tongue, and did not show such reverence for her new brother as she might have shown. Barron was continually at war with her.

'What is this Mr Sand?' she asked pertly. 'What is his work?'

'Oh, he's a Fellow,' said Barron.

'Indeed! That is very lucid. Is he a nice fellow?'

'He is a Fellow with a capital F, Miss Pattie,' was the rebuking answer—'a Fellow of St Gaston's College. His work is—is—anthropology.'

'And what is that, pray?'

'Oh, skulls,' said Barron—'skulls and skeletons, and all that sort of thing. He's wonderfully clever—so clever that the St Gaston people give him two hundred a year as long as he remains unmarried. They know that marriage spoils clever men, so they bribe them to remain single!'

His triumph was but a brief one.

'Has anybody ever tried to bribe *you* to remain single, John?' asked Miss Pattie icily; and John was so demoralised by the thrust that in another moment he had betrayed the secret of Peter's coat.

The minutes that followed were decidedly troubled ones. Dismay succeeded to incredulity, and indignation to dismay. It was in vain that poor Barron pleaded that a Master of Arts and a Fellow of St Gaston's might wear any coat he liked at any wedding he liked, and even claim to set the fashion. He was told that the idea was an outrage, and that he should have placed his foot upon that blue coat at its first appearance. Miss Pattie declared that she would never, never walk out of church on a blue coat-sleeve, and that her brother Charles must be asked to act as groomsman instead of that Fellow. Then Barron said that he would prefer to walk into church with Peter in a blue coat than with any other living man in a black one. So the matter was left, in the faint hope that the groomsman might be smuggled into a more suitable garment on the morning of the wedding.

'It will be a bad thing for him,' said Miss Pattie, 'if he brings that coat down here.'

'Oh,' said Barron. 'What will you do?'

'I shall simply look at him,' was the quiet reply. 'That is all.'

Barron thought it might prove to be quite enough, for Miss Pattie's eyes had remarkable powers of expressing the colder emotions. He felt sorry for his friend, but was utterly helpless.

On the eve of the wedding Peter came, and Barron introduced him to the bride's relatives. While the groomsman was nervously congratulating the bride, he was himself forced to admit to Miss Pattie that the dreaded coat had come, and would

certainly make its appearance in church. Her eyes flashed dangerously.

'Very well,' she said; 'you know what I promised;' and she took the earliest opportunity of working out her vengeance.

This was at supper, when Peter sat facing her. When he addressed her she answered coldly and without interest; if he glanced in her direction he met a look of abhorrence and contempt which even a scientist could scarcely have mistaken. Barron watched the play, at first in fear, but afterwards in surprise. It appeared to him that Peter did not suffer as he should have suffered. He certainly became more silent, but the glances he returned to the enemy were entirely free from confusion.

'You don't seem to hurt him,' said Barron at last. 'What is wrong?'

'There's nothing wrong,' was the sharp retort. 'He is unusually stupid, that is all.'

Barron laughed. 'Nothing of the kind,' he said. 'He is looking at you continually, and perhaps you notice that his interest is visibly increasing. Don't flatter yourself, Pattie; please, don't. He is simply studying the formation of your head, for anthropological purposes. Peter has a mania for skulls.'

After that blow Barron retreated with honour, and bore the groomsman with him. They spent an hour before sleep in going over the duties of the morning, Peter making further notes in his book, with a face of unexpected interest and earnestness. When this was done he said:

'That young woman, Miss Pattie, has a fine pair of eyes, John.'

'Yes?' said Barron expectantly.

'Yes. I saw her looking at this old coat of mine. It is certainly faded, though I have never noticed it before, and perhaps she thought I intended to wear it to-morrow. I am glad that I have brought my blue one—I am sure she—I mean you—will like it.'

What was coming to Peter? Barron gazed at his pleased and contented face in growing amazement. Could it be possible that Miss Pattie had worked this sudden change? Here was retribution indeed!

'John,' said the anthropologist a little more hesitatingly, a little nervously, 'I believe there is an old custom—a groomsman's privilege—to—to—hem—to kiss the bridesmaid.'

'Eh?' cried Barron; 'the bride, you mean, not the bridesmaid. You kiss the bride.'

'Oh,' said Peter, 'the bride, is it—not the bridesmaid? I see;' and it seemed to Barron that his face had fallen a little. But his own amazement was so great that he could scarcely take notice. He tried to imagine how Pattie would look if Peter tried to carry out his mistaken idea of the old custom, and he wished with all his heart that he had left the thing alone. Then he said 'Good-night' to Peter, and hastened away to his own room to laugh in peace.

In the morning Peter appeared in the dreaded coat. It was a dark blue, and he was so pleased with the effect that Barron, who had prepared another coat for him, could not find courage to destroy his illusions. 'After all,' he thought, 'Peter looks very neat; it is to be a very quiet wedding, and everything will be over in half-an-hour.' So he actually congratulated him upon his appearance, and nerved himself to meet the consequences.

The carriage took them to the church, where they prepared to wait in the vestry until the bridal party should arrive. There Barron spent a few anxious moments in reminding Peter of his various duties. It was at this point that a sudden and startling thought occurred to him.

'Peter,' he exclaimed, 'have you the ring?'

'What ring?' cried Peter, astounded. 'No—upon my word—I haven't!'

The bridegroom said something under his breath. He had not given the ring into Peter's charge on the previous night, fearing that he might leave it behind him, and up to the present moment that horrid coat had so troubled his mind that the matter had quite escaped him. The ring had been forgotten!

He made a rapid calculation. His house was not far off, and the missing article could yet be obtained. It was true that the bride would arrive directly, but if Peter made an effort he might return with the ring by the time it would be needed.

'Run!' he said—'run! You know where it is—in my writing-desk. Run!'

Peter did not wait for further instructions. He caught up the nearest hat—which happened to be Barron's—and rushed out by a side-door. There was no vehicle within call, and he could not go in search of one. Clapping Barron's hat over his brows, he tore away through the quiet churchyard, the tails of his blue coat flying behind him.

When he reached the house he knocked twice without effect. Then he perceived that every one must have gone to the church, and turned in despair and helplessness. As he turned he saw that one of the drawing-room windows had been left unhasped and slightly open.

There was only one thing to be done. He gave a furtive glance up and down the silent, sunny street, and then pushed the sash higher. There was an awkward scramble, and the hat was crushed against the top of the window. In a moment more he was safely inside.

The desk was found, but it was locked. In his agitation Barron had never thought of giving the keys. Peter looked about him once more, picked up a poker, and with one or two blows destroyed the lock.

There was the ring, all ready in its case. There, also, was Barron's pocket-book, which had been forgotten like the ring. Peter grasped the

articles, and was turning to fly, when he found himself face to face with a policeman!

It was a painful meeting. The officer had observed Peter's furtive entry, and had quietly followed. It looked to him a clear case of daylight burglary, and he was one of those obtuse policemen whose convictions it is impossible to move. Peter tried to explain.

'It's a wedding,' he cried, 'and this is the ring. I came back to get it, and they are all waiting at the church. I am the groomsman.'

Then came the tragedy of the coat. This policeman knew all about weddings, for he had often attended at the church doors in an official capacity. He had observed the costumes worn on such occasions, and he had never seen a groomsman in a blue coat. He shook his head stubbornly.

'That's all very well,' he said; but I can't take it, sir. You must walk to the station with me. It's close by.'

Peter saw that argument was vain. The entry by the window, the broken lock, the pocket-book, and, although he did not know it, the blue coat were all against him. By this time the ceremony must have begun, and perhaps they were waiting for the ring. With an exclamation of rage and despair, he hurled both ring and pocket-book into the farthest corner of the room.

At the church, however, matters had gone perfectly. Barron soon decided that Peter must have got into difficulties, and then discovered the keys of the desk in his own pocket. Making the best of the case, he secured the services of Miss Pattie's 'brother Charles' as groomsman, sent him to borrow a ring from one of the ladies, and then went to meet the bride, fully provided. Everything ran smoothly after that until the whole party proceeded to the bride's home for the breakfast.

From there a messenger was sent to look for Peter, and just as the breakfast had begun the missing groomsman made his appearance. What he had suffered during the course of his adventure no one would ever know, but there was in his face a mingling of unutterable emotions. Hatless, dusty, hot, and dishevelled, he stepped into the room, and stared about him. But his chief emotion was anxiety.

'Good gracious, my dear fellow!' cried Barron, 'where have you been? What is the matter? Come and sit here.'

Peter came. He looked at the faces of bride and bridegroom, and saw that all was well. Then he wiped his brows, with a sigh of relief.

'It is all right, then?' he said huskily. 'I have been in a terrible state—thought you couldn't get on without the ring.'

He spoke so strangely that a smile appeared on several faces. One of those at the head of the table, however, did not smile. She was looking

into Peter's face, and it was her voice that murmured, 'Poor fellow!' Barron heard it, and wondered.

The groomsmen took his seat, and told his curious story. It could not have been expected that the poor anthropologist would be a good story-teller; but here was a surprise for all. Peter had been shaken out of himself; he spoke with simple feeling and indignation; his words, his gestures, moved every one to sympathy. The scientist had emotions, in spite of science.

'Imagine the position,' he said. 'The bridegroom waiting for the ring which I had been trusted to get—and the policeman immovable, inflexible! My dear Barron, I was wild—I would have done anything—I would have given a fortune—I would have given up my Fellowship—to get away! . . . I would.'

He paused for breath. Every eye was upon him; every sound was hushed.

'The inspector,' he said, 'was a little more reasonable, and thus I am here. That policeman must have been a little mad, I believe. I could not quite make out his explanation; but it seems that one of his excuses for arresting me was my coat—my coat! It is most extraordinary!'

Then, of course, every one looked at Peter's coat, and saw that it was blue beneath the dust. Barron glanced at Miss Pattie, and she, perceiving his meaning, remembered her threat. She looked at Peter Sand once more, for the third time.

There was no ridicule now, no contempt. Peter's face was flushed; his eyes were bright. Miss Pattie saw in his countenance something that caused her own to soften, to change. She saw, perhaps, an old Peter, the one who had been Barron's friend and had won Barron's faith and loyalty long ago—the plain, unselfish Peter, who, during the whole of this unhappy adventure, had not given one thought to himself. Or perhaps she saw in his face the Peter of a possible future, when some soft hand—a woman's hand—should have brushed away the dust of his studies, and sent him forth, neat and burnished, to face the world again.

Then Peter, in the silence, looked up also, and his eyes met hers. For a moment they gazed at one another, and for the second time that day Peter Sand's Fellowship became a very small thing. Then the incident was over.

'Well, upon my word!' muttered Barron, who had seen it all. 'Upon my word!'

As I have already hinted, everything came about through the blue coat. Had it not been for that, Miss Pattie would have paid no more attention to Peter than to any other fusty scientist, and Peter would never have been led to observe her eyes. Had it not been for the coat, Barron would not have forgotten the ring, Peter would have had no need to break into a house, the policeman would have had no reasonable cause to

doubt his explanation. Further, but for the coat Miss Pattie would never have given Peter that second glance which moved her sympathy for him, or that third glance which laid bare to her quick eyes his simple, unselfish heart and the possibilities that lay beneath the dust.

The remainder of the story is simplicity itself. When the Fellow reached home that night he sat up to a late hour, calculating what amount annually he would be worth if he lost his Fellowship! When he had settled this question he shook his head in a doubtful way, and took down from a shelf those packets of manuscript which were the beginning of his *Epoch of the Mastodon*. They had been neglected for two years; but from that hour he spent a large proportion of his time in adding to and revising them.

He also developed socially, paying frequent visits to Barron under the plea that it was well to keep sight of an old schoolfellow, and that he was greatly benefited by change of scene. It was observed that after each visit he showed signs of further development in the form of increased activity. In six months he looked as many years younger.

His book went to press, and he visited Barron still more regularly. He had found a friend there, he said, who was greatly interested in it, and who desired to see the proofs. It may be remembered, also, that at the time of its publication a chair of Anthropology was founded at the new Hexminster University.

The *Epoch of the Mastodon* made a great mark in scientific circles, where it is still regarded as a standard work. The most prominent candidate for the chair at Hexminster was the author of that book, a neat and scholarly fellow—they write it Fellow—whom few even of his enemies would have called a fossil. He was elected almost unanimously, and on the next day told his admiring landlady that he had resigned his Lectureship and his Fellowship, that he was now Professor Sand of Hexminster, and that he was about to be married.

He also intimated that, in deference to the wishes of his bride, he had visited his tailor, and had ordered a new coat. It was to be a black one!

SONNET.

THE fleeting hours of time flow swiftly on,
 Ev'n as the current of yon running stream,
 Which now goes babbling softly, 'mid the gleam
 Of silver pebbles: soon to rush anon,
 In ever-growing fury, on its way,
 Uprooting trees, and bearing from our sight
 The old landmarks, far out into the night
 Of the dim past. And we the meanwhile stay
 Beside it, gazing with reverted eyes
 On joys departed; or else forward strain,
 Seeking the unknown future to explore,
 Heedless that God, behind us and before,
 Has drawn a screen, through which we gaze in vain.
 Who fills each hour with good alone is wise.

M. C. C.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE PROBLEM OF LONDON.

By an EX-VESTRYMAN.

HOW to govern London is one of the problems of the hour. How London is governed is one of the things 'no fellow can understand,' and least of all the Londoner himself. There is a popular notion that the Lord Mayor is the head of the government of London; but he is only the head of a little bit of it—a square mile, with the population of a moderate-sized country town and the wealth of a kingdom. The Lord Mayor is popular because he is the great dinner-giver of London, because he rides about in a gilded coach, and because he makes an annual 'Show' of himself on the 9th of November. The Londoner dearly loves a show, even if it paralyses his business for the day and keeps him waiting at the railway station for hours before he can get home. The Lord Mayor is a fetich to him, even if he is not, as the French imagine, a *real* lord, and a more important personage than the Prime Minister or the Lord Chancellor. The French understand a good dinner better than the nice distinctions of English municipal and political life! Time was when the head of the City Corporation was the Lord Mayor, and there was no other; but now he is only one of them, there being Lord Mayors of Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and several other large cities, and three or four Lord Provosts. But the Lord Mayor of London is still a very great personage, and his is a name to conjure with when any great work of charity or philanthropy has to be carried through. That, rather than his municipal position, is what makes the Lord Mayor really and deservedly great.

For purposes of local government, London may roughly be divided into two parts—the City and the Metropolis. The City is one, but the Metropolis is many. There are, in fact, several Londons: as Parliamentary London, Police London, Poor London, Postal London, School Board London, Water London, Gas London, and so forth. The area in each case is probably different, and the police area extends over a district of nearly seven

hundred square miles, including the whole of the county of Middlesex and parts of the counties of Surrey, Kent, Essex, and Hertfordshire. The governing authorities are legion. In addition to the City Corporation there is the London County Council, the Vestries, District Boards, Local Boards—a chaotic jumble, all aiming at the same thing by widely different methods. There are two bodies of police—one municipal, the other imperial. The poor are looked after by no fewer than four different organisations—namely, the Local Government Board, the Boards of Guardians, the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and the Metropolitan Common Poor Fund. Education, also, is administered by four separate authorities—namely, the School Board, the Industrial and Reformatory Schools, the Poor Law Schools, and the Technical Education Board. There are no fewer than forty-two 'District Councils,' known as Vestries or District Boards of Works; while the rating authorities are probably beyond computation. Contrast this with the city of Edinburgh, which has one supreme Town Council and a single rating authority!

Let it be said at once, in order to clear the ground, that the City proper—that is, the only part of London which has real municipal government—is admirably managed. But it is enormously costly, the Corporation expenditure being eight hundred thousand pounds per annum, and that of the City Commissioners of Sewers four hundred thousand pounds—or a total of twelve hundred thousand pounds! This is a vast expenditure for an area of six hundred and fifty-nine acres, and a *resident* population of little more than thirty thousand. A large proportion of the total amount is absorbed by what may be termed the 'Great Officers' of the Corporation—a retinue more befitting a monarch than a municipality. In addition to the Lord Mayor himself, who receives ten thousand a year, or the same as the Lord Chancellor, there is the Recorder, with four thousand; the Town Clerk, with three thousand five hundred; the Common Serjeant, with three

thousand; the Solicitor, with over two thousand; the Comptroller, Remembrancer, and Chamberlain, with two thousand each; the 'Secondary' (whatever that may be), with fifteen hundred; the Commissioner of Police, with a similar amount; and a host of other functionaries, such as the Sword-Bearer, the Common Crier, the Marshal, two High Bailiffs, a 'Prothonotary,' and a High Steward. These appointments are made by the Court of Aldermen; and there is often keen competition for them amongst the 'sprigs of nobility,' a baronet holding the office of Marshal, and a colonel that of Common Crier, who must not be confounded with the 'bellman' in some towns. What the 'Marshal' finds to do, unless on the occasion of that annual barbarism, the Lord Mayor's Show, it is difficult to imagine, seeing that he is not in charge of the stalwart policemen who regulate the traffic in the more important streets and thoroughfares of the City. Some of the items of expenditure in the Corporation accounts are striking, to say the least. Thus, civil government costs over seventy thousand pounds a year, collection and management of rates considerably over forty thousand pounds, the London Central Markets over a hundred thousand pounds, and Magistracy and police not far short of fifty thousand pounds. Donations, pensions, &c. stand for more than twenty thousand pounds; while educational expenses figure for only fifteen thousand five hundred odd. Rates do not count for much in the City apparently, as it was discovered recently that about thirty thousand pounds had been lost to the Corporation in six years on account of friction between the Commissioners of Sewers and the Board of Guardians, the loss for the past year being no less than *ten thousand pounds*. This is but another example of the evil results of over-much government, or at least of too many governors. But the Commission of Sewers, which was a kind of *imperium in imperio*, has now ceased to exist, and the sewers are likely to be all the purer for that circumstance.

The City is noted for its hospitality, especially to foreigners of distinction, and, in fact, it may be said to be the representative of the whole of London in this respect. The Lord Mayor's banquets have a world-wide reputation, not only as mere feasts, but as occasions on which State secrets are sometimes disclosed and State policy expounded or foreshadowed. The Mansion House, indeed, usurps the place of the Ministerial Bench in this respect; and a Prime Minister or Foreign Secretary will sometimes thaw under the 'loving cup,' when he would only freeze harder under the blandishments of the Front Opposition Bench. But there are occasions when lighter topics engage the Lord Mayor's guests, as when recently the members of the London County Council were of the number, and the chairman of that body referred to a newspaper which had congratulated the Lord Mayor

on his courage in inviting 'a pack of wolves' to his table. It must have been the same paper which suggested that the lion had lain down with the lamb, and the lamb was not inside the lion, as it is confidently predicted it will be one day. The point, however, to be determined is, which is to be the lion and which the lamb—whether the County Council is to 'make a meal' of the City, or the City of the County Council. It is the custom of the Lord Mayor to look in at the Law Courts on his way back from his 'Show,' to receive the congratulations of the Judges, and to invite their Lordships to the banquet in the evening. Last year a startling innovation was introduced, when the Lord Chief-Justice, instead of indulging in the pompous platitudes proper to the occasion, urged his Lordship, in effect, to hurry back to the City and look after the company promoters—apropos, no doubt, of the Hooley disclosures. It was on an occasion of this kind that the late Frank Lockwood, when quite a junior counsel, receiving a nod from the Lord Mayor of the day, translated it into an invitation to the banquet, and remarked, 'Thank you, my Lord. I think I understood your Lordship to say that the hour was seven.' The hour came, but not the man! There are so many comical stories told about these City banquets that one was not at all surprised, on the occasion of the presentation of the sword of honour to the Sirdar, to find one of the great Corporation officials occupying a considerable time in describing to the victorious general the incidents of the battle of Omdurman! The City, indeed, is the great ceremonial, rather than municipal, centre of London, and the Lord Mayor is the great Master of the Ceremonies.

After the Corporation come the City Companies, twelve of which are described as 'Great,' the remaining sixty-five being of no great consequence apparently. The Mercers come first, with a total income of eighty-three thousand pounds; followed closely by the Drapers, with seventy-eight thousand pounds; the Fishmongers, with fifty-two thousand pounds; the Merchant Taylors, with fifty thousand pounds; and so forth. Some of the minor companies—as the Barbers, the Basketmakers, and the Borderers—have no income at all; while the Glass-sellers have as little as twenty-one pounds, and the Leather-sellers as much as twenty thousand pounds. Of some portion of their property the Companies are merely trustees; but of the 'corporate' property they are the sole owners, are not bound to render any account, and may dispose of the income as they please. Some of the Companies are very liberal in their charities, especially in the way of education, and some understand the art of dinner-giving to perfection. Some invite new members to join, others do their utmost to repel, and all resist to the death any attempts to interfere with or curtail their 'ancient privileges.' They have been the object of anxious solicitude on the part of more than one Royal

Commission; and if they had to choose a common motto, it would probably be: 'Long threatened, long live.' But the time is at hand when something will probably be done. To be a member of a Company you need not necessarily have any connection with the trade or calling indicated by its name or title. Thus, a Royal Duke may be a 'Fishmonger' without having anything to do with fish further than eating it; a Prime Minister may be a 'Skinner' without assuming a knife and a leather apron; and a Chancellor of the Exchequer may be a 'Goldsmith' without enriching the national revenue in any shape or form. Some of the Companies bear the names of decayed or dead industries, as Bowyers, Borderers, Fletchers, Girdlers, Horners, Loriners, and so forth; all of them speak of a time when the primitive rather than the practical predominated in the affairs of life. Although the Companies have no official connection with the Corporation, yet, strange to say, they elect, or at least nominate, the Lord Mayor, whose 'Show' they attend in full regalia. Alas! the gaiety of the 'Show' has been sadly eclipsed since Sir John Bennet ceased to attend in his capacity of 'Citizen and Spectacle-maker'—the 'Show' being a function in which 'Spectacle-makers' had a most appropriate place. The members of the Companies are called Liverymen, and besides the head of the Corporation, they elect also certain of its officers; so that it is difficult to see where the 'choice of the citizens' comes in. The Liverymen have a mysterious influence in City affairs, and on a recent occasion it was said that so long as the Companies and the Corporation hung together there would not be much fear of either. To which the wag of the County Council might have replied that they would certainly *hang together*.

Let us now leave the City for the Metropolis. From St Paul's to St Stephen's it is a short three miles, and yet one must traverse as many territories in order to perform the journey. As far as Temple Bar, or rather the Griffin—that heraldic beast, as Mr Labouchere once termed it—we are in City territory; thence to Charing Cross we are in the territory of the Strand District Board; and beyond this, in the territory of the Westminster Board of Works. It would be just the same if we proceeded eastward by way of Shoreditch and Bethnal Green, or northward by way of Clerkenwell and Islington, or southward by way of Southwark and Newington. We should see a different set of dust-carts at work in each district, a different set of scavengers, and a different set of paviers—for they are always tearing the streets up in London. The only thing that would be the same would be the police, and that only outside the City. What happens when a crime is perpetrated on the borderland is not clear. The division, and subdivision, and sub-subdivision of London for municipal purposes is about as reasonable as if the Old Town of Edinburgh, say, were governed

by the Corporation of that city, and the New Town by the Parish of Cramond or the Parish of Corstorphine. While the city police would patrol the High Street and the Canongate, the county police would patrol Princes Street and George Street; and the electric light would illumine one side of the town, while gas lamps would render visible the darkness of the other. This is no exaggeration of what takes place in London; and it was only the other day that a correspondent of the *Standard* wrote to inquire whether the Vestry of St George's, Hanover Square, intended to 'light Piccadilly this winter,' or to leave it in the condition of 'disastrous darkness,' which largely accounts for the horde of disreputable characters infesting the street at night. To think of it—Piccadilly, the proud, the peerless, the patrician, sighing for 'more light' at the end of the nineteenth century!

The County Council, which is a kind of aggravated Metropolitan Board of Works, is only an advisory and supervisory authority, except so far as matters general to the whole of London are concerned, such as main roads, main drainage, bridges, embankments, parks, fire brigade, and so forth. It (the Council) has only been a mixed success, and it has suffered much at the hands of its friends, from the Prime Minister downwards. It is a parliament rather than a practical working machine, and, like its near neighbour at St Stephen's, it yields torrents of talk to mere rivulets of work. It is supposed to have a kind of general authority in the City, which is part of the county of London. But the City keeps it at arm's-length; and it was noticed, not so long ago, when the Council sent to the Corporation some resolution or other which had been adopted as regards the rest of London, and which it was thought might be beneficial to the City, the Common Council simply smiled and passed on to the next business. The Vestries are more amenable, but not very much; and they go muddling along much as they did in the bad old days of the Metropolitan Board of Works. In point of numbers they are formidable, more than three thousand Vestrymen being elected to the municipal Vestries, and by the smaller Vestries to the district boards. This army ought to be enough to govern even London, one would think. But in the multitude of Vestrymen there is *not* wisdom; and much time is lost in mere wrangling, and, in the case of one or two Vestries, in something worse—strong language, to wit. It was only the other day that the police had to be called in to remove a recalcitrant Vestryman at Camberwell, who kept the Vestry sitting till nearly midnight by his insubordinate conduct. Poor, dear old Bumble still exists in vestrydom, and not until he is exorcised will any real progress be made in the municipal government of London. Forty governing authorities to four millions of people, with the City thrown in, only gives them a hundred thousand each, or less than one-seventh

of the population of the great city of Glasgow, which is governed by a single authority, and very well governed, too.

Nowhere is the helplessness of the citizens of London more striking than in regard to the water-supply. Neither the Corporation nor the County Council has any control over this, and in this respect they are as backward as the Corporation of 1606, which, although they obtained an Act of Parliament empowering them to supply water to the City, assigned the duty to a private citizen, Hugh Myddelton, who in 1620 received a charter for his New River Company from James I. In the quaint words of the charter, 'because the Mayor, Cominaltie, and Citizens . . . did thereupon forbear at their comon charge to undertake that worke, soe as the same lay long neglected, and unlike by them to be performed.' About a hundred years later the Chelsea Water-works were established, and since then no fewer than seven other companies have been called into existence by the ever-increasing wants of the Metropolis; so that there are *nine* companies doing for London what most other cities do for themselves. All the companies are wealthy corporations, with one object in view—namely, dividends. One of them is so wealthy that its shares can only be bought by millionaires, and, even then, only in little bits, the one hundred and fourth part of a 'king's share' having been sold recently for one thousand pounds!

All the companies have most arbitrary powers; and as regards household supply they charge on the rating, so that the amount paid has no relation whatever to the quantity of water supplied, or whether any is supplied at all. Some years ago the charge was on the total rental; and it was left to a private citizen, who happened to be a barrister, to fight the question, and obtain a decision that the companies were only entitled to charge on the assessment. But even this is a more or less barbarous arrangement, and leads to gross injustice on the one hand, and gross waste on the other. The companies all work independently of each other; so that, as in the recent East End scandal, one part of London may be suffering from water-famine, while the other parts are deluged with supplies. The companies always adopt the *non possumus* attitude on occasions of failure. They begin by denying that there is any scarcity; then they say, if there is, it is due to frost, or drought, or waste, or evaporation, or, in fact, to any cause but the *laches* of the company. The ludicrous element in the recent failure was supplied by the spectacle of thousands of people carrying their water from the stand-pipes in the streets, in cans and pots supplied by the Vestries, or receiving it from carts which perambulated the streets. This at the end of the nineteenth century, in a city of four million inhabitants! The tragic element was supplied when the Bishop of Stepney had to go half a

mile to get a glass of water for a dying woman. Nor is the water at any time of the best, being taken for the most part from the Thames and Lea, both of which are more or less polluted, the Lea rather more than less. But one would imagine, from some of the evidence given before Royal Commissions, that bacteria and germs in water were rather beneficial than otherwise. Perhaps that is the reason why, at this time of day, the authorities are still debating whether London should do what most other great cities and some small ones have long ago done—go to the hills and the valleys for water. The companies say they shall not go, nor will they sell themselves to the County Council, whose members the chairman of the East London Company has described as the 'Jack Cades of the nineteenth century.'

Gas is only less important than water, and here, also, the citizens of London are at the mercy of companies whose main object is dividends. At one time there were several companies, so that there was a show, at least, of competition. Now there are practically only two, and an unregulated monopoly, with powers only less arbitrary than those of the water companies, is in full swing all over London. The quality of London gas is well known, but the price is not so easily determined; and it was only in the last session of Parliament that complaint was made that the price on one side of the Thames was higher than that on the other, although the conditions of manufacture, one would think, must be the same on both sides. Surely the manufacture and sale of gas, in which some municipalities earn considerable profits which go in reduction of rates, is a matter more germane to the functions of the County Council than the working of tramways. The city of Glasgow has a gas revenue considerably in excess of six hundred thousand pounds, and an electric light revenue of thirty-six thousand pounds besides. But London cares for none of these things apparently.

The social aspects of London life are equally neglected with other things under the present régime. Overcrowding, the ghastly bane of modern communities, prevails everywhere—overcrowding, not simply of areas, but of houses, of streets, of railways, and, in fact, of every species of locomotion. In an 'overcrowded' map of London, contained in Mr Frederick Whelen's most excellent work on *London Government*, the districts around the City—Holborn, Clerkenwell, St Luke's, Whitechapel, and St George's in the East—are all coloured a deep black, so that the greatest poverty surrounds the greatest wealth. Here, surely, is a field for the surplus energies and the surplus funds of the City Companies, which would yield a more blessed reward than the giving of costly banquets to persons of the highest consideration and of no consideration. The *Daily News*, under the heading of 'No Room to Live,' has recently published a series of articles on overcrowded

London, showing that one-fifth of the population—that is, not far short of a million—is living under conditions disastrous alike to health and to morals. Overcrowding in the streets is also a serious evil, as well as a great commercial loss to the City. Charles Lamb once said, in a moment of ecstasy with London life: ‘I often shed tears in the motley Strand, from fullness of joy at so much life.’ What would he say to-day, when the omnibuses have been interdicted from stopping at certain historical landmarks, and waiting cabs and sandwich-men have been ordered off the streets from the sheer necessities of the ever-increasing traffic? And what would Dr Johnson’s opinion be of a ‘walk down Fleet Street’ in this year of grace 1899, on the afternoon, say, of the Boat Race day? We all admire the efforts of the stalwart policemen who regulate the traffic in the streets. Do we ever consider that it would be better to *prevent* blocks of traffic than to regulate them; better to direct ‘through’ traffic into one channel *at the start*, and ‘pick-up’ traffic into another, so that each might pursue its separate course unhindered by the other? Your London wagoner is a very conservative gentleman; and, rather than take a new route, he would stand blocked in the old one for hours. The comparative quiet of the Thames Embankment to this day is the best evidence of that.

Sir John Wolfe Barry, the eminent engineer, and chairman of the Council of the Society of Arts, read a paper recently, in which he advocated the construction of great arterial thoroughfares from east to west and from south to north, on a comprehensive plan, and with due regard to the needs of the future. He claimed no originality for the idea, but pointed out that such a plan was laid down by Sir Christopher Wren, and published in 1724, for the renovation of the City after the Great Fire of London. But it fell aside, no doubt from the fact that then, as now, Metropolitan London was without any authority able or willing to deal with the subject. The block on the suburban railways has become so much a matter of course that one newspaper has a permanent heading, ‘The Rush to the City;’ while accidents are reported daily from overcrowding both of carriages and platforms. The managers say they cannot run any more trains in the morning and evening with due regard to safety, and it must come to this one day, that the hours of business in the City will have to be lengthened, and the employes work in relays, so as to spread the hours of travelling over a longer time. The postmen cannot get to their work in the early morning (5 A.M.) from want of trains on the underground lines, and the managers say they cannot put on any more, as there would be no time in which to effect repairs to the line. The rails even now never get ‘cool;’ and as for the tunnels, they are never clear of steam and foul air. The *Spectator*

looks forward to the time when water and electricity will replace steam, and when industries will move into the country, and so relieve the pressure in London. It would even go the length of building schools in the country, and sending children out by train to them. But that is surely a dream, although the transfer of industries to the country would take many children there too, and is not only practicable but highly desirable. The printing and publishing industries have, in fact, already taken an important step in this direction.

What is to be the future of London government? In 1895 what is known as the Unification Commission was appointed, its instructions being to consider ‘the proper conditions under which the amalgamation of the City and County of London can be effected, and to make specific and practical proposals for that purpose.’ Briefly stated, the Commission recommended that the City Corporation should take the place of the County Council, and should rule over the whole of London—the present ‘City’ being styled in future the ‘Old City’ for the purposes of local government. It was seen from the first that this would never do, and even the City authorities themselves did not like it, their representative and witnesses retiring from the commission at a comparatively early stage. So much for ‘unification,’ which was practically dropped as soon as proposed. Since then a ‘tenification’ proposal has been put forward, which is understood to be supported by Mr Chamberlain, probably because a tenth of the population of London would about represent the population of Birmingham, of which he has been Mayor and is still a resident. More recently a ‘fortification’ party has come to the front, which simply means a continuance of the present system, under which London is cut up into little bits for the gratification and glory of vestrydom. To the lay mind, uninfluenced by local interests and unhampered by tradition, the matter seems simple enough. One London is too few; ten Londons are too many; forty Londons are simply the Vestries over again, with the presiding officer designated as Mayor instead of chairman. Forty mayors and—forty beadles. Heaven forefend!

As an alternative to these proposals, let us propose—(1) the City of London as at present constituted, with the addition of all the East End and River-side districts, *where the wealth of the City is earned*, and of Clerkenwell and Holborn, which are contiguous to the City boundary; (2) the City of Westminster, to include the whole of what is known as the ‘West End,’ and with Battersea added as a counterpoise to the wealth of Belgravia; (3) the Borough of London North (or Islington, if preferred); and (4) the Borough of London South (or Lambeth, if preferred). This would practically take the heart out of London; and as the population of each of the divisions would hardly exceed a million, they could not be considered too large, in view of

the fact that Glasgow, with a population of three quarters of a million, and a total revenue of nearly two and a quarter millions, is managed both with ease and efficiency by a single governing authority. The aldermen of the several divisions might form a County Council for matters common to the whole of London, with the Lord Mayor of the City as chairman. An outer ring of Vestries might deal with the outlying suburbs, under the control of the County Council. If this is considered too simple, the next best plan would probably be to found municipalities on the Parliamentary divisions, although this would be somewhat in excess of the proposal for 'tenification.' Having regard to the fact that the total cost of London local government is represented by the enormous sum of *thirteen millions* annually, and that the total metropolitan debt is upwards of forty millions sterling, or about ten pounds per head of the population, the importance of efficient and economical government is too urgent to be much longer neglected.

Londoners, as has been said, know little of the way in which they are governed, and care less. Only the other day the *Spectator* said that there are times when the indifference of Londoners to the way in which they are governed made it almost despair of improvement. Their business interests lie in one quarter, their home interests in another; and such a thing as combination is practically unknown amongst them, else they had long ago combined against the water tyranny. They may live in the same house for half their lives, and never know the name even of their next-door neighbour. They are a long-suffering, law-abiding class, and put up with indignities and inconveniences which the

dwellers in the smallest of well-regulated communities would not endure for a moment. If their nights are made hideous by the howling of a neighbour's dog, the magistrate tells them to start a dog of their own and howl the other down; or, if their mornings are made miserable by the crowing of a neighbour's cock, they are told by the same unimpeachable authority that they belong to the 'noble army of faddists who are the spoilt darlings of the nation,' and that they are unable to realise the delights of the 'natural sounds of animal life.' What they endure at the hands of the railway companies is beyond all calculation, and a large portion of their day is wasted in getting to and from their business, if it be in the City, as it mostly is. Social conditions are getting worse every day; and the time dreamed of by Mr Frederic Harrison, when the population shall be reduced to two millions, and when the Thames shall 'run as clear as it did in the days of old,' is receding instead of approaching. What London will be fifty, or even twenty-five, years hence who can tell, especially when it is remembered that in 1801 the population was *less than a million*? Old Blucher said of London, a good many years ago, 'What a city to sack!' If he were to come back to-day he would probably say, 'What a city to starve!' For it is one of the problems of London how the city would be fed if our grain ships were blockaded at the mouth of the Thames or harried on the high seas. Another problem is: What would become of the law-abiding population if the bottled-up forces of Anarchy and revolutionary Socialism, at present under the surface, were to discover their strength, and, at the same time, the weakness of a divided and too widely distributed police force?

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XV.



WHY he should have been so surprised at meeting Maas on board the steamer that evening Browne has never been able to understand. The fact, however, remains that he *was* surprised, and unpleasantly so. The truth of the matter was, he wanted to be alone, to think of Katherine and of the work he had pledged himself to accomplish. Even when one is head over ears in love, however, the common usages of society may claim some moderate share of attention; and, all things considered, civility to one's friends is perhaps the first of these. For this reason Browne paced the deck with Maas, watching the lights of Calais growing smaller each time they turned their faces towards the stern of the vessel. Every turn of the paddle-wheels seemed to be taking Katherine

farther and farther from him; and yet, was he not travelling to England on her errand, was he not wearing a ring she had given him upon his finger, and was not the memory of her face continually with him? Maas noticed that he was unusually quiet and preoccupied, and attempted to rally him upon the subject. He was the possessor of a peculiarly ingratiating manner; and, much to his own surprise, Browne found himself, before they had been very long on board, telling him the news that was destined to sorely trouble the hearts of mothers with marriageable daughters before the next few weeks were out.

'I am sure I congratulate you most heartily, my dear fellow,' said Maas, with a fine show of enthusiasm. 'I have had my suspicions that something of the kind was in the air for some considerable time past; but I did not know that

it was quite so near at hand. I trust we shall soon be permitted the honour of making the young lady's acquaintance.'

'I am afraid that will not be for some considerable time to come,' Browne replied.

'How so?' asked Maas. 'What are you going to do?'

'As I told you the other day, I am thinking of leaving England on a rather extended yachting cruise to the Farther East.'

'Ah, I remember you did say something about it,' Maas continued. 'Your *fiancée* will accompany you, of course?'

Browne scarcely knew what reply to offer to this speech. He had no desire to allow Maas to suspect his secret, and at the same time his conscience would not permit him to tell a deliberate untruth. Suddenly he saw a way out of his difficulty.

'We shall meet in Japan, in all probability,' he answered; 'but she will not go out with me.'

'What a pity!' said Maas, who had suddenly become very interested in what his companion was saying to him. 'There is no place like a yacht, I think, at such a time. I do not, of course, speak from experience; I should imagine, however, that the rippling of the water alongside, and the quiet of the deck at night, would be eminently conducive to love-making.'

To this speech Browne offered no reply. The train of thought it conjured up was too pleasant, and at the same time too sacred, to be shared with any one else. He was picturing the yacht making her way across a phosphorescent sea, with the brilliant tropic stars shining overhead, and Katherine by his side, the only sound to be heard being the steady pulsation of the screw and the gentle ripple of the water alongside.

At last the lights of Dover were to be distinctly seen ahead. The passage had not been altogether a smooth one, and for this reason the decks did not contain as many passengers as usual. Now, however, the latter were beginning to appear again, getting their luggage together and preparing for going ashore, with that bustle that usually characterises the last ten minutes on board a Channel steamer. Always an amusing and interesting companion, Maas on this particular occasion exerted himself to the utmost to please. By the time they reached Charing Cross, Browne had to admit to himself that he had never had a more enjoyable journey. The time had slipped by so quickly and so pleasantly that he had been permitted no opportunity of feeling lonely.

'I hope I shall see you again before you go,' said Maas as they stood together in the courtyard of the station on the lookout for Browne's hansom, which was awaiting its turn to pull up at the steps. 'When do you think you will be starting?'

'That is more than I can tell you,' said Browne. 'I have a great many arrangements

to make before I can think about going. However, I am certain to drop across you somewhere. In the meantime, can I give you a lift?'

'No, thank you,' said Maas. 'I shall take a cab and look in at the club before I go home. I could not sleep until I had heard the news of the town; who has married who, and who has run away with somebody else. Now, here is your cab; so let me wish you good-night. Many thanks for your society.'

Before Browne went to bed that night he ascended to his magnificent picture gallery, the same which had been the pride and glory of his father's heart, and, turning up the electric light, examined a picture which had lately been hung at the farther end. It was a Norwegian subject, and represented the mountains overlooking the little landlocked harbour of Merok. How much had happened since he had last looked upon that scene, and what a vital change that chance-meeting had brought about in his life! It seemed scarcely believable, and yet how true it all was! And some day, if all went well, Katherine would stand in the selfsame hall looking upon the same picture, mistress of the beautiful house and all it contained. Before that consummation could be brought about, however, they had a difficult piece of work to do. And what would happen supposing he should never return? What if he should fall into the hands of the Russian Government? That such a fate might befall him was far from being unlikely, and it would behove him to take all precautions in case it should occur. In his own mind he knew exactly what those precautions would be. Waking from the day-dream into which he had fallen, he glanced once more at the picture, and then, with a little sigh for he knew not what, made his way to his bedroom and retired to rest. Next morning he was up betimes, and by nine o'clock had telegraphed to Southampton for the captain of his yacht. At ten o'clock he ordered his hansom and drove to his lawyers' office in Chancery Lane. The senior partner had that moment arrived, so the clerk informed him.

'If you will be kind enough to step this way, sir,' the youth continued, 'I will conduct you to him.'

Browne did as he was requested, and followed him down a passage to a room at the farther end. Browne's visits were red-letter days in the calendar of the firm. When the lad returned to his high stool in the office it was to wonder how he would spend his time if he were the possessor of such enormous wealth. It is questionable whether he would have considered Browne so fortunate had he been made acquainted with all the circumstances of the case. He was an irreproachable youth in every way, who during the week wore a respectable black coat and top-hat, and lived at Blackheath; while on Sundays he rode a tandem bicycle with the girl of his heart,

and dreamt of the cottage they were to share together directly the firm could be persuaded to make the salary on which it was to be supported a little more elastic.

'How do you do, my dear Mr Browne?' inquired the lawyer, rising from his chair as Browne entered, and extending his hand. 'I understood you were in Paris.'

'I returned last night,' said Browne. 'I came up early because I want to see you on rather important business.'

'I am always at your service,' replied the lawyer, bringing forward a chair for Browne's use. 'I hope you are not very much worried.'

'As a matter of fact, Bretherton, I have come to see you because at last I am going to follow your advice, and—well, the long and the short of it is, I am going to be married!'

The lawyer almost jumped from his chair in surprise. 'I am delighted to hear it,' he answered. 'As I have so often said, I feel sure you could not do a wiser thing. I have not the pleasure of knowing Miss Verney; nevertheless'—

Browne held up his hand in expostulation. 'My dear fellow,' he said, with a laugh, 'you are on the wrong scent altogether. What on earth makes you think I am going to marry Miss Verney? I never had any such notion.'

The lawyer's face was a study in bewilderment. 'But I certainly understood,' he began, 'that'—

'So have a great many other people,' said Browne. 'But I can assure you it is not the case. The lady I am going to marry is a Russian.'

'Ah, to be sure,' continued the lawyer. 'Now I come to think of it, I remember that my wife pointed out to me in some ladies' paper that the Princess Volgourouki was one of your yachting party at Cowes last summer.'

'Not the Princess either,' said Browne. 'You seem bent upon getting upon the wrong tack. My *fiancée* is not a millionairess; her name is Petrovitch. She is an orphan, an artist, and has an income of about three hundred pounds a year.'

The lawyer was unmistakably shocked and disappointed. He had hoped to be able to go home that night and inform his wife that he was the first to hear of the approaching marriage of his great client with some well-known beautiful aristocrat or heiress. Now to find that he was going to espouse a girl who was not only unknown to the great world, but was quite lacking in wealth, was a disappointment almost too great to be borne. It almost seemed as if Browne had offered him a personal affront; for, although his client was, in most respects, an easy-going young man, still the lawyer was very well aware that there were times when he could be as obstinate as any other man. For this reason he held his tongue, and contented himself with bowing and drawing a sheet of notepaper

towards him. Then, taking up a pen, he inquired in what way he could be of service.

'The fact of the matter is, Bretherton,' the other began, 'I have a communication to make to you which I scarcely know how to enter upon. The worst of it is that, for very many reasons, I cannot tell you anything definite. You must fill in the blanks according to your own taste and fancy; and, according to how much you can understand, you can advise me as to the best course for me to pursue.'

He paused for a moment, and during the interval the lawyer withdrew his glasses from his nose, polished them, and replaced them. Having done so, he placed his finger-tips together, and, looking at Browne over them, waited for him to proceed.

'The fact of the matter is,' said the latter, 'before I marry I have pledged myself to the accomplishment of a certain work, the nature of which I cannot explain—I have given my word that I will reveal nothing. However, the fact remains that it will take me into some rather strange quarters for a time; and for this reason it is just possible that I—well, that you may never see me again.'

'My dear Mr Browne,' said the lawyer, aghast with surprise, 'you astonish me more than I can say. Can it be that you are running such risk of your own free-will? I cannot believe that you are serious.'

'But I am,' Browne replied; 'perfectly serious.' 'But have you considered everything? Think what this may mean, not only to the young lady you are about to marry, but to all your friends.'

'I have considered everything,' said Browne.

The lawyer was, however, by no means satisfied. 'But, my dear sir,' he continued, 'is there no way in which you can get out of it?'

'Not one,' said Browne. 'I have given the matter my earnest attention, and have pledged myself to carry it out. No argument will move me. What I want you to do is to make my will to suit the exigencies of the case.'

'Perhaps it would not be troubling you too much to let me know of what they consist,' said the lawyer, whose professional ideas were altogether shocked by such unusual—he almost thought insane—behaviour.

'Well, to put it in a few words,' said Browne, 'I want you to arrange that, in the event of anything happening to me, all of which I am possessed, with the exception of such specific bequests as those of which you are aware, shall pass to the lady whom I would have made my wife had I not died. Do you understand?'

'I understand,' said the lawyer; 'and if you will furnish me with the particulars I will have a fresh will drawn up. But I confess to you I do not approve of the step you are taking.'

'I am sorry for that,' Browne replied. 'But if

you were in my place I fancy you would act as I am doing.' Having said this, he gave the lawyer the particulars he required; and when he left the office a quarter of an hour or so later he had made Katherine Petrovitch the inheritor of the greater part of his enormous wealth. Whatever should happen to him within the next few months she would at least be provided for. From his lawyer's office he drove to his bank to deposit certain papers; then to his tailor; and finally back to his own house in Park Lane, where he hoped and expected to find the captain of his yacht awaiting him. He was not disappointed. Captain Mason had just arrived, and was in the library at that moment. The latter was not of the usual yachting type. He was

short and stout, possessed an unusually red face, which was still further ornamented by a fringe of beard below his chin; he had been at sea, man and boy, all his life, and had no sympathy with his brother-skipper who had picked up their business in the Channel, and whose longest cruise had been to the Mediterranean and back; he had been in old Browne's employ for ten years, and in that of his son after him. What was more, he had earned the trust and esteem of all with whom he was brought in contact; and when Browne opened the door and found that smiling, cheerful face confronting him, he derived a feeling of greater satisfaction from it than he had done from anything for some considerable time past.

WHO ABOLISHED FLOGGING IN THE ARMY?



ALTHOUGH it was not until the Army Act of 1881 became law that flogging in the British army was formally abolished, the death-knell of the barbarous practice was set ringing thirty-four years previously.

An incident then occurred which—chiefly through the medium of the press—was brought to light, and produced not only considerable commotion, but caused a revulsion in public opinion and sentiment on this question. Frederick John White, a private in the Seventh Hussars, one May-day in the year 1846, in a hasty moment, suddenly assaulted his sergeant at Hounslow Barracks. This brought him before the district court-martial, and he was sentenced to receive one hundred and fifty lashes on the bare back. Even in those days, when soldiers were severely flogged for the most trivial breaches of discipline, the punishment was not only cruel, but altogether out of proportion to the offence committed. But, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, the sentence stood irrevocable. So, on the 15th June of the said year, two regimental farriers carried out the sentence with the cat-o'-nine-tails. White was a smart soldier, strong, and well set-up; and, notwithstanding the fact that he had been kept without food for seventeen hours previously, he bore the torture manfully; the colonel and the surgeon of the regiment looking on meanwhile. Swish! swish! swish! fell the blows, until, by the time the full tale was told, the poor victim's back was terribly lacerated and running with blood. When all was over he dragged his weak, bleeding, and pain-stricken body to the station hospital. Here his first request was for a jug of tea to quench his feverish thirst; but—and be it said with shame—this reasonable and natural request was refused by the sergeant. On being examined by the doctor, it was discovered that between the shoulder-blades there was a wound

about six inches long and from four to five inches wide; and the ward-book was noted to the effect that White had been 'severely punished from the neck to the loins.' The usual treatment in such cases was adopted, such as hot fomentations and the application of lead ointment; but in a few days boils began to appear on the patient's back; a little while later he complained of pain in the right side; still later symptoms of pleurisy and pneumonia manifested themselves, and then paralysis of the lower extremities supervened. Hereupon he was moved from the surgical side to the medical side of the hospital, where he died on the morning of the 11th July 1846.

This was an unfortunate and serious sequel; and the regimental authorities thought so too, inasmuch as the colonel and the doctor reported the case to the Director-General of the Army Medical Department. Sir James McGrigor, the Director, evidently thought that it would be a grave reflection on all concerned if the idea should get wind that a soldier had died in the hospital as the result of a flogging; so he instructed a first-class staff-surgeon to proceed to Hounslow, and, if necessary, to hold a post-mortem examination. An examination was duly made, and the report of the three surgeons engaged was as follows: 'Having made a careful post-mortem examination of Private Frederick White of the Seventh Hussars, we are of opinion that he died from inflammation of the pleura and of the membrane of the heart; and we are further of opinion that the cause of death was in no wise connected with the corporal punishment he received on the 15th June last.'

So far, so good. Arrangements had now to be made for the burial. These were left to the regimental sergeant-major, who, armed with the certificate of death, set off to see the vicar of Heston, in whose parish the barracks were situated. The sergeant happened to say incidentally that the death was the result of liver com-

plaint. 'That's very strange,' said the Rev. H. S. Trimmer, the vicar. 'According to the certificate, the cause of death was inflammation of the heart—a totally different thing.' The sergeant was taken quite aback; and, in answer to the vicar's further inquiries, frankly admitted that Private White had been flogged a few weeks previously. 'Then,' said Mr Trimmer, 'in the circumstances, I shall refuse to allow the body to be buried without an order from the coroner.' The coroner was communicated with, and on the 15th July the first inquiry was held. The evidence, although of a conflicting nature, was nevertheless very damaging to the military authorities; and the jury did not disguise their abhorrence of the transaction, or their sympathy with the victim. Brushing to one side the post-mortem already held, they desired that a further examination by an independent medical man should be made. An Isleworth doctor was deputed to undertake this, and meanwhile the inquiry was adjourned. On the 20th of the month the jury met to receive the doctor's report. It was discovered, however, that he had only made a partial examination, having neglected to examine the back and spine of the deceased. The coroner and jury were not to be beaten. The latter requested the coroner to appoint a London surgeon of eminence in no way connected with the case, and, if possible, ignorant of the circumstances, to make an exhaustive examination of the body. The coroner's choice fell on Dr Erasmus Wilson (afterwards Sir Erasmus Wilson). Dr Wilson was only thirty-seven years of age at the time; but even then he occupied a high position in the profession. He was consulting surgeon to the St Pancras Infirmary, lecturer on anatomy and physiology at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School, and had written standard works on these two subjects and on cutaneous diseases; so that he was eminently qualified to undertake the task. At the third inquiry, held on the 3d of August, the

whole of the evidence was complete, and the report of Dr Erasmus Wilson was submitted. His opinion was that Frederick John White would have been living had not the punishment been inflicted. He had no doubt whatever on this point. In the face of so conclusive a report from such an eminent and reliable authority, the jury had no hesitation in finding a verdict; and although it is somewhat verbose, it is worth recording once more. It ran as follows:


That on July 11, 1846, the deceased, Frederick John White, died from the mortal effects of a severe and cruel flogging of one hundred and fifty lashes, which he received with certain whips, on the 15th day of June 1846, at the Cavalry Barracks, Hounslow Heath, at Heston, and that the said flogging was inflicted upon him under a sentence passed by a district court-martial composed of officers of the Seventh Regiment of Hussars, duly constituted for his trial. That the said court-martial was authorised by law to pass the said severe and cruel sentence, and that the said flogging was inflicted upon the back and neck of the said Frederick John White by two farriers in the presence of John James Whyte, the Lieutenant-Colonel, and James Law Warren, the surgeon, of the said regiment, and that so and by means of the said flogging the death of the said Frederick John White was caused.

Immediately on the promulgation of this verdict, with the added rider calling upon every man in the kingdom to join hand and heart in forwarding petitions to the legislature praying in the most urgent terms for the abolition of the disgraceful practice of flogging, several important modifications in this method of punishment were introduced, until, as we have seen, it was finally abolished.

We shall not be far wrong, therefore, in concluding that if the name of Captain John Brown of Harper's Ferry stands in the popular judgment for the abolition of slavery in America, so ought the name of Private Frederick John White of the Seventh Hussars to stand for the abolition of military flogging in Britain.

ONLY A DOG: AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

PART II.

T the time I am now speaking of I was finishing up a bit of ground on a rush at the back of the Yackandandah, towards what I see they now call on the maps the Kiewa Creek, and I had a touch of the Gippsland fever, like my neighbours. I had got acquainted with a chap of the name of Tom Lawrence; he camped close by me in a little single tent the same as mine; he was regularly stone-broke, clean out of luck. He seemed a very decent sort of chap, a good bit older than I was; he had been to sea and travelled a lot, so he could spin a simple native lad like me all sorts of interesting yarns about foreign countries and things he

had done and seen there. He was mad about Gippsland too, and when we got a bit more intimate he let out that he had a great secret about that part. In some way which was never very clear to me, he said he had got hold of the bearings of a gully right in the heart of the ranges, where some prospectors had got most wonderful prospects—that all their rations were done, and they were nearly starved out when they struck the gold, and couldn't stop. They got bashed on their way back, and had all died except one man, who, I suppose, was kept alive on purpose to tell Lawrence all about the place.

'He was only waiting to make a bit of a rise and get a good mate to start off to this new El

Dorado; he was quite sure he could find it; and so on. An old gag, that's stale enough now, and that, I dare say, you have heard many a time, boss. You can imagine all the rest, I dare say, and guess that I was flat enough to offer to find the needful for the trip.

'I had sent the better part of my gold to Melbourne by escort, but kept a great deal too much money by me. You see, I hadn't much sense in those days. I had close on £250 in notes and gold. It took near on £50 to get a horse and saddle, &c., for Tom, and a good stock of rations and other things; everything was very dear in those days. I had two horses of my own—one for saddle and one for pack. When it came to fixing up the swags he was all for leaving his tent behind, and making mine do for the two of us; but I didn't fancy this at all, as it was too small; and besides, I always made Jock come into the tent along with me at night; so it was settled to take both tents, and each of us pitch his own at night. And very thankful I ought to be we did, or else I should not be here to-night. I must now tell you that by this time my Jock had become a splendid beast; you could not have found his equal on the diggings. People often wondered at the way I had him trained to the whistle, which I always carried on me. He was something like your little dog in temper, and just exactly the same colour. He would not make friends with any one, and had a terrible "scunner" or dislike to Lawrence, who, I am sure, returned the feeling.

'So now, boss, you can amuse yourself fancying us all packed up ready for a start into the ranges, while I have a spell and a draw of the pipe.'

All the while Jim had been talking little Jock was perched upon the chair, ears cocked up, looking first at one, then at the other, and seeming to pay the greatest attention to the story; and it was amusing to me to notice that, quite involuntarily, Jim seemed to address himself as much to the dog as he did to me.

After a good smoke and a nip he started off again.

'It didn't take long from where we were to get into rough country, but before we camped for the first night I had made up my mind as to one of three things: either Tom was not very sure of his bearings, or he was foxing his track, or he was a very poor bushman. By foxing his track I mean trying to confuse me by doubling on his tracks, as to the actual direction and distance we had gone. This rather tickled my fancy, as I was always counted a first-rate bushman, and some of the Mudgee country is quite difficult enough to try a fellow's metal. I could have told him when we camped exactly the direction of our starting-point, and very close on how far it was off.

'That night I was a good deal disturbed; for, instead of coming into the tent as usual, Jock prowled round and round it nearly all night, and woke me twice by his fierce growling. The next

day the travelling was much of the same kind. Certainly we were getting well into the ranges, but we had gone over a lot of useless ground. At night again Jock repeated the same tactics. It was to have taken us only three days to get to the wonderful gully. Tom pretended he had gone astray a little, but we should be there early on the fourth, he was sure. That day, the third out, we crossed what Tom called two rivers, but which I knew to be the same stream which we had crossed and recrossed. It was, in fact, the Mitta Mitta, as I found out afterwards, and we had recrossed it not a very great distance below where the Omeo rush took place afterwards. In fact, I take it, from looking at the map afterwards—for I was never in that country again—that he was poking about in the country somewhere between Mr Wills and Mr Cooper, as they are now called on the maps, and not in the district at all that is known now as Gippsland proper.

'The third night passed off quietly enough, Jock still on the watch. In the morning Tom felt sure to strike the place that day. You'll bear in mind that since early in the first day there had been no track of any kind to follow, and the going in the ranges was very rough. This day it was worse than ever; but about noon, from the top of a high spur, I saw away to our left, nearly in a nor'-westerly direction, a queer-shaped hill, that I felt certain I had noticed on the second day; and then I knew to what an extent we had been travelling in circles, and that we weren't so very far from our starting-point either. There was no use in saying anything; it was natural enough for a chap who wasn't well used to the bush to get a bit mixed in such country; besides, if the worst happened, and he couldn't find his gully, I had noticed plenty of likely-looking country, and we might do worse than prospect it on our own hook. In the afternoon he got quite confident again.

"I have the right bearing now. See that high bluff with the great boulders piled up like a tower? Well, we ought to find what we want round the foot of that."

'He pushed on now quite briskly, and I remember thinking that he rode more like a man getting to a place he knew than to one of which he had only a description of the bearings. We were going up the bed of a good-sized creek, and an hour or so before sundown he turned sharply off into a widish gully running up to the big spur or bluff, and in which at a distance I could see traces of workings.

"Here we are," he said. "What do you think of me for a bush pilot?"

'Well, I thought very little of his piloting, but said nothing, and we started to camp. The horses, hobbled and belled, were turned up the gully—it was what you would call more of a flat than a gully—tents pitched, and a fire started. While the billy was boiling I strolled up the Flat to see how much work had been done, and found a good

deal more than I expected. About twenty shafts had been sunk, coming down the Flat on the far side. The water-course was on the side of our camp. They started near the top of the Flat, in about six feet of ground, getting deeper as they came down, till the bottom one, about seventy or eighty yards from the camp, was quite twenty feet deep. That evening we had a bit of a chat over the fire. Tom said he did not know where the best prospects had been got. "But we'll try all the shafts to-morrow; most likely the deepest ones are the best."

'Then he started the subject of Jock, who had been getting more cranky towards him every day, and was then crouched down by my side as close as he could get. He said I should have to chain Jock up if we wanted to do any work—that he would be frightened to move about with that great savage beast ready to fly at him any moment.

'This was right enough. I was a bit puzzled myself at Jock's behaviour; he didn't like any strangers, but I had never seen him go on with any one I had worked with before like he did with Tom; he never took his eyes off him for an instant, and watched his every movement, except when on horseback, and I felt all the time the dog could hardly keep from flying at the man's throat. So I said I would fix him up all right in the morning at the tents, which he had been used to guard.

'Before turning in I had a look round. The moon, near the full, was shining brightly, and the air felt sharp and frosty. It was about as wild a camp as I ever saw. The Flat was shut in by high ridges, and towards its head the big bluff loomed up, with the great masses of rock piled up one on the other, and glistening white in the moonlight, like an old giant's castle; though, for that matter, I never saw a castle in my life. The warrigals were tuning up all round, and their music don't ever sound very cheerful.

'Altogether I felt a bit queer and lonely that night, and was glad to roll into the blankets. I made Jock come inside the tent. He didn't want to, but I insisted; so in he came and lay down alongside me. He licked my face all over, rubbed his great hairy muzzle against my cheek, and whined softly. Poor old chap! He wanted badly to tell me something. So there I lay with the good dog's nose against my face, my arm over his neck, and tried to sleep, but it was no use for ever so long. I couldn't help thinking over the last few days. I felt certain now that all the story Tom had told me about how he came to hear of this spot was a fraud. As sure as I lay there, he had been here before. There was no deceiving a thorough bushman in that. The confident way he rode at the finish and many little things proved that to me. I thought our journey over carefully. I felt pretty sure that we weren't more than about forty miles as the crow flies from our start—say one long day's ride through

the mountains—and we had been four days knocking about in the ranges. What I couldn't settle was whether he could have come here straight at the first, or whether he had really got bushed. I know now all about it; he had been just pottering about, waiting for a chance to do for me at night, but Jock's watchfulness had saved me. You mustn't think I had any suspicions of anything wrong. I had never heard or read or dreamt of any such infernal villainy as the scoundrel lying in the other tent was hatching. It never even entered into my head to be uneasy about the money I had on me—a good £200, mostly in notes, which I carried in a pouch inside my shirt. At any rate I meant to have a look at the ground, and then tackle Tom straight, and make him own up what were his reasons for pitching me such a lot of lies. Then I fell asleep. Jock roused me by stretching and shaking himself, and I found it was close on sunrise, so I turned out. Tom was up; and telling him if he would get the billy boiled I would look up the horses, Jock and I turned up the Flat, where, just before falling asleep, I had heard their bells tinkling. We hadn't gone far when I spied the remains of an old camp, and had a look over it. There had been two good-sized tents, the poles still standing; and I could see that the chaps, whoever they had been, had started to get out timbers and laths for driving the ground, at the deeper shafts probably. The horses had not strayed far, and heading them well back down the gully, I got back to the camp for a bit of breakfast. I mentioned finding the other camp, and Tom gave himself straight away.

"Oh ay!" he said; "our old camp is just up the Flat."

'He looked up sharp to see if I had noticed the slip, but I pretended to be too busy pegging away at the beef and damper to mind anything else; but I was more determined than ever to have a good understanding with him by-and-by. After breakfast we got our tools ready, and I chained poor old Jock up to the tent. I had a terrible job with him to make him quiet. He whined and cried and pawed me, and tried so hard to be let free that I had to get Tom to go on ahead, out of his sight. Then I gave him a good scolding, showing him the whistle and making him lie down. He was too well trained to resist me when he saw I was in earnest, and gave in at last; but I couldn't help smiling when I thought of the bit of old rotten strap round his neck that he could snap like a bit of thread. As I turned away to follow Tom my faithful friend gave vent to some most mournful howls.

"I'm blowed if that dog of yours, Jim, wouldn't give a fellow the horrors. You'd think we were going to a funeral," Tom said, with a grin.

'Instead of starting at the lower shaft he turned up the Flat. "Let us have a look at these top ones first."

"I have told you that these were the shallowest, and it stood to reason weren't any good, or they would have been worked. He was down two or three, and got out prospects which I panned out with the poorest results.

"Hadn't we better tackle the deep shaft at once where they left off work?" I said.

"All right," he replied; "you have a turn below, and see if you can't drop on it rich; it's about here somewhere."

"It was plain to me if there was nothing in the lower shaft the whole thing was a duffer. This one, as I told you, was about twenty feet deep. There were a couple of logs along two sides of it, with a short log laid across them, but no signs of a windlass or of foot-holes to go down by. You know in those days diggers used to sink very great awkward holes, not like the neat shafts they do now, and this one was too wide for foot-holes. We had brought a piece of rope, which I made fast to the cross log; and dropping the pick and shovel in, I slipped down the rope. I noticed at a glance a bit of a drive about four feet in on the lower side and a few laths leaning over the entrance, when a slight noise made me look up, and I saw Tom whipping the rope up. He grinned down at me with an evil look, and it struck me then for the first time what an ill-looking dog he was.

"Hullo! what's that for?" I sang out.

"What's that for, my joker? Why, that's because you're trapped at last. Do you know where you are? Why, you're in your grave. A fine caper I've had with you and your blasted dog. I could have finished your job nights ago but for that brute, and been off with that roll of notes; it won't be in your shirt long now. I'll put the set on you, and then I'll finish him."

"I saw him stoop and rise with a great boulder in his hands.

"By instinct I jammed the shovel hard against the side of the shaft over my head; it turned the force of the blow, which beat me down on my knees. Before he could get another I squeezed my body into the drive. There was just room enough to get, as you may say, out of the line of fire, but not much to spare, and the laths, which

I kept in their place with the double end of my pick, helped to make the shelter better. He cursed and swore fearfully when he saw this—but there's no use in repeating his foul language; cursing and swearing is a thing I don't hold by at all—and stopped pelting down stones.

"You won't come out of that, you varmint?" he sneered. "All right, then; I'll earth you in. Won't take long to do that. You'll be quiet enough after a bit, when I come and dig you out; though it's a lot of trouble just for that bit of plunder. The air in that bit of a drive won't last you many minutes;" and with that he started to shovel back the earth into the shaft.

"God knows how I felt. I seemed quite stupefied—to have lost all power of thought. I could only call out silly prayers to the bloody-minded ruffian to spare me. He could have the money, the horses, anything, but for God's sake don't bury me alive! The rattle of the earth falling quickly down the shaft was his only reply. It helped to bring back my senses. I saw the earth rising fast up the mouth of the drive. As I crouched back in the little hollow my hand pressed against the big whistle round my neck. In a second it was at my lips, and with all my strength I blew a call, and well I knew, if Jock only heard it, that rotten strap wouldn't hold him long. Again I sounded it. Then a dread came over me; the way I was cramped in the drive and partly earthed up might deaden the sound. I must get out! I was desperate then. The villain had stopped shovelling at the first whistle-call. I think he was watching the dog. Never mind him. I forced myself fairly clear of the hole, and blew it again shrill and clear up the shaft. He turned sharply round. I saw him raise a great stone. I got my head and shoulders back in shelter in time, but not my foot (the left one). Down came the boulder, as big as your head, on it—fair on the instep. I felt something smash like pieces of tobacco-pipe, and gave a great scream; but I kept my senses, for mingling with my own cry I heard the dog's short angry barks, and knew he was loose, coming like the wind to rescue me. I pushed out of the drive and shouted to him; there came a fierce growl, and I saw the great hairy body flash over the shaft.

GOLD IN IRELAND.



WE are so accustomed to associate the occurrence of gold with California, Australia, and, in more recent times, with the Transvaal and British Columbia, that we are apt to overlook the fact that in Ireland, close to our own doors, so to speak, where much of the land is supposed to be barren

and worthless in the ordinary sense, gold in considerable quantities has been picked up.

In the Dublin Science and Art Museum is the model of a gold nugget which was found in County Wicklow in 1795, the weight of the original lump of precious metal being no less than twenty-two ounces. The history of this and other nuggets, real and apocryphal, has recently been

traced by the perseverance of Mr V. Ball, F.R.S., and the story presents many features of interest.

According to one account the precious twenty-two ounce nugget itself was at one time in the possession of the Dublin Society, and was presented by one of the members to King George the Fourth when that monarch paid a visit to Ireland in 1821. Possibly that generous donor had in his mind a baronetcy or knighthood—for even sane persons will do funny things if they see the chance of getting a handle to their names.

This is, however, a most unlikely story on the face of it, for it can hardly be thought possible that a member of a learned society would be bold enough to give away that which did not belong to him, but was, in a manner, public property. Fancy a trustee of our British Museum presenting one of its treasures to the reigning sovereign, and fancy the absurdity of that sovereign accepting such a gift!

Another story has it that the wily king claimed the nugget as a *droit*, and there and then put it in his royal pocket; that a lady subsequently became possessed of it; and that she, not having any pronounced taste for the study of mineralogy, had it melted down and converted it into more marketable form.

Anyway, the Wicklow nugget was never seen again by mortal eye. The story of George the Fourth's acquisition of this gold was first circulated in 1833, twelve years after the ignoble transaction was supposed to have taken place; and we can imagine what a toothsome little bit of scandal it formed in the mouths of those whose political bias was not in favour of kingly rulers. But the story falls to pieces when the light of inquiry is turned upon it. Upon examination of the earlier catalogues of the mineral collection belonging to the Dublin Society, there is no mention whatever of the twenty-two ounce nugget; and we can hardly imagine that such an unique bit of treasure could be overlooked. Moreover, the keeper of the minerals notes that a large nugget had been found in Wicklow, and that the museum possessed only a model of it.

It seems, indeed, that there were two models of the nugget in the museum, and that two others are yet extant—one in the Geological Museum of Trinity College with a label which describes it as a 'model' (*sic*) of a piece of gold found at Croughan, and another belonging to a private collector.

There is certainly no trace of the lost nugget in the royal collections, and if George the Fourth ever possessed it he must have quickly got rid of it. It is more charitable to suppose that the story is a myth, for the king would hardly behave in such an undignified manner for the sake of such a paltry bit of treasure, nor would he be at all likely to put such a heavy lump into his pocket, however much he might have coveted it.

The origin of the story probably lies in the tradition that the Earl of Meath did once present the king with a small nugget as a curiosity.

It was in the year 1795 that the presence of gold in Wicklow first came as a surprise to the public. The metal had actually been detected some twelve years earlier, but the secret had been well kept, and a more profitable industry than that of rearing pigs and 'praties' had been carried on by a few families living at Croghan Kinshela, where most of the gold was found.

We can imagine with what joy this new source of wealth was greeted by the poverty-stricken peasantry—a treasure which needed no more apparatus for its acquirement than a discarded frying-pan with which to scoop up the gold-bearing mud from the river-bed. The few fortunate ones who held the secret of this Eldorado saw before them unlimited wealth; but the dream was soon to fade. Whether Pat became communicative in his cups, when in command of unaccustomed quantities of 'potheen,' or whether the purchasers of the gold let out the secret, is not known; but news of the Wicklow goldfields soon spread. According to Abraham Mills, who reported on the subject to Sir Joseph Banks, president of the Royal Society, these pioneer workers disposed of three thousand pounds' worth of gold in six weeks, which at three pounds fifteen shillings per ounce would give a total of eight hundred ounces of the precious metal.

The news of the gold-find no sooner got about than people from all parts flocked to Ireland, as to-day they are rushing to Klondyke. They swarmed round the gold-district like flies round a pot of honey. Prior claims were ignored, disorder was rife, and it was a case of every man for himself. If speedy action had not been taken by the authorities it is probable that the crowd would have fought like the famous Kilkenny cats until nothing remained but 'a tale which is told.' The Government stepped in, and by the aid of the Kildare militia took possession of the gold-washings on behalf of the Crown. Up till the time that the works were burnt down and the machinery destroyed after the Rebellion of 1798, over nine hundred ounces of gold had been found. The work was resumed in 1801, but soon after abandoned when it was found unprofitable.

Another alleged Irish nugget has a far more plebeian history than that to which the George the Fourth legend is attached. It was found by a tenant-farmer living at Ballycooge, and was used by him as a convenient weight with which to weigh his wool, until one day a pedlar calling at the house, and getting an inkling of its value, displayed much anxiety to purchase it. The owner was shrewd enough to suspect that it was worth more than the man offered, and refused to part with it. He, however, afterwards gave it to his landlord, whether in quittance of rent or not never transpired; the landlord gave it to

the Earl of Meath, and the Earl presented it to the Dublin Society's Museum.

Perhaps it was the same nugget which was, according to a statement made at a meeting of the Royal Geological Society of Ireland in January 1865, found by a family named Byrne, farmers at Croghan Kinshela some thirty years previously, and supposed to be copper. This nugget was picked up in the river-bed, and weighed eighteen ounces. After the farm people had used it as a weight for several years they sold it to a travelling tinker, who in his turn made a big profit out of the transaction.

There is a third story of a nugget being used as a weight told in the *Hibernian Magazine*. In this case a yarn-dealer used the nugget as a two-pound weight for ten years—which, of course, is no proof that it weighed two pounds. He believed it to be copper ore, but eventually sold it for a considerable sum.

Probably these stories belong really to the same lump of gold, for we all know how tales repeated from mouth to mouth—as these must have been—over many a peat fire, are unlike rolling stones in gathering many additions and variations.

In the already-mentioned report to Sir Joseph Banks there is reference to a gold nugget which weighed five ounces; this also has disappeared from mortal ken, together with others which weighed six, seven, and nine ounces respectively. But we are on surer ground when we refer to a nugget of four ounces eight pennyweight, for in 1844 this was actually shown by the Mining Company of Ireland at a Dublin Exhibition. By a printer's error in one of the journals of the day the weight of this nugget was given as forty ounces,

a mistake which was repeated by others, and which led to this piece of gold being known as the 'Champion Nugget of the United Kingdom.' It will raise a smile when it is stated that this nugget was as unfortunate as the others: it was stolen from the Exhibition, and was never seen or heard of again. Many other nuggets of undoubted Irish origin have been found, and we may assume that the majority of them have been disposed of secretly. Some, however, remain, and can be viewed by the curious in such matters. There are five in the Museum at Edinburgh, their weights varying from one hundred to twenty-eight grains—rather a coming down, it will be thought, from the lumps of gold which have so mysteriously disappeared.

There are also in the Museum of Practical Geology in Jermyn Street, London, seven pieces of Wicklow gold, the largest of which weighs about one ounce. A peculiarity of this Wicklow gold is that, instead of the metal being embedded in the quartz, as is generally the case with Californian and Australian nuggets, the quartz is often found encased in the gold.

Stories of big Hibernian nuggets have a legendary air about them, but that a considerable amount of the precious metal was washed from the soil by the peasantry at the close of the last and the beginning of the present century is an undisputed fact. It will be remembered that gold in Scotland has been worked quite recently, especially in Sutherlandshire and Lanarkshire, and in Wales in the Dolgelly district. The 13,266 tons of ore raised in the United Kingdom in 1895 yielded 6600 ounces of gold of a value of £18,520. Who knows, therefore, how much gold may yet lie undiscovered in the Wicklow Hills?

STRAY RECOLLECTIONS OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.



BOOKS of recollections and reminiscences have an unailing charm for a large section of the reading public, especially if spiced with anecdotes of famous or exalted persons. When an old stager crosses his legs and gets into a reminiscent mood, and begins 'I remember,' he secures general attention, if his recollections are genuinely interesting, and not too prosy and long drawn out. As Browning has it:

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain;
And did he stop and speak to you,
And did you speak to him again?
How strange it seems and new!

As the number of those who have seen and talked with Sir Walter Scott is yearly lessening, we make no apology for handing on the following anecdotes:

Dr Edward C. Robertson, Otterburn, writes: 'My father (the late Dr John Argyll Robertson) some

fifty years ago told me that once, whilst visiting a patient in George Street, Edinburgh, the gentleman requested him to accompany him to his bedroom, where he would show him the greatest sight to be seen in Scotland. On entering the bedroom he was taken to the window, which looked across upon Castle Street. On a table a hand was seen writing with the greatest rapidity on sheet after sheet of paper. As each sheet was finished it was thrown on the floor. The hand so seen was the hand of Sir Walter Scott, the great Wizard of the North, engaged in writing one of his wonderful novels.'

It was during excursions into Liddesdale with his friend Robert Shortreed that Scott encountered James Davidson of Millburnholm, who, if he did not sit for the complete portrait of 'Dandie Dinmont' in *Guy Mannering*, at least supplied some of its features. Dr Robertson says: 'In 1851 I was practising at Otterburn,

in Northumberland, which lies in the valley of the Rede, and under the pleasant shade of the green Cheviots. One day I met at a cottage on the watershed betwixt the Rede and the Coquet a nice middle-aged lady, who, in course of conversation, informed me that she was a niece of the prototype (Davidson) of the famous Borderer of Sir Walter Scott's creation, "Dandie Dinmont." Her uncle, when informed that he was the "original" from whom "Dandie" was fashioned, said, "I wish to goodness that hirpling auld body wad only come again this way; I wad thrash his neck for him."

Mr W. S. Black, of Meerumborah, Bega, New South Wales, sends us a few early recollections of his boyhood in Edinburgh. One day Scott was pointed out to him coming along Thistle Street as a boys' school had just been let loose, when a bright, curly-headed fellow tumbled against him. He laid his hand on the boy's laughing, curly head, gave him a good look and a pat, and let him run off. This was in 1820. This same lad also saw Scott seated in his study in Castle Street, writing with great rapidity, and pitching the finished sheets on the floor. Of Sir Walter Scott's eldest son, who died on his way home from India in 1847, Mr Black writes: 'My regiment was stationed at Arcot, Madras Presidency. There had been a mutiny in my corps while at Jubbulpore; the mutineers were brought down to Arcot and tried. Some were sentenced to be shot; and, to make sure of no fresh outbreak at the execution, a battery of Horse Artillery and a couple of squadrons of the 15th Hussars, under the command of Sir Walter Scott, came from Bangalore to keep order. Sir Walter, in full hussar uniform, with his imposing figure, and mounted on a splendid jet-black Arab horse, seemed to me just what 'Ravenswood' in the *Bride of Lammermoor* should have looked. He was indeed a noble-looking man.'

Sir John Cowan, of Edinburgh, recently alluded in public to his first meeting with Sir Walter when he was a boy in the fourth class of the High School. At that time his (Sir John's) father was living in Moray House, and one afternoon they were walking together up the Canon-gate, when they met a man, not tall, but very lame, and leaning heavily on his walking-stick, and very shabbily dressed. His father and the stranger shook hands, and remained in conversation for some ten minutes, he (Sir John) meanwhile standing by their side. At that time his father was a trustee on the estate of Constable and Co., of which, unfortunately, Sir Walter was a partner. When Sir Walter and his father had ceased their conversation his father introduced him to Sir Walter, remarking that he was at the High School. 'Oh,' replied Sir Walter, shaking him heartily by the hand, 'you are at the High School? A very excellent institution that. I hope you are a very diligent student.'

Some three years later, when he was a student at Bonn University, on the Rhine, he happened one afternoon to be waiting the arrival of the steamer, on board which he expected to find his two sisters. On the steamer coming up to the pier he found his two sisters and an elderly gentleman, apparently near his end, sitting on a chair, and watched over by a daughter. This was poor Sir Walter Scott on his way home to Abbotsford to die. The previous year the Government had sent him out in one of their own vessels to Malta and Rome; and, after spending the winter at Rome, he was now on his way home. It was a sad sight, and yet it was pleasant to know that Sir Walter was so cared for in the last journey of his life.

THE OLD PIANO.

NAY, Maidie, have sweet patience yet awhile;
Your full-toned Erard or your Bechstein grand
Will come ere long. The mute companionship
Of old for old, how can you understand?

To Time's forgotten lumber-room it soon
Shall go. For yet a little let it stay
Just where it stood when threescore years gone by
Across the threshold on a sweet spring day

I brought her home who made my life a joy
Those yellow shrunken keys were gleaming white,
That faded silk was brightest emerald;
With unshed tears of joy her eyes were bright:

And home was heaven when there she sat and played
The simple harmonies that fittest seemed
To suit the simple air, the tender words,
That written were for her and me, we deemed.

I see her now, so proudly in her arms
Holding her first-born boy, and glancing round
With tender triumph when the little hands
Alone had made a feebly jangling sound.

And oh! those merry days, those bygone days,
When in the twilight pitter-patter went
The little feet to merriest music, when
With childish trebles her low tones were blent.

Those days had gone, and we were growing old,
Though you were still unthought of, Maidie mine,
When one we deemed the fairest of our flock
Sang to us in the voice we thought divine:

A slender figure in her snowy gown,
A white camellia in her auburn hair;
So winning in her youthful grace, we thought
'Surely in all the world she is most fair.'

Ah! soon the sun was blotted from our sky,
Hushed was the music, gone the laughter gay.
Like a pure lily, 'midst camellias white,
Silent, yet smiling, our sweet darling lay.

Nay, Maidie—while in lingering caress
I still can draw this wrinkled, feeble hand
Across its yellow keys, in memory of
Those other hands that touched it—let it stand.

MARY J. CROWK.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

REMINISCENCES.

By Lieutenant-Colonel Sir R. LAMBERT PLAYFAIR, K.C.M.G.

IV.—SEYCHELLES AND ZANZIBAR.

IN 1863 the Arabic political appointments under the government of Bombay—Aden, Bushire, Zanzibar, Muscat—were reorganised, and I was the first Political Agent under the new arrangement sent to Zanzibar. A surgeon was added to the establishment; the reason given for this increase, as stated in the government resolution was: 'The medical duties attached to the Zanzibar agency have hitherto been discharged by an officer of the subordinate Medical Department; but His Excellency the Governor considers it most desirable that an officer capable of scientific research should be stationed on that coast, nor is it less necessary that the Political Agent should have an officer of intelligence with whom, at that distant station, he may be able to associate.'

A small steam yacht, the *Pleiad*, was also allowed to me, so that I might be able to visit the great extent of coast under my political control, and keep up postal communication with the Seychelles, the nearest point to Zanzibar where mail steamers then touched.

I went by those islands to join my new post. I made frequent visits subsequently to this interesting archipelago in the *Pleiad*, so I may as well note what I have to say of it on the present occasion. It is situated about one thousand miles due east of Zanzibar. The islands are of granitic structure, and rise steeply out of the sea, culminating in Mahé, which has an elevation of 2998 feet. Of the eight islands which form the archipelago, few except Mahé are inhabited, or they are occupied only by a very small number of families; one is devoted entirely to lepers. The total population is about fifteen thousand, most of whom are blacks; about five hundred are French Creoles. This group of islands was taken possession of by the French in 1742, and the present name was given to them in honour of an officer of the East India fleet,

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Comte Hérault de Seychelles. In 1791 they were taken by the English, along with the Mauritius, and now form a dependency of that island.

The vegetation is most luxuriant: cinnamon and raspberries form the ordinary undershrub on the hills; higher up are splendid tree-ferns; but the most interesting plant is the extraordinary *coco-de-mer* or double coco-nut (*Lodoicea Seychellarum*), found in no other part of the world. It grows as straight as a plumb-line to a height of 100 feet; it throws out only one gigantic frond-like leaf each year; it does not commence to bear fruit for a century, and the nut takes five years to ripen; the interior becomes a sort of vegetable ivory. The sea abounds in fish of splendid colour and strange shape. Many a good day's sport have I had here, but none so good as that described to me by Mr Swinburne Ward, the genial Civil Commissioner of the islands. I published his letter many years ago in a newspaper; but it is so good that it will bear repetition:

'I am happy to say that I enjoy the thorough confidence of a pretty large circle of friends; but there are very few to whom I should like to send this report of a small fishing excursion, and in whose firm belief in the narration I should have the slightest confidence. But you know the Indian waters and their extraordinary capabilities, and can believe almost anything respecting what they can produce. I sent all our gear, harpoons, lines, &c., over to the "Mamelles," twelve miles north of Mahé, in the early morning, in the *piroque*, and went over myself in the whale-boat in the afternoon. The next morning we commenced fishing, and caught about three hundred fish before breakfast. In the evening we got a lot more sharks and a quantity of fish, some quite unknown to any of the men. One enormous ray took the hook, and gave us a deal of trouble before it succumbed to the lances and spears; it was 7½ feet in diameter. As we were

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bringing it home the boat was surrounded by suckers, and I caught two biggish sharks, who were snapping at it as it was lashed to the side of the *pirogue*. This kind of ray is not eatable, so we buried it in the sand at low-water-mark, in order to attract sharks next morning. Its tail makes a delightful walking-stick. Early next morning we went out again, and began by catching a large quantity of *bakshu*, a species that I don't think you determined, and a big fish called *Capitaine du Port*. As we caught them the men cut them open, and threw their entrails over the side. The presence of numerous suckers denoted the presence of the bold shark, so we put some big hooks over for their entertainment. We had not long to wait; a tremendous pull came at the thickest line, and our fun began. The moment the brute felt the hook he came up to the surface, not pulling at all. He raised himself about four feet, right out of the water, and came at the *pirogue* with his mouth open. (*Mon Dieu!* such a mouth!) Had he not been politely received by two lances in the stomach and another down his throat he would have torn half the side of the boat out. It took nearly two hours to kill this brute, who was attacking us nearly all the time. Its length was 13 feet $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches; eight rows of teeth erected! It was almost appalling as he approached the gunnel of the boat. After the entertainment was over we cut him open and took his liver out; it gave nearly a hundred bottles of oil. . . . Coming home we passed close to an enormous *diable de mer* floating quietly about. We went alongside of him, driving a regular whale harpoon right through his body. The way he towed the boat through the water was beautiful, and he also had to succumb to a rather protracted lancing. His size will give you an idea of his strength in the water—42 feet in circumference. We got him awash on the beach, but the united strength of ten men could not get him an inch farther.

'Altogether we made a pretty good bag. The men brought back about 1200 lb. of salt fish; we got twenty-three small sharks from 3 to 5 feet long, one *demoiselle*, 13 feet $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length. Its jaws now ornament my dining-room, and can be slipped over my shoulders without touching them on any side; another 10 feet long; one *raye fouet*, 7 feet 9 inches, not including the tail; and, lastly, the *diable de mer* before mentioned.'

On the 5th of May 1863 I arrived at Zanzibar. The Government House there was a fairly good one, but it was in the town, on a rather unsavoury beach; and there were few pleasant walks easily accessible from it. The rides were lovely; nothing could be more beautiful than the green lanes running all through the island amongst clove plantations, the foliage of which showed every variety of colour from deep green to brilliant carmine. It was a never-ending source of delight to wander amongst these on horseback

or on foot, to eat pine-apples from among the hedgerows, to drink the water of young coco-nuts, and to return home laden with the most exquisite white and blue water-lilies and with trailing bunches of the *Gloriosa superba*. The island is of exceeding fertility; in addition to the cloves, it produces fields of manioc, woods of coco-nut palm, magnificent mango-trees, and such oranges and mandarines as I have nowhere else seen in my travels.

There are no rivers, but numerous streams and springs, some of the latter peopled with little fish as brilliant as the flowers around (*Haplo-chilus Playfairii*).

No wonder, then, that we were most anxious to procure a *shamba*, or country-house, where we might retire from time to time to escape the heat and dirt of the town. One condition was absolutely necessary—that it should be on the sea-coast, so that we might go from one house to the other by boat. I searched in vain in every direction. One place, indeed, I did find which suited me exactly, but I was told that it was not available, and I was, almost rudely, requested not to approach the house. I had almost given the matter up in despair, when one day the Sultan, Seyed Majid, called on me; and as we were sitting and conversing by the open window of my drawing-room, he asked me if I had found a *shamba*; I replied that I could find none to suit me. One, indeed, I had seen, but it was not available. He asked me which it was. I replied, 'Your Highness can see it from where we sit;' and I pointed out the place in question, which rejoiced in the name of 'Boobooboo.' He smiled, and said that this place could easily be got; and that if I would entrust him with the negotiation he would arrange matters for me. I gladly accepted his offer, but stipulated that no pressure should be brought to bear on the owner. He assured me that I might rest quite satisfied on that point.

A few days afterwards his minister called and presented me with a key, telling me that the house was empty and at my disposal. I had never heard who the occupant was, and begged him to tell me. I learnt with astonishment that it was the Sultan's sister Seyedah—or, as the Swahili called her, Bibi Salemah. For a long time, he said, she had been anxious to come into town to be near her sisters, but the Sultan would never permit her to do so; now, however, that he was able to gratify both her and me, he was only too glad to give his consent. It was not till years afterwards that I learnt how different the case really was; the poor girl was devoted to a country life, and she was in dismay at receiving a sudden order to pack up and leave the house, as the new *Balyoos*, or minister, as the British representative was always called, wanted it.

Thus I was the innocent cause of all the misfortunes (if such they were) which subsequently happened to her. No scruple of conscience, there-

fore, interfered to prevent our thorough enjoyment of our new residence. The house was large and roomy, though without any architectural pretensions; it was surrounded on all sides, save on the sea-face, by groves of oranges, cloves, and coco-nut trees. Our dining-room was quite unique; the table was placed under the shade of gigantic orange-trees; the dinner was brought from the house, but the dessert was all around us. I am afraid we often committed what I now see to have been an act of wickedness, cutting down coco-nut trees for the sake of their cabbages. The undeveloped leaves on the summit, when cleared of the bark-like spathes, made a cylinder of about a yard in length and nearly a foot in diameter. This is the most delicious vegetable product that I know. Eaten plain, it is like filberts; sliced and dressed with oil and vinegar, it makes the best of salads; boiled, it was like nothing else in nature—a harmonious combination of cabbage, artichokes, and asparagus! It was the greatest treat to our friends in Zanzibar to come out and spend a day with us here and eat our coco-nut cabbage.

Meanwhile Bibi Salemah had gone to town; she had a very fine house of three stories assigned to her in the best quarter. The streets in Zanzibar, as in all Oriental cities, are very narrow, each story projecting beyond the one below it, so that the houses on opposite sides of the street almost meet at the top. In the house facing that of the Princess dwelt a Hamburg merchant, Mr R—. We had a good deal of informal society at Zanzibar, and used to meet daily at each other's houses to take a cup of tea in the afternoon or play a rubber of whist after dinner. During daylight the terraces of the houses were the usual places of reception. When sitting on the terrace of R—'s house, which had only two stories, I frequently saw the Princess at her open window, always, of course, closely masked, according to custom. She invariably saluted me, and as I was the only European in the place who could speak to her in her native language, Arabic (Swahili or the slave language was usually employed by foreigners), she was always pleased to exchange a few words with me. She never, however, alluded to the affair of the *shamba*.

In 1865 I had to pay a visit to Bombay; and when staying with Sir Bartle Frere, the Governor, at Poonah, I was taken so seriously ill that I had to be sent home at the first opportunity, and I never saw Zanzibar again. My health rapidly recovered after a short stay in England, and I received the appointment of Consul General at Algiers under the Foreign Office. My departure from India had been so precipitate that I could not complete the fifteen days that still remained to qualify me for a pension. The Government, however, permitted me to return to any place eastward of Suez, to enable me to complete my time, and I went to the Seychelles, which

islands I had often visited during my stay at Zanzibar.

Here I must relate the events that took place during my absence. While it was still uncertain whether I should return to Zanzibar or no, the surgeon was put in charge of the Political Agency.

The intimacy that had sprung up between Mr R— and Bibi Salemah ripened into love, and they determined to elope to Hamburg and be married there. He had a vessel loading with cloves, and he persuaded her to escape on board just as the vessel was ready for sea. He smuggled a boy's dress into her house, and made an appointment for her to meet him on the quay after dark. Probably she arrived too soon and was seen loitering about till the expected boat should arrive. The Sultan's guards had their suspicions aroused, took the boy prisoner, and carried him before the Sultan. Seyed Majid's astonishment and horror may be imagined at finding the boy his sister!

She was sent back a prisoner to her house, and a guard was placed at her door. The Sultan ordered that she should be sent to Muscat at the first opportunity, which of course meant that she was to be taken out to sea and thrown overboard. Somehow or other—I never quite knew how—she managed to escape, certainly without the knowledge of the acting Political Agent, and got on board H.M.S. *H—*, which at once got up steam and took her to Aden; there she went to a Spanish family which she had known at Zanzibar.

All this was, of course, absolutely indefensible. We had no right to interfere in a matter concerning the Sultan's family or the affairs of a German merchant. But had we not given her an asylum she would certainly have been killed; so would R— also in the fine old days when Europeans had no consuls to protect them, right or wrong. I have no doubt that this diplomatic impropriety did not hang very heavily on the consciences of the conspirators, whoever they were.

When I reached Seychelles to finish my period of service, I took my return passage in a steamer of the Messageries Maritimes Company. Just as the vessel was on the point of leaving, H.M.S. *Lyra* arrived from Zanzibar. Mr R— was on board. He had thrown up his business at Zanzibar, and was on his way to Aden to marry his princess. We made the voyage to Aden together, and during the few hours that the steamer remained there to take in coal, I was present at a double ceremony in the English church, and acted as interpreter in Arabic—the baptism of the Princess and her marriage to R—. We continued the voyage together, and many curious scenes took place. As at Zanzibar, I was the only person on board who could speak to her in her native Arabic; her husband could only communicate with her in Swahili; she knew no English, so he could never join in conversation when I was speaking to her.

At Cairo we walked through the native bazaar. She was dressed, of course, in European clothes,

She suddenly stopped and said, 'What would Seyed Saeed have said could he have seen a daughter of his walking, with face uncovered, between two Christians, in a Muslim bazaar?'

Seyed Saeed (Sayyid Saïd), better known to Europeans as the Imâm of Muscat, was a very great man indeed; he was contemporary with, and hardly inferior to, Napoleon Bonaparte and Mohammed Ali Pasha of Egypt, except in as far as the stage on which he acted was more restricted. It was he who brought the whole east coast of Africa under Arab sway. It and Muscat remained one kingdom till his death.

Bibi Salemah had been in the habit of wearing ponderous rings in her ears, which thus became so disfigured that she was obliged so to dress her hair as to hide them altogether. She once remarked that it was God's mercy that her nose was not like her ears, as she was the only one of Seyed Saeed's daughters who did not wear nose-rings.

We separated at Marseilles. Her husband was killed at the opening of the Franco-Prussian war when getting out of a tram-car, leaving her with three children, and, I fear, in very straitened circumstances. We kept up a correspondence for some years, at first in Arabic, but latterly in English. I give her last letter to me to show what remarkable progress she made in European languages, especially in English, which she had acquired in Germany:

BERLIN, 14th August 1884.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—How very good of you to take so much trouble in our case. I am truly very thankful to you. Since your last letter arrived it has happened

something to induce me to remain still a short time longer in Germany; therefore I must now wait a little before I can go to my lovely South, which I am always longing for. As soon as I am free of myself you shall hear more of me. I am indeed very sad to hear of your not being well; but I hope the air and the repose in Switzerland will do you good. My old friend, I really wonder you can understand my bad English. Can you speak or understand the most difficult of languages which I have ever met—German? In that case I am more able to write better letters. My love to your dear family and yourself.—Very sincerely yours,

(in Arabic) SALEMAH BINT SAEED BINT SULTAN.

The 'something' here alluded to was an order from the German Foreign Office to hold herself in readiness to proceed to Zanzibar; she went there in a German vessel. This was after Germany had begun to make herself felt as a colonial power, and it was thought that it might be possible to intercede with the Sultan in favour of his expatriated sister. She was, indeed, recognised by a few of her old friends, but Seyed Burgash, the new Sultan, remained deaf to all intercession on her behalf; nor could any effort of diplomacy move him to pity and forgiveness, or obtain restitution of her forfeited possessions. She had no course but to return to Germany.

I can hardly be taxed with any indiscretion in making these revelations. She has written the story of her life, *Memoiren einer Arabischen Prinzessin* ('Memoirs of an Arabian Princess'), both in German and English; and, though she does not give all the foregoing details, her work is a most interesting and reliable account of hareem life, both at the court of her father and of her brother Majid.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XVI.



GOOD-MORNING, Mason,' Browne said as he shook hands. 'I am glad that you were able to come up at once, for I want to consult you on most important business. Sit down, and let us get to work.

You were not long in getting under way.'

'I started directly I received your message, sir,' the man replied. 'Perhaps you would not mind telling me what it is I have to do.'

'I'll very soon do that,' Browne replied; 'and if I know anything of you, you will be glad to hear my needs. I want to see you with regard to a cruise in Eastern waters. I am tired of the English winter, and, as you are aware, I have never yet visited Japan. I've suddenly made up my mind to go out there. How soon do you think you could be ready to start?'

'For Japan, sir?' the captain replied. 'Well, that's a goodish step. Might I ask, sir, how long you can give me? Are you in a very great hurry?'

'A very great hurry indeed,' Browne said. 'I want to get away at the shortest possible notice; in fact, the sooner you can get away the better I shall be pleased. I know you will do all you can.'

'You may be very sure of that, sir,' said the captain. 'If it is really necessary, I fancy I could be ready—well, shall we say?—on Monday next. Would that suit you, sir?'

'It would do admirably,' said Browne. 'I may count, then, on being able to sail on that day?'

'Certainly, sir,' said the captain. 'I will catch the next train back, and get to work without loss of time. Your own steward, I suppose, will accompany you?'

'Yes,' said Browne, for he was convinced that the man was one in whose honesty and courage he could place implicit reliance, which was just what would be wanted on such a voyage.

'And how many guests will you be likely to have, sir?' inquired the captain. 'I suppose you will fill all the cabins as usual?'

This was a question to which Browne had not yet given any proper consideration, though he had practically decided on one person. The voyage from England to Japan, as all the world knows, is a long one, and he felt that if he went alone he would stand a very fair chance of boring himself to death with his own company.

'I am not able to say yet who will accompany me; but in any case you had better be prepared for one or two. It is more than possible, however, that we shall pick up a few others in Japan.'

'Very good, sir,' said Mason. 'I will see that all the necessary arrangements are made. Now I suppose I had better see about getting back to Southampton.'

Having consulted his watch, he rose from his chair, and was about to bid his employer good-bye, when Browne stopped him.

'One moment more, Mason,' he said. 'Before you go I have something to say to you that is of the utmost importance to both of us.' He paused for a moment, and from the gravity of his face the captain argued that something more serious was about to follow. 'I wanted to ask you whether you had any sort of acquaintance with the seas to the northward of Japan, say in the vicinity of the island of Yesso and the Gulf of Tartary?'

'I cannot say that I have any at all, sir,' the other replied. 'But I could easily make inquiries from men who have sailed in them, and procure some charts from Potter, if you consider it necessary.'

'I should do so if I were you,' said Browne; 'it is always as well to be prepared. In the meantime, Mason, I want you to keep what I have said to yourself. I have the most imperative reasons for making this request to you. A little mistake in this direction may do me an incalculable amount of harm.'

Though he did not in the least understand what prompted the request, the captain willingly gave his promise. It was easy for Browne, however, to see that it had caused him considerable bewilderment.

'And there is one other point,' Browne continued. 'I want you to be more than ordinarily careful that the crew you take with you are the best men procurable. I am not going to say any more to you, but leave you to draw your own conclusions, and to bear in mind that this voyage is likely to be one of the most, if not the most, important I have ever undertaken. You have been with me a good many years now, and you were with my father before me—it is not necessary for me to say not only as captain, but also as a man who is an old and well-tried friend.'

'I thank you, sir, for what you have said,' said the captain. 'In reply, I can only ask you

to believe that, happen what may, you will not find me wanting.'

'I am quite sure of that,' said Browne, holding out his hand.

The captain took it, and when he had shaken it as if he would dislocate it at the shoulder, bade his employer good-bye and left the room.

'So much for breaking the news to Mason,' said Browne to himself when the door had closed behind the skipper. 'Now I must see Jimmy Foote, and arrange it with him.'

He glanced at his watch, and found that it wanted only a few minutes to twelve o'clock. Ringing the bell, he bade the footman telephone to the Monolith Club, and inquire whether Mr Foote were there; and if he were not, whether they could tell him where it would be possible to find him. The man disappeared upon his errand, to return in a few moments with the information that Mr Foote had just arrived at the club in question.

'In that case,' said Browne, 'beg the servants to tell him that I will be there in ten minutes, and that I want to see him on most important business. Ask him not to leave until I come down.'

The appointment having been duly made, he ordered his cab and set off in it for the rendezvous in question. On reaching the club—the same in which he had seen Jimmy on that eventful night when he had discovered that Katherine was in London—Browne found his friend engaged in the billiard-room, playing a hundred up with a young gentleman whose only claim to notoriety existed in the fact that at the time he was dissipating his second enormous fortune at the rate of more than a thousand a week.

'Glad indeed to see you, old man,' said Jimmy as Browne entered the room. 'I thought you were going to remain in Paris for some time longer. When did you get back?'

'Last night,' said Browne. 'I came over with Maas.'

'With Maas?' cried Jimmy, in surprise. 'Somebody said yesterday that he was not due to return for another month or more. But you telephoned that you wanted to see me, did you not? If it is anything important, I am sure Billy here won't mind my throwing up the game. He hasn't a ghost of a chance of winning, so it will be a new experience for him not to have to pay up.'

Browne, however, protested that he could very well wait until they had finished their game. In the meantime he would smoke a cigar and watch them. This he did, and as soon as the competition was at an end and Jimmy had put on his coat, he drew him from the room.

'If you've nothing you want to do for half-an-hour or so, I wish you would walk a little way with me, old chap,' he said. 'I have got something to say to you that I must settle at

once. This place has as long ears as the proverbial pitcher.'

'All right,' said Jimmy. 'Come along; I'm your man, whatever you want.'

They accordingly left the club together, and made their way down Pall Mall and across Waterloo Place into the Green Park. It was not until they had reached the comparative privacy of the latter place that Browne opened his mind to his friend.

'Look here, Jimmy,' he said, 'when all is said and done, you and I have known each other a good many years. Isn't that so?'

'Of course it is,' said Jimmy, who noticed his friend's serious countenance, and was idly wondering what had occasioned it. 'What is it you want to say to me? If I did not know you I should think you were hard up, and wanted to borrow five pounds. You look as grave as a judge.'

'By Jove! so would you,' said Browne, 'if you'd got on your mind what I have on mine. It seems to me I've got to find some jolly good friend who'll see me through as delicate a bit of business as ever I heard of in my life. That's why I telephoned to you.'

'Very complimentary of you, I'm sure,' said Jimmy. 'But I think you know you can rely on me. Come, out with it! What is the matter? Is it a breach of promise case, or divorce, or what is it?'

'Look here, old man, before we go any farther,' said Browne, with great impressiveness, 'I want to ask you not to joke on it. It may seem humorous to other people, but I assure you it's life and death to me.'

There was a little silence that might have lasted a minute; then Jimmy took his friend's arm. 'I'm sorry,' said he; 'only give me a decent chance and I'm sure to make a fool of myself. I had no idea it was such a serious matter with you. Now then, what is it? Tell me everything from beginning to end.'

'I will,' said Browne. 'But I ought to tell you first that I am not supposed to say anything about it. The secret, while it is mine in a sense, concerns another person more vitally. If I were the only one in it I shouldn't care a bit; but I have to think of others before myself. You may remember that one night—it seems as if it were years ago, though in reality it is only a few weeks—you and I were walking down Regent Street together. You told me you had seen a picture in a shop window that you wanted to show me.'

'I remember the incident perfectly,' said Jimmy, but this time without a smile. 'It was a very foggy night, and you first kept me waiting half-an-hour outside the shop, and then acted like a lunatic afterwards.'

'Well,' said Browne, without replying to his friend's comments upon his behaviour on that occasion, 'you may remember that the night

following you dined with me at Lallemand's, and met two ladies.'

'Madame Bernstein and Miss Petrovitch,' said Jimmy. 'I remember. What next?'

Browne paused and looked a trifle sheepish before he replied. 'Well, look here, old man; that girl, Miss Petrovitch, is going to be my wife.' He looked nervously at Jimmy as if he expected an explosion.

'I could have told you that long ago,' said Jimmy, with imperturbable gravity. 'And, by Jove! I'll go further and say that I don't think you could do better. As far as I could tell, she seemed an awfully nice girl, and I should think she would make you just the sort of wife you want.'

'Thank you,' said Browne, more pleased with Jimmy than he had ever been before. 'But that only brings me to the beginning of what I've to say,' he continued. 'Now I want you, before we go any further, to give me your word as a friend that whatever I may say to you you will not reveal to any one else. You cannot think how important it is, both to her and to me.'

'I will give you that promise willingly,' said Jimmy. 'You can tell me whatever you like without any fear that I shall divulge it.'

'Your promise is all I want,' said Browne. Then, speaking very slowly, and as earnestly as he knew how, he continued: 'The truth of the matter is that that girl is by birth a Russian. Her father had the misfortune to get into trouble over an attempt upon the Czar's life.'

'A Nihilist, I suppose?' said Jimmy.

Browne nodded. 'Well, the attempt was discovered, and Katherine's father was arrested and sent to Siberia, condemned to imprisonment for life. He was there for many years, but later on he was drafted to the island of Saghalien, on the eastern coast of Siberia, where he now is.'

Jimmy nodded. 'After that?'

'Well, on the morning of the second day after that dinner at Lallemand's, Miss Petrovitch and Madame Bernstein left for Paris, on some important business, which I now believe to have been connected with the man who was exiled. I followed her, met her, and eventually proposed to her. Like the trump she is, she did her best to make me see that for me to love her was out of the question. Thinking only of me, she tried to put me off by making me see how impossible it all was. But instead of doing what she hoped, it only served to show me what a noble nature the girl possessed.'

'She is not rich, I suppose?' asked Jimmy.

'She has not a halfpenny more than three hundred a year assured to her,' the other replied; 'and she shares that with Madame Bernstein.'

'And yet she was willing to give up a hundred and twenty thousand a year, and the position she would have in English society as your wife?'

'She was,' said Browne.

'Then all I can say, is,' said Jimmy, with considerable conviction, 'she must be one in a million. But I interrupted you; I'm sorry. Go on.'

'Well,' continued Browne, 'to make a long story short, she finished by telling me the sad story of her life. Of course she said that she could not possibly marry me, being the daughter of a convict. Then she went on to add that news had lately come to her—how I cannot say—that her father is dying. It seems that he has been in failing health for some years; and at last the terrible climate, the roughness of the living, and the knowledge that he was hopelessly cut off for the rest of his existence from all he held dear in the world has resulted in a complete collapse. To hope to obtain a pardon from the Russian Government would be worse than futile. All that remains is to get him away.'

'But, surely, my dear old Browne,' said Jimmy, who had listened aghast, 'it cannot be possible that you dream of assisting in the escape of a Russian convict from Saghalien?'

'That is exactly what I do think,' replied Browne, with unusual earnestness. 'Come what may, if it costs me all I am worth in the world, I am going to get the man out of that hell on earth. Try to think, my dear fellow, if you were in that girl's place. Her father, the man whom she has been brought up to believe has been sacrificed for his country's good, is dying. She declares it is her duty to be with him. How can I let her do that?'

'I admit it is impossible.'

'Well, what remains? Either she must go to him, or he must come to her.'

'In plain words, she wants you to risk your good name, all you have in the world, your happiness, your very life indeed, in order to get a fanatic out of the trouble he has brought upon himself.'

'You can put it how you like,' said Browne; 'but that is practically what it means. But remember she is the woman who is to be my wife. If I lose her what would life be worth to me?'

This was the crucial part of the interview. For the first time it struck Browne that he was figuring before his friend in rather a selfish light. 'I wanted to see you,' he began, 'in order to find out whether you would care to accompany me to the Farther East. Remember, I don't want you to pledge anything. All that I ask of you is to say straight out whether you would care to come or not. I shall sail in the yacht on Monday next for Japan. We shall touch at Hong-kong *en route*, where I am to have an interview with a man who, I believe, has brought off one or two of these little affairs before. He will tell me what I am to do, and may possibly do it for me. After that we

proceed to Japan, where we are to pick up Madame Bernstein and Miss Petrovitch. From that moment we shall act as circumstances dictate.'

'And now I want you to tell me one thing,' said Jimmy; 'what is your reason for wanting me to accompany you?'

'I will tell you,' said Browne. 'I want you to come with me because I am anxious to have one man on board, a friend, in whom I can place implicit confidence. Of course Mason will be there; but as he will have charge of the boat, he would be comparatively useless to me. To tell the truth, Jimmy, it will make me easier to know that there is some one else on board the boat who will take care of Miss Petrovitch in the event of anything happening to me.'

'And how long do you propose to be away from England?' his friend inquired.

'Well, that is a very difficult question to answer,' said Browne. 'We may be away three months, possibly we may be six. But you may rest assured of one thing; we shall not be absent longer from England than is absolutely necessary.'

'And when do you want an answer from me,' said Jimmy.

'As soon as you can let me have one,' Browne replied. 'Surely it should not take you long to make up your mind?'

'You don't know my family,' he answered. 'They say I can never make up my mind at all. Will it do if I let you know by seven o'clock to-night? I could arrange it by then.'

'That would suit me admirably,' said Browne. 'You don't think any the worse of me, old chap, for asking so much of you, do you?'

'Angry with you?' answered the other. 'Why should I be? You're offering me a jolly good holiday, in excellent company; and what's more, you are adding a spice of danger too, which will make it doubly enjoyable. The only question is whether I can get away.'

'At any rate I'll give you until to-night to make up your mind. I shall expect to hear from you before seven o'clock.'

'You shall hear from me without fail,' said Jimmy; 'and if by any chance I can't manage it you will understand—won't you?—that it is not for any want of feeling for yourself.'

'I know that, of course,' said Browne; and thereupon the two young men shook hands.

A few moments later Browne bade him good-bye, and, calling a hansom, drove back to his own house. As soon as he lunched he wrote to Katherine to tell her how things were proceeding. The afternoon was spent in the purchase of various articles which he intended to take with him. For this reason it was not until after six o'clock that he returned to his own

house. When he did, the butler brought him a note upon a salver. He opened it, and found, as he expected, that it was from Jimmy.

'Dear old man,' it ran, 'I am coming with

you, happen what may.—Always your friend, J. FOOTE.'

'That is another step upon the ladder,' said Browne.

SOME MINOR RURAL INDUSTRIES.

II.



DR FREAM, the accomplished and distinguished editor of the *Quarterly Journal* of the Royal Agricultural Society, drew attention in the June part of that periodical for 1894 to some minor rural industries that are not followed up in this country as they ought to be. Dr Fream is not an enthusiast who sees a fortune in a nursery garden and fancies that jam factories will be the sheet-anchor of the British farmer. But while keenly alive to the depressed state of agriculture in this country, and to the difficult problems it presents to the political economist, he does not neglect any matter, however trivial, which bears upon those problems. Like all other agricultural writers, he is surprised that so many eggs and so much poultry should come from abroad, and that the value of these imports should be so rapidly increasing. In six years—between 1888 and 1893—the value of these imports had risen from £3,480,000 to £4,454,000, and this in spite of the well-founded complaints of farmers that the markets for agricultural produce are not remunerative, and that prices are steadily falling. Dr Fream in his article takes up two subjects—the duck-fattening industry carried on so successfully near Leighton Buzzard, and the fowl-fattening industry of Heathfield and Uckfield. So clearly and ably does he deal with both these important subjects that it would be unpardonable impertinence to attempt to summarise his article; and readers interested in the matter should turn to it, and they will find that no point is neglected, and that the whole subject has been handled with the care, thoroughness, and accuracy characteristic of the author.

Some idea of the immense amount which British farmers lose through foreign competition may be gathered from the following list of staple food stuffs imported into the United Kingdom in 1893:

Butter, margarine, milk, cheese.....	£22,597,250
Bacon, ham, pork, lard.....	14,804,250
Barley, oats, peas, beans, hops, straw.....	13,814,506
Eggs, poultry, game, rabbits.....	4,742,343
Vegetables, pickles.....	2,879,239
Fruit and conserves of fruit.....	1,819,343
	£60,656,931
If oxen and bulls are added.....	6,213,447
Total	£66,870,378

Sir George Birdwood, in a letter to the *Times*,

asked if it is not possible for a great part of these imported products to be raised at home. He said: 'The buyers in the various importing houses of London are the most intelligent, the shrewdest, and the most energetic Englishmen of our generation, and as patriotic as they are able. They would buy all the eggs, poultry, and butter they want within the United Kingdom, provided they were as securely, cleanly, uniformly, and artistically put up, and as promptly and regularly supplied, as are those of France and Belgium, Holland and Denmark. They would prefer to buy British cheeses to American, were not the latter carried by our railways from Liverpool to London so much cheaper than the former. Similar remarks apply to all the items of the list.'

This is not the first time that the attention of the agricultural community has been directed to the neglect of poultry-rearing on a small scale, and to the possibility of a large number of people taking it up and adding considerably to their income thereby. The points that Dr Fream brings out clearly are that egg-producing and poultry and duck fattening should be supplementary to other occupations—that is, that they should be on a small scale, and that they require untiring attention. In this way, and in this alone, can they pay. They are not occupations for men who want to be away from home half their time, or who can comfortably spend £500 a year on their personal requirements. But they are occupations eminently adapted to thrifty, hard-working, intelligent people who are not too proud to earn an honest living with their own hands.

One cannot help regretting that so many of our small towns depend largely for their eggs, butter, and poultry on other countries. Surely there must be something wrong somewhere when one finds the grocers and the poulterers looking to France and Holland for supplies which one would suppose could be drawn from the immediate neighbourhood of the town itself.

The stumbling-blocks to the extension of the minor rural industries are undoubtedly that small producers have seldom any capital, and that they are not always intelligent enough, though one can seldom censure them for lack of industry; while the larger people, though they have the capital and the intelligence, lack the industry and prefer to leave the work to paid dependents. Therein lies the explanation of the almost inevitable failure; these industries are for small people

working with their own hands and brains, and not afraid of long hours and constant exposure.

At this moment, although small holdings are not easy to get, there are many places where a few acres of land can be bought at £20 an acre. Ten or fifteen acres would be ample; that would cost £300, while £350 would buy the necessary sheds and appliances, though some hundreds more would be needed to stock the holding—say £1000 altogether. An industrious man with a little hired labour would have no difficulty on such a holding in growing a large amount of produce, which would command a ready sale in the market-towns near, or would support him and his family; while the egg and poultry industries would be supplementary and would be profitable.

A clergyman whom I often used to visit had a small parish, a slender income, and a large family—the three often go together.

Like many of the country clergy, he had plenty of spare time, and he turned it to profitable account. His fruit, of which he grew a great deal, sold well; so did his eggs, vegetables, and poultry; while his pigs, of which he reared many, found a ready sale in a small town near. He had, he positively assured me, no private means at all, while his professional income fell short, value of parsonage included, of £165 a year. Of course I do not know, and cannot even guess, what his very large garden brought in; but this I do know, that he had so little glebe that he had to rent a good-sized field; and yet, while sufficiently popular and successful in his parish, he lived in rude plenty, and, seconded by a hard-working wife, found no difficulty in making ends meet. This vicar's industry was a good example to his neighbours, and added to his local influence and helped to fill his church; it certainly did not do him any harm.

Another case is still more striking. A keen Scotsman, a house agent, who has had a long apprenticeship to hard work at the Cape, carries on in the most crowded part of a large village, near two towns of some importance, a most profitable duck-fattening industry. This man has great control over his time, and much of his work is done by correspondence. He has a large walled-in yard and some rambling old sheds; but his space is extremely limited. The ducks are reared in surprising numbers, and sold to an hotel at remunerative prices. It is certainly a sight not soon forgotten to see the army of ducklings in that small yard, while the sheds are crowded with sitting hens, and artificial incubation goes on on a large scale besides.

No one supposes that there is unbounded scope for this industry, but in the country at large there ought to be an outlet for a good many thousand small people. The capital needed is not large, nor is it necessary to give one's whole time to it.

The demand for poultry, according to Dr Fream,

is very large, and greatly in excess of the supply; though, of course, plenty of authorities are to be found who contend that this statement is not correct, and that poultry do not pay. But when did authorities agree?

Both the clergyman and the house agent found that they could dispose of all their produce—indeed, that they could have sold many times as much as they could raise. A connection is not difficult to form, though one cannot deny that success would be more probable close to towns of some importance with a large resident population.

In some cases shops are supplied, but not commonly, as the shopkeeper naturally wants his profit, and expects a large share of the receipts for himself. In all the really successful cases—and they have not been few—the producer has been in direct communication with the consumer, and has avoided the middleman's charges.

Village shopkeepers with cheap land close to their houses might in many cases carry on, with the help of their wives and families, such an industry, especially near towns of some size, where they could dispose of their surplus.

One does not want to suggest that life should be shorn of all its attractions and enjoyments; but one thing is certain—that the public school and university man can rarely take up this or most other laborious non-intellectual callings with any hope of success. He lacks patient industry, or, at any rate, the right sort of industry. He likes to linger over his meals. He is not partial to early rising. He soon feels that he has done a prodigious amount of work and needs change; and he much prefers sauntering about and watching his paid dependants, whom he thereby very much hinders.

But to a man not accustomed to the refinements and elegances of life, one who can and will work like the house agent mentioned above, a man of short nights and long laborious days, there ought to be much more scope.

What foreigners could do we can do just as well. Many growing, flourishing towns offer markets that depend in the main on foreign supplies. Were all our eggs, poultry, cheese, hardy fruits, and butter to be raised in England, British agriculture might not be prosperous, but it would be far more prosperous than it is at present, and many thousand more families would live on and by the land.


Let me close my paper with a few words on France and Belgium. In the neighbourhood of sub-tropical Cannes flowers are grown in immense quantities, and the perfumes produced there are said to be worth £800,000 a year, or, rather, the exports amount to that sum. One hundred tons of Parma violets are said to be grown there, 1500 tons of orange-flowers, 500 tons of geraniums, 250 tons of jasmine, and 1500 tons of roses. The wormwood for absinthe and the mint for pep-

permint come largely from this wonderful district, as do also many of the strange poisonous drinks used in Paris. From Ghent, on the other hand, 752 tons of live plants were grown for the British markets in 1897. Great care is given to these minor industries, and more greenhouses are

being put up every year; while England, which is rapidly becoming *the one land* where agricultural depression is most acutely felt, is the best market in the world for all the surplus agricultural produce of more shrewd and industrious nations.

ONLY A DOG: AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

PART III.

OW a great terror took me again. The ruffian was armed; he had a pick to his hand, and carried a sheath-knife, I knew. What if, in a struggle, he should happen to disable or stab the dog?

'There was a desperate scrimmage going on. I could hear Jock's growls and snaps. Presently the wretch gave a sharp scream.

"That's one for Jock," I said to myself.

'But I must make him come in. I must have him to guard the shaft till I managed to get out. Never mind the man. My only thought was to get out of that accursed hole—that living grave. I called and shouted to Jock to come in. His training told. Furious as the dog was, he obeyed me, and came to the top of the shaft.

"You must stop here, Jock, and watch him—to mind him—to look out."

'And there he stood sentinel. Bristling all over with fury and his great fangs gleaming, he looked a formidable antagonist indeed. But how to get up? The shaft was too wide to cut footholes, except perhaps in one of the corners. And then the time. But a lucky thought struck me. The laths were of free grained stuff. With the pick I split from them some stout stakes, which I sharpened at one end, and then drove them into the corner of the shaft with the pick, one over the other, getting up step by step. "Now, Jock, stand fast; watch him, old dog!"

'One more peg in and I can get hold of the cross log. Another a bit higher and Jock was slobbering my face. I could feel the ruffian had moved away. One more effort and I was up out of that hideous hole—out of that deadly pitfall.

'I sank down on the heap of headings, and hugged and kissed old Jock. Never can I forget my feelings. My foot was useless and giving me great agony; but never mind that. I was up in the free open air again. How green the grass looked, and how bright the sunshine! Never before did the sky look so blue. Away at the very top of one of the ridges opposite, a great tree stood up clear against the blue sky; a flock of white cockatoos were whirling and screaming around it. How white they were, and how they glistened like silver in the sunlight! I have never

since seen a tree with cockatoos flying round it without the whole of this scene coming back plainly before me.

'But where was my would-be murderer? Why, just over at a little clump of wattle scrub, about thirty yards off, busy at something. Just then he looked round, saw me on the heap of stones, and gave a great start. I saw then what he had been doing. In his hand he had a long light sapling, to which he had lashed his sheath-knife. This then was a spear, and with it he would be able to keep Jock off and stab him when he got the chance. But I was out of the hole, and though I had no weapon save the pick he had left behind him, and couldn't stand upright, still there were lots of good stones round me. You know you can't beat bush riddies at flinging stones; I used to be a regular don at it. If it came to a duel with stones, I wasn't frightened of coming off second best.

'As he came slowly forward I saw that he limped a bit, and there was a big blood-stain on his moleskin trousers. "That's Jock's work," I thought, as I raised myself up on one knee and gathered plenty of handy-sized ammunition, making the dog keep well in. Tom saw my determined stand, and although he knew he had hurt me badly with the big stone, he didn't know how much I was crippled. He stood watching me for a while, calculating the chances, and then, after shaking his fist at me and using some very bad language, he moved slowly off to the tents. I could think of nothing better to do after that than to give old Jock another good hug, then crawl painfully across to the same clump of wattles, fix myself up a spear like his, and get back to my heap of stones. Now by good luck, on leaving camp that morning, I had brought my billy with me, half-full of cold tea, and there it was still untouched where I put it before going down that deadly shaft. I was parched with thirst, and I had then the sweetest drink of all my life.'

I have tried to give you this story as faithfully as I can repeat it, but no words of mine can convey any idea of the dramatic manner in which it was told, or, rather, acted to me. My friend, Morris, had gradually become very excited, and

when he had brought the story up to his arrival at the fateful gully he got up from his chair, moving restlessly up and down. Jock had jumped down too, and kept following him about, whimpering and giving little, short barks of suppressed excitement. Then Jim acted all the scene in the shaft. He caught up a tray from the table to show how he guarded his head from the first stone. Then up about so high on the wall was the height of the drive. This was the way he crouched down; and so on. But when, to imitate the whistle-call, he put his fingers in his mouth and blew it so shrilly as to make the house ring again, little Jock lost all control over himself. He burst out into furious barking; he flew here, there, everywhere, after invisible enemies, and tore round and round Jim as though to protect him from some, by us, unseen danger. By the time Morris came to finding the billy of tea he was calmer, and sat down again. Jock also returned to his post on the chair.

'There's something very queer in the way your little dog goes on,' said Jim. 'One would almost think he knew what I was talking about. I can't make it out at all.'

Now to me, who was quietly watching the whole scene and knew the dog's habits, it was stranger still. I felt convinced that I had seen two actors going through a performance they were perfectly familiar with—I am of that opinion still. How one of them came to know his part in it I had just heard. But what about the other—the dog?

'So now,' continued Jim, 'I have explained to you how my old dog helped to save me from a miserable death, and how I got this crippled foot, and perhaps that is all you want to know.'

'Excuse me, my friend,' I replied. 'You have certainly got out of the shaft, and are sitting on the headings just now with a make-shift spear, a crushed foot, and a dog, in the heart of the ranges, and a murderous ruffian prowling round; but so far from being saved yet, I should say you were in one of the tightest places possible; so fire away. I want the yarn, the whole yarn, and nothing but the whole yarn.'

'All right,' replied Jim; 'then off we go again.'

'You will understand that I had been watching my worthy mate pretty closely. As I got back with the spear I saw him go up the flat with the bridles, and presently come back with all three horses. He then quietly saddled mine and the pack-horse, pulled down both tents, picked out the best—mine of course—put all the rations, the tent, and everything else he could lay his hands on, including the other saddle, on the pack-horse; piled up the other tent, my blankets, and all the rest of the things he didn't mean to take, in a heap, and set fire to them. And I, boss, had to sit there watching him. I tried, but found I could not move freely enough to do any good.

'I didn't want any one to tell me what his game was; he was just going to leave me there, in a crippled state, to starve. Not a nice lookout, eh? but just heaven compared with being down that cursed hole. When he had everything packed up and ready he rode towards me till within speaking distance, still holding his spear, and shouted:

"You stick there, you ——! I missed you one way, but I've got you another. I can see you're cooked, or you wouldn't have let me take the horses and things so quiet. Just stop where you are and starve; you've neither tucker nor shelter. You'd better have let me settle you in the shaft short and sweet, you know. Well, I shan't forget you or your blasted lapdog; he has given me something to remember him by, so I'll give you a look up in a few days just to get that bit of coin you're keeping so kindly for me, and I won't forget this time to bring a shooting iron with me in case it's wanted. So long, my hearty, and keep your pecker up."

'And with that off he went, leading the pack-horse and driving the other with the bridle tied up before him. I gave him a fair time to get well away, and then started for the camp. I had a great job to get over, for I was pretty well loaded, my shirt being full of stones in case he came back on me sudden-like, and I had a good drink crossing the bed of the creek. First I put down the stones, and went down to the creek for another load. You mustn't laugh at the stones, boss; they were the only things I could depend on to beat him off with if he attacked me. People may think nothing of stones who can't throw straight, but I tell you, in the hands of a man who can, they are a very effective weapon. Then I overhauled the wreck. The fire hadn't done as much harm as I thought; there was no wind, and the things had only smouldered. I rooted out a good many pieces of the tent, some parts of my blankets, a few of my clothes, and two bags, in one of which I got a little bit of salt meat—about a pound and a half. Then under the bushes I had lain down to sleep on was a small saddle-pouch. In that I got three ship's biscuits, about half-a-pound of rice tied up in a sock, and a cake of tobacco. In another old jumper I got a little bag of tea and sugar mixed—enough to make three small pots. Besides that I found half a johnny cake I left from breakfast, and Jock sniffed out of the bushes a piece of cooked meat—about two pounds—that the ruffian had slung away. So this was our stock of provisions—three biscuits, half-a-pound of rice, half a johnny cake, two pounds cooked meat, a pound and a half raw meat, tea and sugar for three pots, and a cake of tobacco; so we weren't starved yet by a long way. By this time my foot had got so bad and swollen that it had to be looked to. Before starting I thought of the time, and pulled out father's old silver watch. Well, what time do you think it was? Just ten o'clock. All this business I have

been telling you of had only taken about three hours and a half from the time we left the camp after breakfast. Putting the watch down beside me, I started to cut off my boot. There was plenty of blood in it, and the foot was a terrible sight. I'll just tell you what the matter was. The big stone had come down fair on the instep and smashed nearly all the bones of the top of the foot, some into two or three pieces, and some of these were sticking through the skin. I noted this afterwards, for the pain in getting the boot off was so great that I fainted away. When I came to my senses poor Jock was whining and licking my face in great trouble.

'I had to take myself up pretty sharp; there must be no more fainting business if I was ever to win free out of this fix. I did the best I could to get the foot into shape, bandaged it with unburnt bits of my shirts, and then with strips of the tent, with some thin pieces of bark for splints. It wasn't a great job for a doctor, but I got wonderful relief, and, with one of the tent forks for a crutch, felt a deal more active. But time flies. I looked at the watch; it was now twelve o'clock. Something must be done to get away from this place before night. I would not stop there for all the world. Now I had got an idea in my head, and had been turning it over all the time I was dressing my foot.

'This scoundrel Lawrence was, as I have said, a very poor bushman and a very bad rider. I had led the pack-horse all the way here, and it had taken me all my time, too, in places. So I felt sure he could never lead a pack-horse and drive another before him in country like this. I was certain of that. If he managed to get the horse a mile away from the camp it would give him all he knew. There was a chance he might only go a short distance off and camp, but I didn't think so; Jock showed no signs of uneasiness. My idea was he would lose the horse before he had gone very far and not trouble about it, never thinking it possible for me, in my crippled state, to either find or catch an unhobbled horse. Something must be risked, and I determined to put Jock's training to the test. Mr Oxley and I had trained the two dogs,

among other things, to go forward at a certain signal in wide circles and head in anything they found. They would work thus singly or together, on either horse or cattle camps. I crawled down to where the horses had started from, put Jock on the scent, talked to him, showed him the whistle, blew the signal, with the cry, 'Seek forward—seek forward,' moving my arm round in the direction he was to go, and then gave the signal again. Jock looked at me, pricked his ears, gave one snuff at the trail, and was off down the Flat full gallop. I got back to my stones and spear, and sat with the watch in my hand counting the minutes. Oh, how slowly they went! Oh, how lonely I felt! If poor old Jock was only back. What if he should run foul of Lawrence and think I meant him to be rounded in and get wounded? Oh, those weary hands on the watch, how slow they went! Minutes seemed like hours. It was just half-past twelve when I started Jock. It got slowly, so very slowly, to one o'clock. I'll wait the hour, and then try to recall him. I filled the first pipe I had smoked since breakfast, and thought I would count the puffs; but I couldn't smoke. At last it came to half-past one. Well, if that was only one hour, there can't be more than half-a-dozen in a whole day.—What?—eh? Was that a dog's challenge? Yes; but how faint!—It's Jock! Hurrah! And he has got something. What is it? Oh, if he has come across that ruffian and tried to round him in! There's one consolation if he does and the man is on horse-back: he will make the horse throw him, to a certainty.

'That's something like the way I fidgeted and fumed.

'But it was Jock's voice, and it came steadily nearer and nearer. He was fetching something in. A minute or two more, and, oh, what a leap my heart gave!—for there, just turning up the Flat, was the spare horse which Jock was bringing along like a regular artist, right up to where I was standing. The bridle was on him, fastened up. I trembled so I could hardly limp forward to catch him; but at last the reins were in my hand. Thank God for it!

THE LION OF SOUTH AMERICA.



HE lion, as the puma is commonly called in South America, has of late years become very rare in most parts of that country, as it is a very shy, wary animal, and is only to be found in lonely, uninhabited spots, far away from the haunts of man. Though it goes by the name of the lion, it has none of the savage qualities of the king of beasts, and even when at bay is an arrant coward, unlike all other members of the feline race, which are accustomed

to fight for life until the last gasp. The jaguar, or South American tiger, is a much more formidable animal, and has often been known to attack a man, a feat hardly ever attempted by the puma. The puma's strength, however, for an animal of its size, is astonishing, and it is able to carry off a sheep with the greatest ease; though, if pursued, it will relinquish its prey, and make off without attempting to show fight.

Pumas are a terrible scourge to flock-owners, as the havoc they commit among the sheep and young

calves is very great, and they are so quick and silent in their movements that it is extremely difficult to catch them in the act of carrying off their prey. A friend of mine, who was for some years sheep-farming in the River Plate, thus describes his experience of these animals:

'I was some years ago on the outside pampas in charge of a flock of sheep which a puma used to visit constantly. The grazing-land round was covered with immensely tall clumps of a reedy kind of grass called *paja*, and there were but few houses in the neighbourhood. About a league from my ranch were two high hills, covered with large boulders of stone; and it was in holes beneath these the pumas had their lairs. There were two flocks of sheep at the house, and both I and the native in charge of the other flock had been provided with rifles and plenty of cartridges to kill the puma if possible. One corral, or sheep-pen, was a little distance away in front of the house; but, strange to say, our friend made no attempt to carry off a sheep from the flock which was confined there, but always came to the corral of the one I was in charge of, which was quite close to the house—in fact, the window looked out into the corral itself. The reason we assigned for this was that a large plot of maize had been planted on one side of it, and at the far end the clumps of *paja* grass grew right up to the corral fence; while the corral of the flock in front of the house stood upon a slight hill, and had no cover on any side. We had about half-a-dozen dogs, which used to sleep outside; but they never appeared to be aware of the puma's approach until the sheep came dashing madly from the quarter it had entered. The cunning beast seemed to know the nights we were on the watch, and would sometimes let a week or more pass without paying us a visit; then, just as we were beginning to relax a little in our vigilance, we would hear the sheep rushing about in the corral; and when we dashed out through the window, which was always open, we would find them huddled up in a corner, while here and there three or four were lying kicking on the ground. These all had their necks broken by a blow from the animal's paw, done either in play or to get them out of its road while searching for a fat animal to carry off, as it never failed to select one of the best sheep in the flock. The whole affair was over so quickly that, though several times, I am sure, scarcely two minutes had elapsed before we were on the far side of the corral, we could never discover any sign of the robber; and I often found myself wondering if there was not something supernatural about the animal's movements, so speedily and silently did it disappear. The dogs, however, always used to follow it into the open, and twice were so close on its tracks that they made it leave its prey.

We used to mount our horses when we heard them giving tongue; and on both occasions we

found the animals the puma was carrying off lying untouched, but perfectly dead, in the long grass. Both of them had the marks of the puma's teeth in one of their fore-legs, as well as having their necks broken; for the powerful creature used evidently to carry off its victims slung over its back, holding one of their fore-legs in its mouth, while the two hind ones trailed upon the ground on the other side. Even when the puma got off undisturbed with its prey, it was an easy matter with the dogs to find the carcass next day, hidden in a clump of grass, but with the fattest parts, the breast and kidneys, devoured. We used to poison the remains; but though numbers of foxes, hawks, and other carnivorous animals and birds were often found dead round about, the puma never seemed to return to the carcass to make another meal. The natives used to say that its sense of smell was so fine that it could at once detect if any one had been near the spot, and would then never approach the carcass again. We also tried pitfalls, with a live lamb tied above as a bait; but the wary beast never went near the place, and all we caught was one of our own horses, which one night fell into the pit. This puma made about twenty visits to my flock in the space of three months without our ever catching a glimpse of it, though one night we must have been very close on its tracks.

I happened to be at the window when the sheep came running towards the house, and dashed out at once without waiting to lift my rifle (I had my revolver in my belt), calling to the dogs as I went. As I was running across the corral I distinctly heard the thud of a heavy body against the wooden gates in one corner, and fired two shots in that direction. On reaching the spot I found the sheep the puma was carrying off—a big wether—still alive, but with its fore-leg and shoulder completely torn away from its body. The puma was evidently just making off with its prey when it heard me calling to the dogs, and in its hurry had not jumped high enough to clear the gates, got the sheep entangled in them, and had torn off the poor animal's shoulder in its efforts to get the remainder of the body free. I used afterwards to tie up a dog in that corner; and as at first it used to howl all night, the puma discontinued its visits. But directly our canine watchman got accustomed to the post and ceased making a noise, it made a raid one night at the other corner and carried off another sheep. This, however, was its last visit, as afterwards we tied dogs all round the corral, and thus stopped its depredations.

'The following summer I went one evening with two natives to sleep at a ranch three leagues off, where next day we were to secure some of our sheep which had strayed away and got mixed in a neighbouring flock. The ranch was a small one; and, as the night was very warm, we were all sleeping outside, and had just turned in when the flock, which was lying about a hundred yards off, came rushing towards the house. It was very

bright at the time, and the old native in charge caught a glimpse of something yellow in the midst of the sheep. He immediately made straight for his horse, which was picketed near, and, hollering to the dogs, set off with them in pursuit at full gallop, calling out to us as he went, "Un leon! Un leon!" ("A lion! a lion!"). We mounted and followed as quickly as we could, and about two hundred yards from the hut found the dogs had brought the animal to bay in a large clump of *paja* grass. At first I thought it was a large yellow dog they had caught trying to steal a sheep; but the peculiar snarling noise the animal made, and the way it arched its back, quickly made me aware what it was, though until then I had never seen a puma in its wild state.

I remarked that it showed very little inclination to fight, but tried to get through the clump and escape on the other side when it saw us approaching. The dogs, however, gave it no quarter, though they took care to keep out of the way of its formidable claws, which every now and then shot out with lightning rapidity at the boldest of its assailants. The old shepherd had meanwhile gone back to the ranch for his lasso; and, watching his opportunity, he threw the coils round the puma's neck, and then started off at full gallop, dragging the half-throttled beast after him. Its cries as it was dragged along closely resembled those of a young child, and were something pitiful to hear; but once the dogs saw their enemy stretched out and powerless they dashed at it from all sides, and we had great difficulty to save the hide from being torn to pieces. When we succeeded in driving the dogs away we found the

animal was quite dead, choked by the lasso, which the old native told me was the quickest and surest way of killing them. It was a large male, of a tawny yellow colour, with a dark stripe down the back, where the hair was of a much darker colour than that on its sides. It was very gaunt and thin, and appeared half-starved, or it would scarcely have approached so near a house where there were men, for we were all talking at the time the sheep began to run. The old shepherd said it must have been very weak, else he would scarcely have overtaken it with the dogs, as pumas are very quick in their movements, and will soon distance a horseman. Their grease is said to be a sovereign cure for rheumatism; but there was not a particle to be found on the one we killed. I often thought it must have been the same that used to visit my flock, as it never returned the following winter. When they cannot get sheep and calves these animals prey upon partridges, armadillos, young deer, and even young ostriches (rheas); for several times I have discovered their lairs among the rocks by the armadillo shells and ostrich feathers lying outside.

'It was very lucky that the puma paid us such an early visit that night before we were asleep, as the sheep were not shut in the corral, and some little time before, not far from my ranch, a female and two cubs found a flock feeding one night at some little distance from the house, and drove it off in front of them, playing with the sheep as a cat does with a mouse, and disabling over a hundred, most of which were found to have their necks broken; for the puma always strikes in the same place, on one side of the throat.'

THE ROMANCE OF MUTBY WORKHOUSE.

By Mrs ISABEL SMITH.



HE Guardians of Mutby Workhouse had just finished their ordinary meeting, when the Master, with rather a sheepish expression of countenance, observed:

'I think, gentlemen, I ought to lay before you a letter I received yesterday. First one of the sort I ever had.'

'Dear me, Tripp, what's that?' exclaimed the chaplain, otherwise the Rector of Mutby, commonly called Parson Weaver, a round, rosy-faced man, who more resembled a farmer than a clergyman.

The other members of the Board ceased their various conversations and looked expectant, all except Dr Evesham, the medical officer. For the last half-hour he had heard every impatient thud of his handsome chestnut's hoofs on the gravel outside, and felt that what might be an agreeable method of passing a little spare time to his con-

frères was a waste of precious moments to a busy man like himself. The whole business might be settled so much more quickly had they been concise instead of rambling and disputative. He had just been wondering how it could ever have been accepted as a popular fact that his sex were behindhand in the matter of speech, when this new delay occurred. He was a man of about thirty-five, quiet and reserved, living by himself, and accustomed to long, lonely drives about the Suffolk country on his professional errands.

'Well, Tripp, what is it?' repeated Parson Weaver rather impatiently. He had been interrupted in an interesting discussion with his neighbour, the Squire, about the trotting hackney and 'gate-post' mangolds that he had got first prizes for at the recent agricultural show.

The Master cleared his throat, and read, somewhat nervously, the following epistle:

Sept. 15, 18—.

To the Master of Mutby Workhouse.

SIR,—I am a native of Thorpe St Barnabas, and left this country forty years ago for Australia, where I made a comfortable fortune. I am now returned to my native land, but find nearly all my friends are gone and scattered. I am fifty-eight years of age, strong and hearty, and want a wife to help spend my savings. Can you recommend me a nice, respectable young woman among your inmates? I should prefer a single woman, not a widow, and would make her a good husband. Please write by return to Stephen Yaxley, Bell Inn, Thorpe St Barnabas, Suffolk.

A smile appeared on most of the faces round the baize-covered table as the Master finished.

'Dear me, Tripp,' said the parson, 'are you to be turned to a matrimonial agent in your old age?'

The Master half-laughed. 'It would seem so, sir. Curious letter, isn't it, gentlemen? But I thought it my duty to show it you.'

'Certainly, certainly,' echoed all. Dr Evesham was gazing absently out of the big window at a distant view of stained wherry-sails gliding up the river.

'What is your opinion, Evesham?' asked the Squire rather pettishly. He thought the medical officer might take a little interest in the subject, so that he could get back the sooner to the more interesting one of agriculture, and convince Parson Weaver that the prize for mangolds had been unfairly bestowed.

'My opinion? I have hardly had time to form one,' answered the doctor coolly. 'But I don't know that I should take any notice of the letter.'

The Master coughed deprecatingly. 'Well, sir, if I may be so bold as to suggest, I just mentioned the matter to my wife, and she says she thinks he might do for Susannah West.'

'*Susannah West!*' exclaimed the doctor, bringing the legs of his chair to the ground so violently as to make the others start.

'Is that the girl with the reddish hair?' asked the Squire, screwing up his eyes meditatively.

'And violet eyes,' said the parson; 'very much like some of the old masters' portraits of the Madonna.'

'The young woman's father was a small farmer at Cutton All Saints,' said the Master, 'and failed. She was ill for a long while after she got here. It seemed to prey upon her mind.'

'Yes, yes, we all remember,' said the medical officer. 'She had a low fever; it was a tough job to pull her through.'

'You ordered port wine for her, sir,' said the butcher cheerfully. He did not object to what some members called extravagance in the sick-dieting, which generally included a good supply of beef-tea.

'A sad case, a sad case,' said the Squire. 'But I don't see why the young woman can't go out to service.'

'Not strong enough,' replied the doctor, 'nor brought up to that sort of work. She has the

instincts of a lady, but unfortunately not enough education to fit her for teaching.'

'Then, from what I can see of it,' said the Squire, 'she will be here for the rest of her days—like old Molly Mobbs, that was reckoned to have cost the ratepayers over one thousand pounds altogether.'

'Unless she accepts this offer,' said the chaplain. 'Eh! gentlemen?'

All looked a little doubtful, as if not quite certain whether to treat the suggestion seriously.

At that moment a troop of little workhouse children filed past the window, followed by a young woman, clad in the lilac-check Union gown and hideous black straw Union bonnet with its purple ribbon.

'There goes Susannah West!' exclaimed the Master; 'she's just bringing the little ones home from a walk. A rare hand with them she is, too.'

The sun was shining straight upon the young woman in question, and the Board caught a glimpse of a dazzling wild-rose complexion and bands of red-gold waving hair.

'A very respectable girl indeed,' said the parson; 'and I for one suggest that we follow this offer up. We ought to make inquiries; and, though I have plenty to do in the parish' (the others exchanged quietly amused glances at this assertion, for it was well known that the parson took his parochial duties very lightly), 'I will go over to Thorpe St Barnabas myself and find out all I can of Mr Stephen Yaxley. But in the meantime, Tripp, say nothing to the girl.'

A special Board meeting was held a few days later. The parson's inquiries proved satisfactory, and it now only remained to inform the young woman of the proposal.

'I suppose you've quite settled it shall be Susannah West, gentlemen?' said the Master a little diffidently.

'I suppose so, Tripp. Why?' asked the Squire.

'Well, sir, for the matter of getting rid of one of the women, I'd sooner it was Mary Pott. She's such a grumbling creature—never satisfied.'

'So she is, Tripp; but then she's a widow, and that is against Mr Yaxley's specifications.'

Tripp scratched his head. 'Not a bad-looking woman, sir,' he observed.

'No, no. But a stipulation is a stipulation; and I, for my part, consider that Providence has sent this special offer on purpose for Susannah West.'

A murmur of approval followed this assertion; only the butcher ventured to demur: 'Seems a bit oldish for the girl, don't he, gentlemen?'

'Old? Pshaw! What's fifty-eight?' cried one and all. 'Better able to take care of a wife. Got a position,' &c.

'Yes, yes; to be sure. Of course that makes up,' said the butcher.

'Very well,' said the parson; 'then let it be settled once for all that he have Susannah West.'

'Yes, gentlemen; that is all very well as far

as it goes,' observed the medical officer, who had not yet spoken. 'But the question still remains, *Will Susannah West have him?*'

The others looked a little foolish, as though this side of the argument had not struck them.

'That we can soon find out,' said Parson Weaver irritably. 'Tripp, fetch the girl here.'

In a few minutes the girl stood before them; she looked shy and half-frightened, wondering what the Board could want of her.

'Ha! Susannah, my dear,' began the parson—he had called her Miss West in the days of her prosperity, but one cannot expect complimentary titles in the workhouse—'we have sent for you—because—in short—well, we have had a very advantageous offer, which we think will just suit you.'

Before Susannah could make any reply, the Squire, determined that the chaplain should not have it all his own way, exclaimed in his hearty voice, 'What would you say to a good home and a kind husband, my girl?'

The colour flooded Susannah's face; she gave one startled glance, then stood, with her eyes on the floor, nervously plaiting a corner of her checked apron.

'Perhaps it would be as well if I read the letter we have received,' said the parson, glaring disapproval at his neighbour for having forced his hand.

Then he put on his spectacles, and read in slow and ponderous tones Mr Stephen Yaxley's epistle, pausing every now and then to see the effect. If he expected rapturous gratitude when he finished he was disappointed. Susannah never raised her eyes. Her colour came and went, and her lips trembled; but she said not a word.

'Well, my girl,' cried the Squire, unable to restrain his impatience, 'what do you say to this? Isn't it a fine chance? I wouldn't think twice about it if I were you. Just look at your position. Here you are in the workhouse at your age, and, like a rat, without a friend in the world. Not any fault of yours, of course,' he added as a pained expression flitted across the girl's face.

'Perhaps she would like a little time to think it over,' suggested the butcher in his thick, husky voice.

'Have you got nothing to say, Susannah?' inquired the parson rather sternly.

The girl's fingers interlaced nervously.

'You are very kind, gentlemen; but I—I—don't know what to say.'

She looked round appealingly, desperately.

'Come, come, be quick to settle it, girl. We don't want another special meeting called,' cried the Squire.

The medical officer rose: 'I think, gentlemen, perhaps if I saw Miss West alone for a minute she might give me an answer. She feels embarrassed, I can see.'

'Quite right, Evesham,' said the parson. 'They can go into your room, Tripp, can't they?'

Tripp, jumping up with alacrity, led the way to his tobacco-scented little sanctum.

'Sit down, Susannah,' said the doctor kindly. 'Now don't be flurried. You have heard this offer; it seems a good one for you. But don't say "Yes" if you'd rather not. Just think it over a little.'

He turned his back on her, and, going over to the mantelpiece, examined a quaint old china group of an Englishman, Scotchman, and Irishman, seated together, entitled 'Auld Lang Syne.' A long silence followed; then Susannah spoke. She had a remarkably sweet, soft voice, and the doctor looked round quickly.

'If I do say "Yes," Dr Evesham,' she said tremblingly, 'it will be because—you—wish me to; for no other reason.'

She raised her eyes to him as she spoke. They were beautiful eyes, and sent a thrill through the medical officer.

'I wish you to say "Yes"?' he exclaimed, coming towards her.

'You have been so good to me; you saved my life when I first came here. I should never have recovered but for your care and attention. I always feel'—she clasped her hands tightly together—'you are the only friend I have, and there is nothing I would not do for your sake.'

The passionate warmth of her tone startled Dr Evesham. He caught both the hands with which, ashamed of her freedom, she was about to cover her face, and said tenderly, 'My poor girl! Then you shall never say "Yes" to this offer!'

The Board was waxing impatient, and the Squire and parson had almost broken their long friendship over the prize 'gate-post' mangolds, when Dr Evesham returned without Susannah West.

'Well, doctor, I hope you have brought the young woman to see reason,' said the former.

'I hope so,' replied the doctor dryly.

'Has she said "Yes," then?' asked the Squire and the butcher in a breath.

'She has to me, gentlemen,' said Dr Evesham, reddening. 'I am going to marry her myself!'

OUR APRIL.

Ox, but our land is lovable to-day!

What wonder if that poet held it dear

Whose cry for England's April still rings clear!

His wistful words are changed, perforce, to gay

On my love's lips and mine; but far away,

Across the world, they win a sigh, a tear,

From home-sick hearts who never, never veer
From that desire which nothing can allay.

Come, my sweet lady, let us walk abroad,

By gleaming meadow and by singing lane,

Inspire the savour of the hopeful sod,

Count the first flowers and catch the birds' refrain—

But 'mong our prayers make one for those whom God

Will not allow to see their land again.

J. J. BELL.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

IN THE POOR MAN'S HOTEL, LONDON.

IT is not pleasant for a man who arrives in England from a long voyage to find that he has to wait several days before he can cash the draft which is to furnish him with liberty of movement. Such was my predicament in London not long ago; and when, on the morning after my arrival there, I overhauled the contents of my purse, I gazed at a pretty long face in the looking-glass before which I was standing.

For two or three nights I put up at an ordinary commercial hotel, paying half-a-crown for an untidy bedroom, and eating my meals in the stuffy, unsavoury coffee-room below, whence a full view could be had of what was going on in the diminutive kitchen adjoining. The days passed; and, my letters being still delayed, I was compelled to quit my little bedroom, and to ruminate for a few hours in the foggy London streets. Once more my hand plunged into my pocket and brought forth my available capital for inspection. Yes, it had come to that: I must pick up my meals anyhow, and for the present sleep in a 'doss-house'—that is, to put it down plainly, occupy a dirty narrow bed in a dirty room, among some dozen dirty, noisy people, whose speech consists of stupid obscenities, and whose breaths reek of the chemically manufactured 'four-ale,' the staple tippie of the London poor. After paying your 'tanner' to a loudly-dressed personage at the entrance, who looks like a retired pugilist, you can descend into the common kitchen in the basement, to warm yourself before retiring; and if you are wise, and wish to escape being unmercifully bantered in the choicest vernacular, you will avoid an air of aloofness or superior virtue while sitting among your ragged fellow-guests. It is by no means a romantic situation to be in—indeed, you begin to think it would be preferable to tramp the streets; but the thought of the slimy, greasy London streets at night, with their pall of chilling, bewildering fog, that recalls to you, not Kipling's, but Thomson's *City of Dreadful Night*,

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quickly drives you back again to the warm, bright fire of the dilapidated kitchen, with its grimy and repulsive inmates, speaking in a language which to you is almost unknown. Listen to this gaunt, tattered old fellow at your elbow, whose peddling stock-in-trade is flung carelessly at his feet, as he expounds to you, with half-drunken emphasis, *his* philosophy of life:

'Wot I says is this, mate. Put me in any part of London with a couple of bob in my fist, and I makes a crown of 'em easy afore night; but 'spose I ain't got the blunt, how does I proceed—hay? Do I look like a green 'un, or do I not? Look at some of these yer ones. There's Bill Simmons—him with the black eye; he begs a tanner of a pore pusson in the New Cut, and gets run in; and serves him right. I know a trick worth two of that. None of your pore broken-down toffs for me; a high-toned gentleman's *my* game, and Piccadilly is my 'appy 'untin'-ground. And I never fails—leastways when I don't cringe and snivel as if I was Bill Simmons awskin' fur a tanner of a pore pusson—the bleedin' idjit!'

On the third morning of my stay in the 'doss-house' I was disconsolately sauntering along the embankment between Westminster and Lambeth Bridges, when I entered into conversation with a genial policeman, who was slowly pacing his beat. In the course of our walk together I informed him briefly of the circumstances in which I was placed, and of the unpleasant character of my lodging, when he turned and asked me:

'Hever been to Rowton 'Ouse, sir? No. Well, there's one on 'em not fur off, by Vauxhall Station yonder; and if you like to look in there, I think you will find yourself better suited.'

I soon found myself before the entrance of a large brick building, with many windows and a single wide door. On entering I had to pass through a turnstile, beside which was the ticket-office, while in front was a cream-coloured brick wall, with a clock in the centre, and corridors to left and right of it. After paying a sixpence

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for a night's lodging, and receiving a ticket in exchange, I took my way along the right-hand passage, and soon reached the large dining-hall, which was at that hour a scene of varied activity, for breakfast was in progress. At least fourscore men of different ages, and in every description of dress, were scattered about the long room (it measures about 160 feet by 20 feet), either seated at the long deal tables, or purchasing cooked edibles at the bar, or cooking at two large ranges—frying bacon, toasting bread and bloaters, and infusing tea. The bar, at which prices ranged from one halfpenny to sixpence, was attended by two smart girls dressed in nurse-like black and white.

One old gentleman in the crowd particularly took my eye. He was faultlessly attired, wore a silk hat, and had a gray beard; and as he stood with long toasting-fork before the blazing coke-fire, apparently as unconcerned as the roughest there, he had the look of a broken-down banker or City merchant. He could have bought a herring ready-cooked at the bar for a penny; but (as I afterwards ascertained) he obtained two outside for a penny, and by cooking one of them for himself had still one left for another occasion. When the bloater was cooked he placed it upon a plate which he had in readiness; and then, going to the table, with great deliberation spread out an old newspaper, tablecloth fashion, upon a corner of it. He returned to the fire for his herring, and also taking up from a lot of tin teapots there one marked on the spout with a bit of blue paper, brought bloater and teapot back to the table. He now disappeared through the door by which I had entered, but soon returned carrying in one hand a few dishes, with a knife, fork, and spoon, and under his left arm a two-foot wooden box marked 'Hudson's Soap;' and, depositing his burden on the table, divested himself of his hat and cloak, and sat down. My wonder as to the contents of the box was soon solved: he drew from it a loaf of brown bread, a lump of butter, an orange, and a piece of currant cake; and then, after resting his morning paper, which he must have purchased on his last trip, against his parti-coloured teapot, he proceeded with his breakfast in the orthodox London fashion.

Whereupon, my interest in him being at an end, and my own necessities making themselves felt, I advanced to the bar; and, after buying a large cup of good tea, a cooked bloater, and two slices of buttered bread, all for the sum of threepence, sat down to my own breakfast, at just double the price (as I soon learned) that my prudent old financier was paying for his. It was a lively and variegated scene. From the navy in clump boots and corduroys to the well-dressed dandy—old and young—every shade of life seemed to be represented there, without any collision or suggestion of incongruity, and all with the greatest orderliness.

After breakfast I walked into the recreation-

room, then upstairs to the reading-room, both apartments adorned all round the orange-chrome painted walls with large and splendid pictures of rural and historic scenes. Picking up one of the daily papers from one of the many polished tables, I sat down in a comfortable arm-chair before one of two large fires, and reflected that here indeed was a contrast with my quarters of the last few days. There seemed to be no end to the conveniences I came across in those spacious chambers in the course of the day; the very ideal of democratic good-fellowship seemed to hold sway within them; and when at night I ascended to the regions above, and took possession of my numbered cubicle, my satisfaction was still greater. For here was a tidy little room, 9 feet by 5 feet, with a window, a chair, a shelf with clothes-pegs below it, and a commodious spring-bed with hair mattress and plenty of clean clothing to cover it. If during the early part of the night I was once or twice disturbed by the snoring of a fellow-lodger in some neighbouring cubicle, the annoyance soon passed away, and I passed the long night in absolute comfort and repose.

The pioneer of these splendid institutions, Lord Rowton, is a hard-working peer, and the most modest of men. He was, as most people know, the confidential friend of Lord Beaconsfield. As long ago as 1866 the latter recognised the genial and energetic nature of Mr Montagu Lowry-Corry, and appointed him his private secretary, in which capacity he accompanied Lord Beaconsfield to the Berlin Congress of 1878. On the resignation of the Government, two years later, Lord Rowton was made a peer, taking his title from Rowton Castle, his seat at Shrewsbury. He refused many offers of public appointments during Lord Beaconsfield's life, preferring to render that statesman voluntary service rather than devote himself to any other work.

Lord Rowton is not often paragraphed in the personal columns of the newspapers, but he is, nevertheless, a great figure in the social work of the Metropolis; and the London poor single men will bless his name long after many names that are now better known have been forgotten. It is by his practical energy in one of the most deserving social movements of our time that he has won a high place in the ranks of philanthropists. Until a few years ago, one of the most urgent needs of the Metropolis was the provision of means whereby a working-man (unmarried) could live cheaply and cheerfully, free from the degrading surroundings of the common 'doss-house.' There were hotels for the rich in abundance, but nobody seemed to care for the stranger within the gates whose pockets were all but empty. Lord Rowton, impressed by this state of things, put to himself the question, 'Why should not the working-man have his hotel?' There was no reason why he should not; and one morning, in 1893, London

awoke to find itself the possessor of a new distinction—the only working-man's hotel in the kingdom, if not in the world. No blare of trumpets proclaimed the event, but four hundred men slept more soundly that night than perhaps they had ever done before; and from then until now hardly a bed has been vacant when the doors close half-an-hour after midnight.

So tremendous was the success of the first Rowton House at Vauxhall that a larger house was opened at King's Cross two years later, in 1895; and another, larger still, was opened at Newington Butts early last year. Others are now in process of erection at Hammersmith and White-chapel; while a sixth may soon spring up at Hackney. The latest of the 'Rowtons,' as they are colloquially called by those who use them, is on an enormous scale. It has provision for over eight hundred men, each of whom, for a modest sixpence a night, enjoys the full advantages afforded by an outlay of fifty thousand pounds. It has been Lord Rowton's endeavour to make the hotel as home-like as possible; and the absence of restrictions is one of the happiest features of the place. No questions are asked on admission—sixpence is the universal 'open sesame' to this palace of comfort. For a palace of comfort it is. There is not a brighter, cleaner, or more thoroughly respectable place in London than a Rowton House. So replete is the hotel with all the necessities of life that a man might live in perfect happiness for six months without leaving the premises. There is the bar, almost always open; there is the hair-dresser, ever at one's service; the shoemaker always at his post; the laundry always working; the tailor always anxious to make or mend on the lowest possible terms. At the bar of the shop you can buy anything from a plate of roast beef for fourpence to a seidlitz powder for a halfpenny. The man who likes to cook his own dinner has the free run of the kitchens, with their fine ranges, or he may have it cooked for him by the Rowton cook; and the man who wants exercise may wander at will through half a mile of corridors, or in the square which separates one side of the house from the other, where he may lounge as long as he will. But the latest and largest Rowton House is so vast that it is difficult to describe it without confusing readers in a mass of details. There are nearly fifty persons on the permanent staff, including thirteen women whose duties are confined solely to making beds. Each woman makes over sixty beds each morning. The building is six stories high, and the area of all the floors is nearly ten thousand yards. Over three thousand blankets are needed for the beds, and there are eight hundred safes or lockers in which the men can lock up anything they desire. The number of hot and cold water-taps in the hotel runs well on into three figures, and there are always ready for use eight hundred gallons of boiling water. Though the prices are so low that a man can live in com-

parative luxury for a week on twelve shillings, a year's turnover in the three hotels represents a small fortune. At the very least, fifty thousand pounds changed hands in 1898, and probably much more. The beds alone will bring in eighteen thousand pounds—seven hundred and fourteen thousand beds at sixpence. It is not all profit, however, as will be readily understood. The bedclothes especially are a heavy item in the balance-sheet.

The most astonishing feature of Lord Rowton's scheme is that it pays in actual cash. 'Rowton Houses, Limited,' is one of the most successful concerns in London—'a philanthropy that pays five per cent,' to quote Lord Rosebery. The first house was established by Lord Rowton himself, at his own risk, and cost him thirty thousand pounds; but its great success opened up a vista of enormous possibility; and a company was formed with a capital of a quarter of a million. There are now, as already stated, three 'Houses,' providing beds for nearly two thousand men, and in a short time the number will be doubled. Nowhere else in the world is there to be had such a splendid sixpenny-worth as in these handsome and spacious hotels. Engravings of the works of the best painters hang on the walls; the books of the best writers are found in the library; the morning, evening, and weekly papers, and numerous games, are all at the disposal of the man who has paid his sixpence, along with a score of other advantages not generally found in the average home.

Lord Rowton, in the first years of the Vauxhall establishment, used to come and sit incognito among his guests, and chat familiarly with them as they sat in their cosy arm-chairs around the fire. 'It is one of the most important features of our work,' he recently said, 'that the men should bear in mind that they are only receiving what they pay for. There is no suggestion of charity. Everybody is on an equality. They appreciate what they get and the freedom they enjoy, and they do their best to please me. Not that I preach to them—I never do that. But they know that I like to see everything in order and clean, and they make it their business to keep things so. We have hardly half-a-dozen rules in the place, and these we could dispense with easily enough. You may be surprised to know that I have never seen a cut in a table or a mark on a wall in any one of our homes, though thousands of men of all sorts and conditions have passed through them.'

'All sorts and conditions' aptly describes the men who make use of the Rowton Houses. There is the educated man who has come down in the world, the shabbily-dressed man who can talk to you in many languages, the man who has squandered his fortune in riotous living. Actors, artists, musicians, discharged soldiers, menagerie and circus men 'down on their luck,' who not so

long ago thought less of a sovereign than they do now of the serviceable, vulgar penny, rub elbows with the ordinary, commonplace Cockney artisan and labourer. Men in frock-coats and tall hats mingle with men who wash their own shirts, and wait for them to dry in the room downstairs; and the man of professional rank sits side by side with the man who brings in a parcel of wrappers at night to address before he can purchase his next morning's breakfast. It is a cosmopolitan assembly; but one and all are grateful to the benefactor who has made them kin.

The Scot is there too—where is he not?—in his two subdivisions of Saxon and Gael. The salient difference between him and the Cockney is that when the Scots 'argle-bargle'—which they often hotly do—it is on topics of more than local or temporary interest; while to the Cockney such an event as the retirement of Justice Hawkins or a horserace is of more importance than a split in the Liberal party or the Fashoda fiasco. Over yonder in the corner by the window sits an old gray-headed Scotchman, who is almost in rags, but he once held his head high as an instructor in the Kensington Art Schools, and he now paints and retails for a living the loveliest little water-colour sketches. His head, too, is crammed full of ancient, and mostly exploded, lore about Babylonians and Egyptians, with which he drenches the curious person who is so rash as to draw him into conversation on this fascinating subject. His volubility is amazing, and equally so is his industry. In another part of the crowded room—for it is evening—sits a tall, handsome young fellow, a Scotch solicitor, who now earns his bread and butter by coke-handling at the neighbouring gas-factory. When he came in to his supper he was a study in gigantesque black, but he has now rid himself of his coating of soot, and his curly pow and delicate-tinted complexion bespeak him—as he is—of gentle blood and birth. He is a modern in thought, and sometimes combats the intensely Tory painter with a perfervid eagerness that makes the calmer Cockneys stare at both in wonderment. And now behold that spruce little man, with scarlet satin necktie and silver-mounted cane, and—I regret to add—port-wine complexion; he seems the very dandy of the room, though he must be considerably over sixty years of age. He, too, has performed his ablutions after the labours of the day, and doffed his work-a-day clothes. He was formerly an officer in the Scots Guards—everybody dubs him 'captain'—and is a scion of one of the proudest of the old Highland families. In manners, dress, and conversation, he certainly would not seem out of place in the first circles of Belgravia; but meanwhile what does he do for a living? With a very different suit, and presumably a different manner, he goes out in the morning, after cooking and eating his breakfast, to vend

bootlaces and matches at a certain street corner, where he has worked up a custom. And there is the precise Scot, too—a Scot apparently with some small allowance from his relatives—who has barely set his foot as a mariner on foreign parts, but thinks he has a mission to instruct mankind: 'I tell ye, my friend, the shortest day has nothing to do with it. The sun *never* moves; the sun is a fixed point; it is the worruld that moves.'

Throughout the different rooms and corridors of Rowton House, though rough expressions may sometimes be heard, the language in general is the language of courtesy. Nobody seems to be positively hard up in the miscellaneous crowd of young and old men, well-dressed and ill-dressed, cooking, eating, reading, writing, or chatting, pipe in mouth, about the place. It must not be supposed, however, that life is all *couleur de rose* even at Rowton House. The necessary sixpence may drain the lodger's resources for the day, and then he will have to go fasting for many a dreary hour, with what philosophy he may have at command. Or even the indispensable sixpence may be lacking on some cold night, and then he has the prospect of the streets before him for a night's lodging, for there is no credit given at Rowton House even to the oldest *habitué*. In that respect a three-and-sixpenny private lodging outside possesses, for the reputable lodger, its one distinct advantage over the 'Poor Man's Hotel.' Yonder young man, with the look of an actor, seedily dressed, and rather shamefaced-looking, has not a prosperous air as he flits about the room with something rolled up under his coat. It is a pair of trousers, or perhaps a fine crush-hat, which he wants to dispose of for the magic sixpence. Look at that sturdy-looking old Northumbrian, with the keen blue eyes and the grizzled, military-like countenance. He is sixty-four years of age, or more, and he looks for all the world like a retired Yankee colonel; but he is simply a jobbing gardener, and at this season of the year he gets very little to do. He passed the last night in the streets, and this is how he managed to pull through the severe ordeal. He was allowed to sit in the house till closing time, and then betook himself for shelter from the bitter north-east wind to the railway arch adjoining Vauxhall Station, which forms the junction of five converging streets at that point. At midnight, after the public-houses close, two perambulating coffee-carts take up their station there, and remain till 5 A.M., doing a thriving business. Our gardener, to avoid police notice, must keep tramping up and down under the long, chilly archway until about one o'clock, when a number of cabs begin to rattle up, and many of them stop at the coffee-stands for refreshment. Here is our nightfarer's opportunity, for he can compete with other unfortunates in similar case for the privilege of holding a horse's head

while the cabman and his fare are regaling themselves with coffee and cake; for this brief service he receives one penny, and if he is agile, quick-sighted, and venturesome, he may capture three or four pennies up till the waning of the cab traffic at 3 A.M. He then has the means of buying a little refreshment for himself, with something over; and then comes his worst experience—the desperate effort to keep his blood in circulation, and to resist the urgent craving of his whole being to throw himself down anywhere and sleep. At 5 A.M. a neighbouring cocoa-room, one of the Lockharts' many establishments, opens, and by investing a halfpenny (if he has no more) in a small cup of the beverage, he obtains warrant to rest and shelter himself—but not to do what he would fain do, sleep—until 7 A.M. At that hour Rowton House re-opens; he can re-enter its warm and cheerful

precincts as a prospective lodger for the next night; he may find some acquaintance who will share his modest breakfast with him; and then, after an hour's sound sleep on one of the kitchen benches, near the blessed, blazing huge fire, he sets out again on his tramp in search of work.

But these cases are exceptional, and serve to show how highly the advantages presented, at so low a charge, by the management of the 'Poor Man's Hotel' are valued by those who have once tasted of them. As our American cousins would say, Rowton House 'has come to stay,' and will ever be the noblest memorial of its founder. Lord Rowton is a nephew of the Earl of Shaftesbury. How much of his zeal in social work was inspired by his distinguished uncle's friendship we can only guess; but certainly the mantle of the humanitarian Earl seems to have fallen on worthy shoulders.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XVII.

IN the morning following the receipt of the letter from Foote, as described in the previous chapter, Browne was walking from his house in Park Lane in the direction of Piccadilly, when he descried Maas coming towards him.

'This is a fortunate meeting, my dear Browne,' said the latter after they had greeted each other; 'for I was on my way to call upon you. If you are walking towards Piccadilly perhaps you will permit me to save time by accompanying you.'

Browne was not feeling particularly happy that morning, and this may have been the reason that he was glad of Maas's company. He stood in need of cheerful society. But though he wanted it, he was not destined to have it. It was a bleak, dreary morning, and once or twice during the walk the other coughed asthmatically. Browne noticed this, and he noticed also that Maas's face was even paler than usual.

'I am afraid you are not very well, old man,' he said.

'What makes you say that?' asked Maas.

Browne gave him his reasons, and when he heard them the other laughed a little uneasily. 'I am afraid you've hit it, my friend,' he said. 'I am not well. I've been to see my doctor this morning, and he has given me some rather unpleasant news.'

'I am sorry indeed to hear that,' said Browne. 'What does he say is the matter with you?'

'Why, he says that it is impossible for me to stay in England any longer. He declares that I must go away for a long sea-voyage, and at once. To tell the truth, I do not come of a very strong family; and, by way of making me feel better

satisfied with myself, he tells me that unless I take care of myself I may follow in their footsteps. Of course it's all very well to say, "Take care of yourself;" but the difficulty is to do so. In a life like ours, what chance have we of guarding against catching cold? We dance in heated rooms, and sit in cold balconies between whiles; we travel in draughty railway carriages and damp cabs, and invariably eat and drink more than is good for us. The wonder to me is that we last as long as we do.'

'I've no doubt we are awfully foolish,' said Browne. 'But our fathers were so before us.'

'A small satisfaction, look at it how you will,' returned Maas.

'And so you're going to clear out of England, are you?' said Browne very slowly, after the pause that had followed his companion's speech. 'Where are you thinking of going?'

'Now, that was just what I was coming along to see you about,' replied his friend. 'You may remember that in Paris the other day you spoke of undertaking a trip to the Farther East. I laughed at it at the time, for I thought I should never move out of Europe; since then, however, or rather since the doctor gave me his unwholesome news this morning, I have been thinking over it. I dined last night with the Rocktowers, who, as you know, are just back from Japan, and found that they could talk of nothing else. Japan was this, Japan was that, possessed the most beautiful scenery in the world, the most charming people, and the most perfect climate. So fascinated was I by their description that I went home and dreamt about it; and I've got a sort of notion now that if I could only get as far as Japan all would be well with me.'

Now, from the very first moment that Maas had spoken of leaving England, Browne had had an uneasy suspicion that something of the kind was coming. In his inmost heart he knew very well what his companion wanted; but, unfortunately for him, he did not see his way to get out of it. When he had told Maas in Paris that he intended taking a yachting cruise to the Farther East, and had laughingly suggested that the latter should accompany him, he had felt quite certain in his own mind that his invitation would be refused. To find him now asking to be allowed to accept after all was almost too much for his equanimity. Pleasant companion as Maas undoubtedly was, he was far from being the sort of man Browne would have taken with him on such an excursion had he had the choice. Besides, he had already arranged that Jimmy should go with him. Therefore, like the ingenuous youth he was, he took the first way of getting out of his difficulty, and in consequence found himself floundering in a still greater quagmire immediately.

'You have not booked your passage yet?' he inquired, as if the matter of the other's going with him had never for a moment crossed his mind.

Maas threw a searching glance at him. He had a bold stroke to play, and he did not quite know how to play it. Though he had known Browne for some considerable time, and was well aware that he was far from being an exceptionally clever young man, yet, for a reason which I cannot explain, he stood somewhat in awe of him.

'Well, to tell the truth,' he said, 'that was just what I was coming to see you about. I wanted to find out whether you would permit me to withdraw my refusal of your kind invitation in favour of an acceptance. I know it is not quite the thing to do; but still our friendship is old enough to permit of such a strain being placed upon it. If, however, you have filled your cabins, do not for a moment consider me. It is just possible I may be able to secure a berth on one of the outgoing mail-boats. Get away, however, I must, and immediately.'

Browne scarcely knew what to say in reply. He knew that every person he added to the party meant an additional danger to all concerned; and he felt that, in common justice to Maas, he could not take him without giving him some hint of what he was about to do. Maas noticed his hesitation; and, thinking it betokened acquiescence to his plan, was quick to take advantage of it.

'My dear fellow,' he said, 'if I am causing you the least inconvenience, I beg of you not to give it a second thought. I should not have spoken to you at all on the subject had you not said what you did to me in Paris.'

After this speech Browne felt that he had no opening left save to declare that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to have the other's society upon the voyage.

'And you are quite sure that I shall not be in the way?' Maas inquired.

'In the way?' Browne replied. 'Not at all; I have only Jimmy Foote going with me. We shall be a snug little party.'

'It's awfully good of you,' said Maas; 'and I'm sure I don't know how to thank you. When do you propose to sail?'

'On Monday next from Southampton,' answered Browne. 'I will see that you have a proper notice, and I will also let you know by what train we shall go down. Your heavier baggage had better go on ahead.'

'You are kindness itself,' said Maas. 'By the way, since we have come to this arrangement, why should we not have a little dinner to-night at my rooms as a send off? I'll find Foote and get him to come, and we'll drink a toast to the Land of the Rising Sun.'

'Many thanks,' said Browne, 'but I'm very much afraid it's quite out of the question. I leave for Paris this afternoon, and shall not be back until Saturday at earliest.'

'What a pity!' said Maas. 'Never mind; if we can't celebrate the occasion on this side of the world, we will do so on the other. You are turning off here? Well, good-bye, and many, many thanks to you. You cannot imagine how grateful I feel to you, and what a weight you have taken off my mind.'

'I am glad to hear it,' said Browne; and then, shaking him by the hand, he crossed the road and made his way down St James's Street. 'Confound it all,' he said to himself as he walked along, 'this is just the sort of scrape my absurd mania for issuing invitations gets me into. I like Maas well enough as an acquaintance, but I don't know that he is altogether the sort of fellow I should have chosen to accompany me on an expedition like this. However, what's done cannot be undone; and it is just possible, as his health is giving way, that he will decide to leave us in Japan; then we shall be all right. If he doesn't, and elects to go on with us—well, I suppose we must make the best of it.' As he came to this philosophic conclusion he turned the corner from St James's Street into Pall Mall, and ran into the arms of the very man for whom he was in search. Foote was evidently in as great a hurry as himself, and such was the violence of the impact that it was a wonderful thing that they did not both fall to the ground.

'Hang it, man, why don't you look where you're going?' Foote cried angrily, as he put his hand to his head to hold on his hat. As he did so he recognised Browne.

'Hollo, old chap, it's you, is it?' he cried. 'By Jove! do you know you nearly knocked me down?'

'It's your own fault,' Browne answered snappishly. 'What do you mean by charging round the corner like that? You might have known what would happen.'

They stood and looked at one another for a moment, and then Foote burst out laughing. 'My dear old fellow,' he said, 'what on earth's wrong with you? You don't seem to be yourself this morning.'

'I'm not,' said Browne. 'Nothing seems to go right with me, do what I will. I tell you, Jimmy, I'm the biggest ass that walks the earth.'

Jimmy whistled softly to himself. 'This is plainly a case which demands the most careful treatment,' he said aloud. 'From what I can see of it, it will be necessary for me to prescribe for him. My treatment will be a good luncheon and a pint of the Widow to wash it down. Come along.' So saying, he slipped his arm through that of his companion and led him back in the direction of the Monolith Club. 'Now, Master Browne,' he said as they walked along, 'you will just tell me everything—hiding nothing, remembering, and setting down naught in malice. For the time being you must look upon me as your father-confessor.'

'In point of fact, Jimmy,' Browne began, 'I have just seen our friend Maas.'

'Well, what of that?' replied the other. 'How has that upset you? From what I know of him, Maas is usually amusing, except when he gets on the topic of his ailments.'

'That's exactly it,' said Browne. 'He got on the subject of his ailments with me. The upshot of it all was that he reminded me of an invitation I had given him in Paris, half in jest, mind you, to visit the East with me.'

'The deuce!' said Jimmy. 'Do you mean to say that he has decided to accompany us, now?'

'That's just it,' said Browne. 'That's why I'm so annoyed; and yet I don't know exactly why I should be, for, all things considered, he is not a bad sort of a fellow.'

'Nevertheless I wish he were not coming with us,' said Jimmy, with unwonted emphasis. 'Did you tell him anything of what you are going to do?'

'Of course not,' said Browne. 'I did not even hint at it. As far as he knows, I am

simply visiting Japan in the ordinary way, for pleasure.'

'Well, if I were you,' said Jimmy, 'I should let him remain in that belief. I should not say anything about the real reason at all, and even then not until we are on the high seas. Of course I don't mean to imply for an instant that he would be likely to say anything or to give you away in any possible sort of fashion; but still it would be safer, I should think, to keep silence on the subject. You know what we are going to do, I know it, Miss Petrovitch knows it, and Madame Bernstein also. Who else is there you have told?'

'No one,' said Browne. 'But I dropped a hint to Mason that the errand that was taking us out was a peculiar one. I thought he ought to know as much as that for more reasons than one.'

'Quite right,' said Jimmy; 'and what's more, you can trust Mason. Nevertheless, say nothing to Maas.'

'You may depend upon it I will not do so,' said Browne.

'Now here's the club,' said Jimmy as they reached the building in question. 'Let us go in and have some luncheon. After that what are you going to do?'

'I am off to Paris this afternoon,' the other replied. 'Madame Bernstein and Miss Petrovitch leave for Japan in one of the French boats the day after to-morrow, and I want to see them before they go.'

After lunching with Foote, Browne returned to his house, wrote a letter containing the most minute instructions to Captain Mason, and later on caught the afternoon express for Paris. The clocks of the French capital were striking eleven as he reached his hotel that night. He was worn out, and retired almost immediately to bed, though it would have required but little persuasion to have taken him off to the Rue Jacquarie. As it was, however, he had to content himself with the reflection that he was to see her the very first thing in the morning.

(To be continued.)

PIN HOLE PHOTOGRAPHY.



IT may probably surprise a great many people who have not given the subject special attention to learn that the lens, which seems such an indispensable part of the photographic camera, is in reality as much an accessory as is the glass of the spectacles to the human eye. Such, nevertheless, is the case. Excellent photographs can be taken without the intervention of any lens whatever. A few words of explanation here may not be deemed amiss. As every schoolboy nowa-

days is aware, the human eye is simply a perfectly constructed camera in miniature. To reproduce the phenomenon of vision on a large scale, all we have to do is to exclude all light from a room except that which is allowed to enter through a small round hole in one of the sides of the room—in a shutter, for instance. Now look at the wall facing the hole in the shutter; you will see a faithful picture of what is going on outside in the street. The only difference is that the objects are all reversed and upside-down. The human eye and the photo-

graphic camera are both simply reduced models of the room with the hole in the shutter; or rather, it would be more correct to say, the room with the hole in the shutter is an enlarged model of the human eye.

Who it was who first investigated the phenomenon of the dark chamber—the camera obscura—is unknown; though it would appear from recent researches that the honour, like so many other honours, is due to Leonardo da Vinci, one of the most universal geniuses that ever lived. At any rate, fifty years after Da Vinci's death, Porta, a native of Naples, constructed, in the year 1569, a small model of the dark chamber, which to all intents and purposes is the camera of to-day without the lens. Ever since then it must assuredly have occurred to the mind of many and many a searcher that there might be some means of perpetuating the fleeting pictures that were successively painted on the wall of the camera obscura; but the secret took nearly three centuries to discover; otherwise, instead of dating from the nineteenth, photography might have dated from the sixteenth century.

Take a thin plate of bright polished silver. Expose it in the dark to the vapour of iodine, until its surface has acquired a light-yellow tint; still keeping all light carefully away from it, place it in a camera—a reduced model of the room with the hole in the shutter—opposite the hole. Now uncover the opening. The image of the objects in front of the hole is immediately projected upon the iodine-coated silver plate within the box, and—remains there; light having the property of chemically modifying the iodine. Such is photography in its simplest form. The iodine-coated silver plate is nowadays replaced by a highly sensitive dry plate; but the principle remains the same. A lens fixed in the hole accentuates the action of the light so that the photograph is much more rapidly painted; but just as no spectacles can give as clear a definition as one's own healthy eye, so does the lens of the camera distort the images it reflects to a certain extent. In the best lenses this defect has been reduced to the very minimum, but it exists nevertheless, modifying the natural perspective of the pictures. A photograph taken by means of a lens can never be anything, therefore, but an approximately accurate reproduction of a person or scene. The sneer of artists at photography is thus justified.

Though it has always been recognised that, in principle, a lens was not indispensable, it has hitherto been deemed impossible to take a satisfactory photograph without it. What are known as pinhole cameras—that is, cameras which are constructed with a tiny aperture through which the light is admitted, instead of a lens, have been looked upon more or less as pretty scientific toys demonstrating a principle and nothing more. Photographs, it is true, had been obtained by means of them; but they were

always very indistinct—'fuzzygraphs,' as they were contemptuously called. The unsatisfactory results hitherto obtained are due, it would seem, entirely to the fact that the matter had not been properly studied. A French amateur photographer, M. Combe, after a series of experiments extending over several years, claims that he has elucidated the most important factors in the problem; and some of the practical results he has obtained are truly astonishing. The camera M. Combe employs was constructed by himself, and, being made out of cardboard, cost only a few pence for materials; and yet the photographs he has succeeded in taking with this simple apparatus are almost perfect, and have evoked loud cries of admiration from all the artists who have seen them.

M. Combe shows that the notion hitherto prevalent among such a large number of photographers, that pinhole photography was subject to no laws, is quite erroneous. On the contrary, if successful results are to be achieved by its means, it is absolutely necessary to study and observe these laws with the greatest care. The necessary calculations and precautions, however, are not beyond the capacity of any intelligent child. All that is necessary is to place the sensitive plate at a certain fixed distance from the hole, the distance varying with the size of the hole. Knowing the size of the hole, a simple calculation enables the operator to find the precise distance from it at which the plate should be fixed. A difficulty, however, that seemed almost insurmountable was just that of knowing the exact size of the hole. If it is easy enough to measure a hole through which you can push your hand, it is a very different matter to measure one that will not admit a darning-needle. It may measure the hundredth part of an inch across, or it may measure the one hundred and twenty-fifth part of an inch. To know where to fix the plate we must first learn the exact diameter of the hole. How are we to find it out? or how are we to make a hole of a given size without invoking the aid of some skilled scientific-instrument maker?

M. Combe gives us the means, and it does the greatest credit to his ingenuity. He takes a hundred needles, all of the same size and calibre, lays them close together side by side, and measures them across. Suppose he finds that the hundred needles measure one and a quarter inch, or, to express the same in decimals, 1.25 inch. To find the diameter of one needle, all that is necessary is to divide 1.25 by 100—in other words, to move the decimal point two places farther to the left, .0125. The hole made by such a needle measures, therefore, .0125 inch; or, in vulgar fractions, $\frac{1}{80}$ of an inch; or, simpler still, $\frac{1}{8}$ of an inch. For every size of hole there is a corresponding focus at which the image projected through the hole is at its maximum of clearness, and it is at this point at which the plate must

always be fixed. Photographs taken by this method are in perfect perspective, and the contours of the objects represented, instead of presenting the hard lines so commonly reproached to photography, possess that soft natural aspect which has hitherto been one of the chief prerogatives of painting. To obtain this quality in their photographs is precisely what the best operators of the day have been striving to do for a long time past, with more or less success. The light that can pass through a hole one-hundredth part of an inch in diameter is so small in quantity that, naturally, the plate has to be ex-

posed much longer to its influence than is the case in the ordinary cameras, so that instantaneous photographs of moving objects are unobtainable by pinhole photography. It may well be, however, that some day photographic plates will be manufactured so sensitive to light that even the minute quantity passing through a pinhole will be sufficient to instantly impress them. When that day comes pinhole photography will perhaps triumph definitely. Meanwhile, after M. Combe's experiments, none need be deterred from being a photographer for lack of means to purchase the necessary apparatus.

ONLY A DOG: AN AUSTRALIAN STORY.

PART IV.



OR the first time since I saw Lawrence ride off with the horses I felt there was reasonable hope of escape. Now I felt sure that I should pull through somehow.

And whom had I to thank for it but old Jock, who twice in the one day had saved me almost by a miracle.

'And you asked me, boss, when we first met if I valued a dog's good opinion. After Jock and I had made a very sparing meal I fixed up some sort of saddle with the two sacks, bits of blankets, clothes, &c., with a good wide sling for my foot; fixing on my crutch and spear, I scrambled up, and made a start with as queer a rig-out as was ever seen in those or any other ranges.

'Before leaving I had one last shuddering look at that dismal shaft that had so nearly been my living tomb, and then turned my back on it for ever. It was just 3.30 P.M. when I left that accursed camp. There had been a lot, boss—my life's most terrible experiences—crowded into that one day since half-past six in the morning.

'I will not trouble you with all the details of my terrible ride.

'After leaving the camp I travelled on slowly for six or seven hours. There was bright moonlight, but still that is not a very favourable light for travelling in such rough country. Fortunately the horse, though not a very showy one, was staunch, mountain-reared, and active. Then I camped till daylight in the greatest agony. Next day on again, with occasional halts to rest the horse. I often shudder when I think of that journey. I was beginning to get light-headed from the inflammation of my wounds, and I felt I couldn't hold out much longer. The sun set for the second time; still I kept on mechanically. It was eleven o'clock that night when I roused myself up a bit; the country was certainly more open.

'A bit farther on Jock gave a whimper, and, putting his nose to the ground, trotted on in front.

I saw he had struck a track, made, most likely, by timber-getters. This might mean anything, as these men are constantly shifting their camps, and the track might be going either to or from one of them. But, as Jock seemed satisfied, I was. He took the lead now in such a confident manner that I felt my spirits cheered up, and they needed it. In a while my dog challenged. I stopped and listened. Yes, faintly in the distance there came a dog's bark. I kept along the track for another good two miles, the barking getting louder, till, on rounding a spur on the bank of a good-sized creek, I saw a camp before me—a couple of big tents, some timber-trucks and logs, while the jangling of bullock-bells was welcome music to me.

'I don't remember well what happened then. Of course all the dogs roared and barked and charged out, with Jock joining in the general commotion. I was told afterwards that I sat there on the horse blowing the whistle like mad. Then there were people round me. I was lifted down; some one put something to my mouth—it was a pannikin with a stiff glass of rum in it. Down it went, and a bit after I gathered my senses. I was in one of the tents, with a lot of hearty bush chaps round me. As soon as I was able I told them my story. You can imagine their surprise and wrath. I don't know which was greatest—that or their admiration for Jock, who, having given the camp champion a good dressing down, was unusually amiable, and allowed himself to be patted and made much of.

"By the holy smoke!" said a young fellow they called Syd, "I'd sooner have that there dawg than the best horse this side of Victoria." And, as you know, from a young bushman, boss, that was paying him the highest possible compliment. When they understood how very bad my foot was, and that I couldn't possibly ride any farther, the young fellow, Syd, offered to go for a cart.

"There's a spring-cart down at Pearson's; it's

only ten miles. I'll get my horse and be off at once. I'll be there before daylight, and back an hour or two after sunrise."

'So off he went. I was so exhausted that I fell into a heavy, restless sleep, from which I was roused about eight o'clock with the news that Syd was back with Bill Pearson, who was to be my coachman, and the spring-cart packed full of hay, on which I could rest my weary limbs. Bidding all hands at the camp good-bye, with hearty thanks for all their kindness, I started off with my new friend.

'I can't tell you a tenth part of all the goodness I met with. At Pearson's, when they saw how anxious I was to get on, they got fresh horses, and Bill Pearson undertook to see me right through into the Yackandandah. Fifteen miles farther on he got an exchange of horses, and before night I was back at the main camp, in bed, with a doctor looking after me. At first he was all for cutting off my foot. When he found I wouldn't suffer that, he patched me up in a sort of a way, so that in six weeks' time I was able to start for home. Father came as far as Albury to meet me with a Yankee wagon, and by degrees we got home. Then it was the doctor again, till at last I had to be taken to the hospital in Sydney. There I was operated on several times, but pieces of bone still kept coming away. At last I got all right, and had this boot with a spring instep made, with which I have managed to get on very well ever since.

'Of course I had made a deposition to the Victorian police of all that had happened, but nothing had been heard of Lawrence.

'He was taken, however, and Jock caught him. It came about this way. When at last I left Sydney as cured, better than twelve months after my accident, I went to Bathurst to stop for a while with uncle. My younger brother Charlie came over from the Mudgee side to see me and bring Jock, whom I hadn't seen for six months. You never saw such a meeting; I don't know which was the silliest, the man or the dog. About a week after, on a Saturday evening, one of my cousins, Jock, and I were in town, standing among a bit of a crowd near Webb's stores talking about a new rush, when suddenly Jock gave a fierce growl and sprang at a man passing in the road with a swag on his back. The man was so taken by surprise that he slipped and fell down, luckily for him on his face, for the dog was on him in an instant worrying him. Then I got Jock by the collar, calling out to secure the man, for I knew who it was without seeing his face. The police came up, and I shouted to them to take the man away quickly, for so furious were the dog's struggles that, not being very strong yet, I could hardly hold him. We got Jock home and chained him up, and I went over to the police-station. My story was well known all through the district, and I recognised Lawrence at once.

'He denied his identity of course, but I told the sergeant about Jock's tussle with him at the shaft; and, sure enough, when he was searched there was the scar of the bite on the thigh of his right leg—and a precious bad bite, too.

'When the Victorian police came over to fetch the villain they brought another warrant besides the one about my affair. A man who was crippled in some accident in Victoria had made a confession, some three months before this, that in company with another man he had robbed and murdered his two mates somewhere about a couple of months after my experience with Lawrence. Like me, this man had been decoyed into the bush. He stated where the bodies were buried, and they were dug up. The description given of his accomplice tallied so well with that given by the Bathurst police of Lawrence that a warrant for murder was issued against him, and the troopers got him back to Victoria in time for the other dying scamp to identify him; other evidence also was forthcoming, and Lawrence was hanged in Melbourne for murder. I had to go over there of course, but my case never came on. And now, boss, that's the whole of the yarn, lock, stock, and barrel, and I think I'll say good-night and turn in. . . .

'Well, I don't mind having another just for a nightcap.'

'Yes; but what became of Jock?'

'Poor old Jock lived to be very old—more than twenty years—and died at Mr Oxley's head station of old age, a little over four years ago. He is buried in the garden, and there is a fine stone slab over him, with an inscription telling the wonderful things he did for his master; and it winds up by saying that even if you searched the world through you could never find a stauncher friend than lay there, although he was *only a dog*.'

Next morning Jim rode a bit of the way with me. At the cross-roads he stopped and got off his horse to bid little Jock a most affectionate farewell.

'I suppose, little doggie,' he said, holding Jock in his arms, 'that I shall never see you again.'

'That you will, I guarantee,' I said, 'and before many months, too. I am coming back here. In the meantime there's my address, and give me yours, for I'm going to write to you.'

Now there had been something on my mind all the morning, and something on his. Out it came at the last moment.

'Do you happen to know,' I asked in the most innocent manner, 'the exact date when your old dog died?'

'Yes, I do,' he replied; 'it's on the monument. It was on the 17th August 1877. And as fair-play is bonny play, do you know the exact date when your little Jock was pupped?'

I did, and I told him. It was on the 18th August, just one day later, of the same year.

'Just so. I thought so,' said Jim.

'What on earth do you mean?' I snorted. 'Why can't you speak out plain instead of going on like that?'

'I mean exactly the same as you do, boss,' said Jim, with a laugh, 'and that is this. I don't know what they may call the thing in a dog that makes it know people, learn things, makes it wise, and guides its actions—whether it's soul or spirit or something else. But the soul or spirit,

or whatever you like to call it, that was in my old Jock when he died is in your little Jock now. I can see it in his eyes. And, look here, boss; if you were to argue till you were black in the face you wouldn't convince me to the contrary.'

'And considering, old man,' I replied, giving his hand a hearty farewell grip, 'that I am just of the same opinion myself, I am not going to try.'

THE LATEST JEWEL ADDED TO THE BRITISH CROWN.



HE latest addition to the British Empire, which is the Kowloon Peninsula, jutting out from the mainland of China towards the island of Hong-kong, has been acquired by us on the same principle as actuated the dog-in-the-manger—that is, we do not want it ourselves, but we do not intend to let any one else have it. The reasons for our apparently selfish conduct are not far to seek; for, while the territory in question is of little or no value to us, it might be of inestimable value to any power hostile to us should they acquire it for the purpose of erecting fortifications on the high hills which command the forts and harbour of Hong-kong.

The land recently acquired has dotted about it, especially where it looks towards Hong-kong, a number of high, barren, and very picturesque hills, between which are fertile, well-watered valleys, every square inch of which has been terraced and irrigated to grow the crops of rice and vegetables on which the dense population of the district lives. The people are a turbulent, hardy lot, highway robbery and piracy being their besetting sins. The strongly-walled villages, with massive gateways, show that intercourse between them is not always as friendly as it might be.

My knowledge of the district is derived from several shooting excursions I made to it some years ago, after the snipe and quail which haunt the rice-fields and brushwood; and perhaps some account of these may be interesting, as illustrating the character of the natives. They hate and despise Europeans, but are not averse to their visits on account of the 'kumshaws' or presents they receive from the foreign devils; and it is even said that they post their children all about among the growing rice when they see a white man shooting, in the hope that a stray shot or two may penetrate one of them and thus enable them to demand money in compensation.

Many Europeans have had most disagreeable experiences owing to shooting accidents of this kind. One man I know had the misfortune to shoot a native, and he was seized by the bystanders, his

hands and feet tied together, and a pole passed through, by which he was carried, head downwards, on the shoulders of several men, as they are accustomed to carry pigs, for miles over hill and dale to a mandarin, from whose custody he was only released, after very considerable delay and difficulty, at the instance of the Consul at a neighbouring treaty-port. His wrists still bear the marks of the treatment he underwent on that occasion.

Another case occurred while I was in Hong-kong. A party went out shooting, and one man's gun went off accidentally when a number of Chinese children were round him, one of whom was mortally wounded. The villagers took the whole party prisoners, and locked them up in a dark and filthy shed, making angry and threatening demonstrations round them. At length they apparently came to the conclusion that dollars were better than revenge, and intimated that the party would be released for eight hundred dollars; and one of the sportsmen was allowed to return to Hong-kong for the money, while the remainder of the party were kept close prisoners. The emissary knocked up one of the bank managers in the middle of the night, got his bag of dollars, and returned to his captive friends, whom he released from their uncomfortable position by the payment of the ransom. Every one said that had the parents of the injured child been offered ten or twenty dollars immediately on the occurrence of the accident they would have been perfectly satisfied; but the demand grew rapidly with the lapse of time, and the natives, knowing that such large sums were obtainable, rendered any more excursions to that district very dangerous. In fact, in so densely populated a district, where the natives were generally working in their fields, shooting was at all times by no means safe or pleasant either for the shooters or the shot!

I well remember a trip a large party of us made one very hot day. We were carried ashore from our launch by a number of the natives, and tramped for hours among the rice-fields. We walked along the narrow embankments separating the patches in which the rice grows in water three or four inches deep. Every few yards a water-snake awoke

at our approach and slid off the bank into the water, gorgeous dragon-flies darted hither and thither through the air, while shoals of little fish and creeping things played about in the water. The women and children ran out of the villages to stare and jeer at the foreign devils, while the men in their umbrella hats either went on with their work or joined our rapidly increasing retinue to see the fun and pick up our empty cartridge-cases or anything else they could lay their hands on.

When the sun got too hot for us to pursue our sport, and our internal sensations showed that it was near lunch-time, we adjourned to a shady grove and had all our good things unpacked. An admiring crowd of natives of all ages surrounded us, and made merry over the strange appearance and doings of the foreign devils. Soda-water and other effervescing beverages excited much mirth and wonder; but they were by no means averse to sharing with us eggs, cold fowl, and other viands they were familiar with. We were inclined to look upon them as a good-natured and friendly lot, till, our repast finished, we packed up and turned to go, when they at once bombarded us with a shower of stones and clods of earth.

There is an entire want of sentiment about John Chinaman. I suppose the struggle for existence is so keen in their densely populated country that they have no time to cultivate the softer emotions of kindness and gratitude. It is wonderful to observe the glee with which they see any one of their fellows hurt or made ridiculous. The tortures inflicted in their courts of law, and the bloody public executions which are so common in China, are all popular spectacles and entertainments in which even the children delight; while the indifference to the welfare and comfort of their women is to us a most painful study. I remember the wife of a wealthy Chinaman, who had never been able to bear him a living child, being admitted into the hospital at Hong-kong and safely delivered of a son. The husband at once insisted on removing both mother and child to his home, quite regardless of the fact that such a proceeding would be most dangerous to the woman; he apparently thinking that, as she had borne him a son who would be able to carry out ancestral worship for him when he was dead, the wife was of no further use to him.

When the children of the boat-people cry because they have been hurt, the mother, instead of soothing them, simply takes the cover of the well of the boat off, pops in the child, closes the lid and sits on it till the child is quiet; while if they see any one drowning, instead of rescuing the person in danger, they row away, it being a custom that whoever rescues any one becomes responsible for him in the future.

The fact that it always puts a Chinaman in a good humour to see any one made ridiculous is

utilised by Europeans when they get into a row with the natives. If you can make the majority laugh by caricaturing any physical peculiarity or gesture of one of your assailants, their anger evaporates at once.

On one occasion, when I was shooting with a friend, an old woman, evidently objecting to our coolies walking among her rice, rushed at us, followed by all the loafers in the village, flourishing formidable clubs, and yelling and gesticulating most violently. I was inclined to beat a hasty retreat; but my companion, who had been considerably longer in the country, reassured me, and, waiting till the old woman came up, he made faces at her and imitated her voice and gestures, when all the men round her began to laugh and left us unmolested.

There are no roads in our new protectorate, and no beasts of burden; the people, however, keep numerous pigs and dogs. The former are their favourite article of food, but look very unwholesome, with their lean, hollow backs and limbs, and stomachs flabby and pendulous, so that they generally rest on the ground. The dogs are those now so fashionable in England under the name of chows; and some varieties, as the name implies, are habitually eaten by their masters, as are also cats, rats, frogs, and other, to our tastes, most uninviting creatures.

These few anecdotes may tend to prejudice us against our recently acquired fellow-subjects, and therefore it is only just to say that the inhabitants of that part of China, when they emigrate away from the baneful effects of mandarin rule, with its squeezing and oppressive tendencies, have the best of characters. They are industrious, patient, law-abiding, and clever workmen. They will make a living where a white man would starve, in a new country pursuing the necessary but despised callings of washermen, cooks, and market-gardeners. Thus our new fellow-subjects may yet do good service to the empire in the hotter parts of Australia, in West Africa, and other parts of the world where the aborigines will not work, and where the heat is too great to allow of Europeans doing the manual labour necessary to open out and develop these valuable possessions. Men drawn from this district may also prove useful as soldiers, if it be decided to raise Chinese troops for the defence of Wai-hai-wei, recently acquired by us. With their homes and relations in British territory, they will not need to fear the vengeance of the Chinese authorities should they do anything contrary to the wishes of the mandarins. This is a lever which is made use of to a very great extent by the authorities in dealing with offenders. Should a man flee from arrest in China, it is said that the authorities at once imprison all his relatives till he gives himself up, which he is pretty certain to do. It is well known that a poor man in China will even take the place of a criminal condemned to death for a monetary

consideration, in order to make his parents more comfortable, or to pay suitable sacrifices to their departed spirits if they be dead. Respect and obedience to their parents, and care for their com-

fort in their old age, is one of the most marked and pleasing traits of Chinese character, and constitutes one of the most important parts of their religion.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A GREAT WORK.



NE of the grandest engineering works ever conceived has just been inaugurated by the laying of the foundation-stone, at Assouan on the Nile, of a vast granite dam which is destined to hold the waters of the historic river in check. This huge wall will be more than a mile in length, seventy-six feet high in places, and thirty or forty feet in width, so that it will form a bridge across the river as well as a dam to conserve its waters. The effect of this obstruction will be the formation of a reservoir with an area of about six hundred and seventy square miles, holding one thousand million tons of water; and it is estimated that this mighty volume will be the means of bringing two thousand five hundred square miles of desert land under cultivation. The so-called cataracts, which are in reality rapids, will disappear, and a lock at each end of the granite wall will form gates for the passage of vessels up and down stream. The work has been planned by Sir Benjamin Baker, will be undertaken by Mr Aird, and will probably be completed in about four years' time. It is regarded as the greatest engineering enterprise undertaken in the land of the Pharaohs since the building of the Pyramids.

INCENDIARY MICROBES.

Under the above title a writer in our French contemporary *La Nature* contributes an interesting article on spontaneous combustion, showing that when stored hay, bales of cotton, tobacco, &c. take fire, the action is in the first place due to bacteria. In wet seasons such fires are most common, and are due to storing the hay, &c., in a damp state; fermentation follows, with great rise of temperature—a process due entirely to the action of microbes; the hay is changed to a dry, porous, and carbonaceous condition; and it presently takes fire. It will consume slowly, until accident brings the external air to its help, when the incandescent mass bursts into flame, and the microbes which caused the initial mischief are destroyed in a funeral pyre of their own making.

THE PITCAIRN ISLANDERS.

Correspondence which has recently been issued by the Colonial Office respecting the present state of the Pitcairn Islanders tends to show that these descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers have degene-

rated. It is an interesting point whether this is due to the intermarrying which has gone on among them during the past one hundred and ten years. One peculiarity attaching to the islanders is the loss of the front teeth, not by disease, but by breakage. This they attribute to their food, which chiefly consists of bananas, yams, &c.; but the Tahitian natives, who are their near neighbours, and eat the same kind of food, are blessed with sound teeth. An American missionary and his wife say that the want of intellect among the young is simply appalling. Another observer describes these same children as being bright, merry little things, whereas the adults have a tired, hungry look, very different to what he had expected to find after reading of this unique island and its people. If they are questioned, the words must be put in very simple form, else they do not understand. This sluggishness of brain cannot certainly be put down to excess either in eating or drinking, for the Pitcairn Islanders are total abstainers, they do not smoke, and they are almost vegetarians in their diet.

FLASHING ADVERTISEMENTS.

At last an effort is being made to deal with that recent outcome of electrical progress known as the flashing advertisement; and although that effort does not extend beyond the limits of the Metropolis, it is at any rate an endeavour to reach the fountain-head where the evil is at present most rampant. No fewer than four hundred architects have petitioned the London County Council to stop a practice by which 'the architectural value of one of the most beautiful sites in Europe, Trafalgar Square, is thus nightly destroyed.' The petitioners have some hope that powers will be obtained to deal with this matter effectually, because some time ago, when an attempt was successfully made to throw advertising notices by means of a searchlight upon Nelson's Column, in the same square, an appeal to those in authority resulted in the practice being abandoned. An endeavour to advertise soap and pills on the clouds was happily abandoned about the same time because of its impracticability.

A NEW ELECTRIC LAMP.

For some time there have been rumours of an electric lamp on an entirely new principle, and the matter took more definite shape when the contrivance was recently exhibited at the Society of Arts, London. It is known as the Nernst in-

candescant electric lamp, and its chief peculiarity is that it employs a rod of refractory earth in place of the usual carbon filament, and that this material is not enclosed in a glass exhausted of air. The rod is preferably composed of the oxides thoria, zirconia, yttria, &c., which are employed in the manufacture of the Welsbach mantle as used in the incandescent gaslight, and when in a glowing white-hot state emits a most intense light. The arrangement differs from familiar forms of electric lamps in that it requires to be lighted with a spirit flame, or by other means, for the rod does not become a conductor of the electric current until it has been heated. The new lamp offers such economies of current in use that it is sure to meet with general adoption provided that the rod is cheap and does not require too frequent renewal.

SUBMARINE WARFARE.

Experiments in France with a submarine vessel, the *Gustave Zédé*, have once more invited quotations from Jules Verne's mythical account of a voyage beneath the sea, and the French press has somewhat hastily assumed that at last the fleet of perfidious Albion is at her mercy. There is nothing new about the idea of a submarine boat, for it has appeared in various forms during the past two centuries; but no nation has dared to put it to the test of actual warfare. We may feel sure that the English Admiralty would not have neglected this means of offence if it really possessed the marvellous powers credited to it by the French newspapers; and the same reasoning will apply to the non-appearance of the submarine vessel in the recent war between America and Spain. If such a boat should be considered a valuable addition to our naval resources, our naval authorities will not be slow to adopt it, and will benefit by the recent experiments in the production of a vessel which is sure to present many improvements upon the French model.

PEARLS AND RUBIES.

Although you cannot get 'figs off thistles' after any amount of cultivation, you can get pearls without diving for them in deep water, and rubies without going all the way to Burma for them. The latter, indeed, are said to be 'manufactured' in London on a tolerably large scale—so large that a ruby-making syndicate is said to be dividing £37,000 a year net profit on the business. These chemical rubies are said to be so perfect as to deceive the 'very elect'; and a well-known expert asks why, if Science can produce a trinket which cannot be told from Nature's, she should not have the benefit of the difference in price between what it costs to make the article in the laboratory and the obtaining of a stone of similar size and quality from an Oriental mine. As to size, that is simple enough; but as to quality, there are no doubt other experts who would wish

to have a say in the matter—those, for instance, who have a stock of *real* rubies on their hands. But, after all, what does it matter, when those who own real diamonds as often as not wear paste ones for safety? Pearls are not, as yet, made in the laboratory; but it seems they can be made in the aquarium, and that there is no need to dive to a depth of forty or fifty feet to obtain them. One Signor Comba has been experimenting for several years in the artificial production of pearls at an aquarium in Turin; and so successful have his efforts proved that he is now engaged in a plan for laying down a large quantity of pearl oysters (*Meleagrina margaritifera*) in the Mediterranean, along the south coast of Calabria, with a view to more extended operations. It is contended, however, that the mother-of-pearl shell will not 'live' in a temperature of less than sixty-eight to seventy degrees Fahrenheit, and but slight hopes are held out for the success of Signor Comba's experiment. In Queensland, however, they have been cultivated with success, as a result of an experiment conducted in Torres Strait by Mr W. Saville-Kent, F.L.S., late Commissioner of Fisheries to the Governments of Queensland and Western Australia. But the great drawback is the distance of these countries from the chief markets for mother-of-pearl, which are London, Hamburg, and Trieste, and the consequent expense of conveying the pearls thither. Still, it is admitted that there are great possibilities in the artificial production of pearls, and that it undoubtedly represents a most profitable industry, which could, under expert management, be carried on concurrently with systematic pearl-shell cultivation. The term 'artificial production' applies, of course, in a wholly different sense from that used in regard to rubies—the pearls themselves being real, and only the method of 'rearing' them being artificial.

STREET HYDRANTS.

We naturally pride ourselves upon our modern fire brigades, but we cannot expect them to render the most efficient help unless they are provided with a readily accessible supply of water. In the Metropolis itself, where the best appliances would be looked for, the method of supplying water to fire-engines leaves much to be desired. The hydrants are usually placed beneath the pavement, under an iron plate, which must be raised before connection with the engine can be made, and in frosty weather, especially if there be a leak in the valve, the whole arrangement is frequently covered with ice. Indeed, it is not an uncommon experience for the engine to be brought over the hydrant to thaw the ice before anything more can be done. A new hydrant, the invention of Mr William Jones, has recently been tried in London with some success. It is fixed to and forms part of one of the ordinary street-lamps, just like the arrangement

common in many private buildings. A valve close to it enables the water to be turned on at a moment's notice; and at a recent trial of the apparatus two lengths of hose were attached and the water flowed through them in fifteen seconds. By means of a syphon arrangement the water in the delivery tube can never freeze so long as it remains liquid in the mains.

FIREPROOFING WOOD.

Among the many valuable lessons taught by the recent war between Spain and the United States is the important one that a ship of war should have as little wood in its construction as possible, and that what there is should be fire-proof. Dr Hexamer recently read before the Franklin Institute a paper dealing with this subject, and showing how, by a comparatively cheap and easy process, woodwork may be rendered absolutely incombustible. It may be noted that the inventor of the system does not seek to make money out of it, but gives it to the American nation with a view to do his country a service. Before commencing his experiments Dr Hexamer laid down certain conditions which he considered imperative, the chief of which was that to prove effective against fire the wood must be treated, not on the surface only, but through its entire mass. After trying various substances with which to impregnate the wood, he finally chose water-glass, treating it at a later stage with ammonium chloride in order to render it insoluble. The woodwork is first of all heated in an iron container to expel all moisture; after which the water-glass is admitted under pressure, and is forced into the inner recesses of the wood. Ammonium chloride is then admitted to the container, under the same conditions, and the wood is finally washed in running water, and slowly dried.

FOR SANITATION AND SCIENCE.

The munificent gift of Lord Iveagh (Edward Cecil Guinness) of a quarter of a million sterling to the Council of the Jenner Institute for the endowment of scientific research as to the origin and prevention of disease, and another quarter of a million for the improvement of an insanitary area in the heart of Dublin, recalls the fact of his former benefactions towards industrial London. In November 1889 it was announced that he had placed in the hands of Lord Rowton, Mr Ritchie, President of the Local Government Board, and Mr Plunket, First Commissioner of Works, a sum of £250,000 for the erection of dwellings for the labouring poor. His intention was to provide sanitary dwellings for people somewhat poorer than those who had previously availed themselves of existing artisans' dwellings. Since 1889 the Guinness Trust has erected four blocks of buildings on the south side of the Thames—at Brand Street; St Page's Walls in Bermondsey; Snowfields, Ber-

mondsey; and Vauxhall. They have now two thousand three hundred and fifty rooms and tenements in all parts of London, with a population of over seven thousand under their roofs. Lord Iveagh's gift for research into the origin of disease recalls that of Sir William Savory of one hundred thousand pounds for the establishment of a convalescent home in connection with one of the London hospitals, of which the first announcement was made on January 1, 1890, as well as the recent munificent gifts towards providing sanatoria for consumptives. Sir Sydney H. Waterlow, who has been the moving spirit and chairman of the 'Improved Industrial Dwellings Company,' presented the London County Council in November 1889 with about twenty-nine acres of his estate situated in Highgate Hill. He also gave six thousand pounds in cash to purchase the freehold interest in part of this estate.

The donations for industrial dwellings in London made by the late George Peabody amounted in all to £500,000. The amount received for rent and interest up to 1898 brings the total fund up to £1,220,446. The Trust has provided for the artisan and labouring poor over five thousand separate dwellings and over eleven thousand rooms. It was the desire of Peabody in making the bequest that within a century the annual receipts from rents might yield such a return that there would not be a poor labouring man of good character who could not get necessary house-room. We may safely credit the labour and influence of the late Lord Shaftesbury with the first suggestion for this very practical use of surplus wealth.

A NEW FIREARM.

What seems to be a very formidable rival to the revolver is the light automatic carbine or pistol which has recently been put upon the market in three patterns, two of which come from Germany, and the other from Belgium. The new weapon is only half the weight of a rifle, it is sighted to five hundred yards, it will come in half for packing, and its cost is under ten pounds. Ten cartridges can be inserted in one second, and as many as eighty shots per minute have been fired from this compact weapon. The ammunition used is of the smokeless variety, and the cartridges are very light in weight. The weapon will doubtless prove of great use for sporting as well as for more serious purposes.

AN IMPORTANT DISCOVERY.

At a recent meeting of the Paris Academy of Medicine a report was presented by M. Laborde concerning some experiments made by him in conjunction with M. Jaubert with a view to restoring vitiated or breathed air to its normal condition. It is well known that expired air, besides being short of oxygen, is charged with carbon dioxide, watery vapour, and other products. The experimenters in question

assert that they have discovered a chemical substance which, by simple contact with expired air, will restore to it its lost oxygen, while at the same time it will rob it of all its noxious properties. Three or four kilogrammes of the compound will allow a man to live twenty-four hours in a confined space without any fresh air being administered to him from outside. It need hardly be pointed out that this discovery, if *bonâ fide*, will be of the greatest use to divers, firemen, and all who have to face an irrespirable atmosphere. In previous apparatus having the same object, caustic soda has been employed to absorb the carbon dioxide, while the oxygen has been renewed from a compressed store of that gas.

THE RAPID SEASONING OF WOOD.

Yet another application has been found for the modern wonder-worker—electricity—in the quick seasoning of timber, and by all accounts the process is a reliable one. At Charlton, Kent, the well-known electricians, Messrs Johnson and Phillips, have set up a plant in order to work the Nodon-Bretonneau system, which consists in immersing the timber to be treated in a tank containing a solution of borax, rosin, and soda—a mixture which may be described as an antiseptic varnish. Plates of metal are arranged above and below the timber, and these are so connected with a dynamo that the electrical current completes its circuit through the wood. Under this treatment the sap is driven to the surface of the bath, and the borax liquid takes its place in the pores of the wood. This part of the process occupies from five to eight hours, after which the wood is dried spontaneously or by artificial means. It is said that a fortnight's exposure to summer weather will render the wood as serviceable as if it had been stored in the ordinary way for five years.

THE RULER OF AFGHANISTAN.

Dr A. G. Gray recently gave a most interesting account of his experiences at the court of the Ameer of Afghanistan, where he sojourned for a long time, and was able to accomplish much good in the practice of his profession. Medical science among the native Afghan doctors is in a very primitive condition, and seldom, even by an accident, is the right remedy prescribed. At the time of Dr Gray's visit numbers of lives were sacrificed to ignorant medical treatment, a fair sample of which may be instanced from the fact that the Ameer himself was bled for gout, while his feet were placed in iced water. But the sufferer would not allow Dr Gray to prescribe for him until he had seen the effect of English treatment upon his servants, and this proved so satisfactory that at last the foreigner was called in to attend both the Ameer and the Sultana. In the case of the lady diagnosis was rather difficult, for doctor and patient were separated by a silk

curtain. Moreover, the Sultana plainly stated that she preferred her own nostrums to his. Dr Gray describes the Ameer as a clever ruler, who is doing much to civilise a people among whom murder and robbery have heretofore been regarded as venial offences.

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW.

The publication in our February issue of an article under this title describing the Norfolk village of Stiffkey has awakened an angry correspondence, and the Editor has received many letters indignantly denying the statements which it contained as to the gloomy and miserable condition of the place. In a letter to the *Eastern Press* of Norwich, Mr Victor Pitkethley virtually acknowledges having unintentionally maligned the hamlet, and the Editor can only express regret that he gave currency to misleading statements. It has also been pointed out that these statements bear a close resemblance to the description of the village furnished in a volume by Mrs Berlyn, entitled *Sunrise-Land*.

The Editor is assured by a writer who has known the place for forty years that it is one of the most lovely villages in Norfolk. Other correspondents point out that the cottages are tidy and comfortable, and that the fact of inter-marriage and the number of red-haired Rufuses is untrue. There is a well-conducted voluntary school, the church services are well attended, and the chapel people have just decided to build a new place of worship. The gathering of the famous cockles, which appears to be a profitable industry, does not, at the same time, incapacitate the women for their other duties or the girls for domestic service.

TO A BLACKBIRD.

SABLE-COATED, golden-throated,
Well-spring of content;
Bird or angel, God's evangel,
Surely thou wert sent
From Heaven's portals down to mortals
To interpret *Love*,
In its sweetness and completeness
As 'tis felt above.

Deep and quiet—no wild riot
Like the lark's is thine;
Full and tender, thou dost render
Thy love-song divine;
And *her* spirit and mine hear it,
Answering to its call.
In its sweetness and completeness
Love is all in all!

M. HEDDERWICK BROWNE.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE MAKING OF A MAN.

A STORY FROM LIFE ON THE PAMPAS.

By ANN SCOTT.

CHAPTER I.—INTRODUCES OUR HERO.



THE sun, a ball of fire, had touched the straight line of the horizon—a sign that the working-day was over. At the *estancia* of Las Tres Aromas—‘The Three Aroma-trees’—all was astir preparing beds and supper for man and beast. Riders arrived from various directions, who, after unsaddling and watering their horses, and turning them out to feed in the open, joined a group of loiterers lounging round the fences of the *corral*, telling each other well-worn stories of race-meetings and polo-matches, as they discussed the more favoured ponies who stood shoulder to shoulder, their noses buried in a trough filled with oats and maize. A flock of sheep passing through a gateway raised a cloud of luminous dust, and filled the air with the noise of their bleating; the horsemen bringing them in stood out gigantic black figures against the light of sunset, as with shouts they waved their whips in a vain attempt to hasten the stupid, weary animals.

In the centre of the *patio* a great fire smouldered; over it the cook, a brown-skinned, stalwart woman, prepared to roast a huge bit of beef. She talked in shrill Spanish to two *gauchos* who had asked and obtained permission to pass the night at Las Tres Aromas. Too tired to answer her, they squatted on their heels, puffing cigarettes, and watched with satisfaction a pot of soup bubbling on the fire.

As the short twilight faded, light after light shone out from the windows of the *estancia* house, where the mistress hurried from room to room, directing the maids in their work of lighting lamps, filling water-jugs from the draw-well, and preparing beds for unexpected arrivals, who, appearing at sundown, accepted as a matter of course supper, bed, and breakfast, riding off again in the early morning with little chance of finding

such comfortable quarters for many nights to come. In the big living-room a fire of hard redwood and maize cobs blazed noisily, lighting up the dark vault of the open chimney, and sending dancing gleams of light down the long table, covered with white linen, silver, glass, and sweet flowers. It seemed wonderful to find such comfort, prettiness, and the stir of human life in the empty wilderness of the pampas—a wilderness that, like a desert of grass, more monotonous in colour and in perfect flatness than the golden deserts of the East, surrounded this small patch reclaimed and cultivated by the skill of man.

So thought a traveller who, coming along the dark and silent road, caught sight of the cheerful lights and heard the clamour of voices. Since daybreak he had been in the saddle, riding his two horses alternately, and only resting at noon at a *ranchito* (a mud-built hut), where he got some beef and *maté* (Paraguay tea, drunk through a tube)—all the food he had tasted that day. Never had Dick Milner felt so despairing; for the first time in his experience life seemed full of unknown terrors and difficulties he could not overcome. Only three years ago he had left an English public school. How easy and happy life had been there, now he looked back on it! He had been unable to choose a profession which required steady application to monotonous work, so he had been launched on the world, to make his way as best he could, with a good education and little else to help him. Unfortunately he had made a bad start, and let himself drift into a careless, aimless style of life, such as too many young fellows fit for better things are content with in a country where it is easy to keep yourself and a horse or two, and where there is little to rouse an ambition for higher aims.

Owing to a foolish quarrel, Dick had left a large well-known *estancia* where his father had got him an opening—one amongst half-a-dozen other young fellows learning to work under a capable chief. Cut off from all control, Dick at first enjoyed his independence; but in time he learnt its disadvantages. Without a friend to say a word for him or give him introductions, it was not easy to get work from the best class of his countrymen; and as his clothes became shabby and his manners deteriorated, he drifted lower and lower, till he found himself thankful to get food and a bed, in return for his services, from an Irishman of the lowest type. Very soon the disorder, misery, and drunkenness of the life around him brought utter disgust; and at last he realised to what low depths he had sunk. He straightway packed all that was left of his outfit in a pair of saddle-bags, and rode off to the nearest town, leaving his master too stupidly drunk to be surprised or put out by this desertion.

He put up at an inn till he could hit upon a plan for his future. The inn was of the roughest; he was only too thankful to find that he shared a room with an Englishman. They spent two long evenings together in the dreary saloon, where the men from the town drank and gossiped, and played billiards on a table that was used for many other purposes during the day, or in wandering about the dull streets trying as best they could to kill time. In return for Dick's companionship, the elder man showed some interest in his plans; and, after hearing his story, urged him to apply to Mr Hardie of the *estancia* of Las Tres Aromas for work. He talked much of Mr Hardie's enterprise and energy, that had opened up a district hitherto little known. He and other travellers who came and went from the inn were always ready to talk of the place, as of a land flowing with milk and honey, a dairy with butter and cream, a garden with fruit and vegetables; and an orderly house, with books and pictures, and many other signs of civilisation, was a topic worth discussing in this country, where few householders could boast of more than a roof over their heads and a well sunk by the door. A little encouragement was all Dick required; the morning this chance-friend parted from him he was off on a three days' ride to Las Tres Aromas.

Now, within sight of the land of promise, a fit of dejection fell on him. A touch of frost had come with the swift darkness that chased away the heat of the sun; he shivered and felt conscious of being tired out and hungry; and for the first time he felt anxious as to what welcome he would receive. 'A fellow like Hardie would have nothing to say to a wanderer like him. What was the use of trying for a better sort of life? No one would dream of giving him a respectable job.' Then he remembered the

wretched tramps that haunt the roads at home, ever seeking work, but never finding it. In his dejection he fancied that he had much in common with such undesirable types of humanity, and he blushed at the thought. If we probe the depth of self-abasement wholesome reaction sets in. Dick laughed bitterly at himself. Surely he was fit for something better, if anything better could be found in this low-down country! He had not been a duffer at school; he was considered rather a fine fellow, in fact. Here no one seemed to think him worth a good day's pay. If they would only give him a chance. A wave of home-sickness swept over him. Poor lad! he recalled the kindness and sympathy freely offered him by friends of school and home life. He had said good-bye to them so easily, only impatient of the concern they had shown for him—their fussiness, he had called it. Fussiness! Could he have it now it would prove a cordial to warm his cold heart. His eyes grew dim, pain clutched at his breast, and he swayed in his saddle. A stumble on the part of his horse brought his wits back to the present; he straightened himself, and, looking ahead, saw the lights shine out of the gloom of nightfall, and heard bursts of laughter and a voice shouting an order in English. At the same time his horses pulled up at a gate which a peon (or labourer) was locking for the night.

'*Buenas noches, señor!*' shouted the man in a hearty voice.

'*Buenas noches, señor!*' answered Dick. 'Is this Las Tres Aromas? Is Don Diego at home?'

'*Si, señor,*' answered the man, letting the chain drop and swinging the gate open.

Dick and his horses passed through. As is the custom of the country, he rode straight to the *palenque*—that is, an arrangement of posts and bars where horses are tied up—and himself unsaddled his horses and drew water from the well; after giving them a good drink, he dashed a bucketful of water over each steaming back, and then turned them loose in a field, where they did not hesitate to join a group of hungry beasts feeding from a stack of dried *alfalfa*, a sort of clover. Dick then turned his steps to the house. He stopped short when he reached the open kitchen window, and looked in. What a jolly scene it was! A little old woman stood in front of a stove, heaping on a dish piles of snowy rice crowned with a savoury curry; a little girl perched on a high dresser ground coffee-berries in a hand-mill. 'Real coffee,' said Dick to himself, with a sniff at the flying odour, and his spirits began to rise. Two elder girls fluttered in and out, carrying dishes along the open corridor to the dining-room at the farther end. They looked very pretty in their gay frocks and white aprons, and seemed to step to the music of an accordion played by a young fellow lolling on a bench in the background. All seemed to be talking and laughing at their hardest.

Stepping up to the door, Dick, in polite Spanish, asked if he could speak to Don Diego. In the *campo*, as the country districts of Argentina are called, the old Spanish form of address—Don or Donna with the Christian name—is still in use. The master and mistress are generally known as *el patrón* and *la patróna*, while the second in command gets the sonorous title of *mayordomo*.

One of the girls, telling Dick to follow her, led the way along the corridor, or veranda, and, popping her head in at the dining-room door, called out, '*Hay un hombre, Don Diego*' ('Here is a man, Mr James').

This was greeted with a burst of laughter from the group seated at the table. '*Hay un hombre!*' cried a mocking voice, with an English accent that made it almost impossible to recognise the words; 'there's always an *ombray* waiting for the *patrón*.'

'Strangers know that you are to be found at home at feeding-time!'

'Oh Jim, have some dinner in peace before you see him.'

This last remark was made in a woman's voice—a lady's, as Dick recognised with a thrill. Overcome with shyness, he stepped back into the darkness, and became conscious all at once of his unpolished top-boots, a ragged hole in the elbow of his well-worn coat, and, worst of all, became aware of what till now he had never thought of—that his hair was lying in curls on his temples, half-hiding his ears and touching the collar of his coat. It was many weeks since he had seen himself face to face in a looking-glass, but without its aid he pictured himself quite unfit to be introduced to polite society. The peep into the cheerful kitchen had fascinated him; but what he saw now was a different matter. The kitchen was less formidable, and he thought of taking refuge in it; but, at the same time, he longed to join his equals in the position he had a right to claim, yet feared he might have forfeited that right.

The room that seemed to him so desirable a place was in reality very simple. The walls were whitewashed and the furniture was of varnished deal; but it was furnished with the best of all furnishing—well-filled bookcases, pictures on the walls, and a piano in the corner; while guns, polo-sticks, and shining bits and spurs filled up odd spaces. A motley assortment of men surrounded the table; but Dick's eye rested first on the lady at the head, dressed in bright silk and dainty lace, with her fair, smooth hair carefully arranged, as his sisters would dress for a quiet evening at home. On each side of her sat a gentleman, in black coat and white collar—a rare sight in those uncivilised parts. Then came two lads, who were being trained by Hardie, much as in old days a squire was trained by a knight; learning by personal attendance to

model themselves on their superior, and more completely under control and discipline than any schoolboy under a severe master. Next to them sat, on one side, a shopkeeper from the nearest camp-town, by his dress and bearing a horseman, like all his countrymen, but with that air of wishing to please and accommodate that betrays his calling in every land. Opposite to him was a huge cattle-buyer, who sat like a statue, making no movements except such as were necessary to the despatch of his dinner; from time to time he looked out of the corner of his eye at the lady, much as one of his own untamed bulls would eye a stranger in the herd. He would have been happier in the *peones'* quarters had pride permitted him to relinquish the right custom allowed him to claim of being entertained with the best hospitality the *estancia* could produce. These two looked a dirty pair beside the Englishmen, though, without doubt, the shopman was satisfied with his toilet, having drenched himself with Florida water and tied his brilliant silk neckerchief in the latest style. At the end of the table, with his back to Dick, sat James Hardie himself.

Dick could only open his mouth and stutter when Hardie, jumping up, asked him what he wanted, telling him to come in and speak for himself. His wife, however, who would often say that she had learnt since she lived in the camp to judge a good horse and a gentleman under an ungroomed mane and a rough coat, understood the reason of the lad's distress; and, more by the tone of her voice than the words she said, soothed her husband's irritation.

'Jim,' she said, 'he looks so tired and cold. Take him to your room and let him have a wash; and bring him back quickly—he must be hungry.'

As Hardie led Dick across the *patio* to a bedroom, he asked him where he had come from, and a few questions as to his journey.

'From Garahan's place. My name is Dick Milner,' answered Dick.

'What took you there? Working for Garahan?'

'Yes; but I could stand it no longer—such a beastly hole, and such a set of drunken Irishmen.'

'I have heard of the place—as bad as they make them, I should say. You were a fool to go there,' interrupted Hardie in a tone of disgust. 'You are looking out for another job, I suppose?' he added dryly.

'Yes—that is, I heard—I thought—perhaps'—The shamefaced lad looked up at the man beside him, who in the dimly-lit room could be clearly seen by the light of a candle he carried. A quiet, strong face, smooth-shaven, except for a moustache as fair as the short curls that covered his head; he had the fresh colour and clear eyes of one who lives in the open air and takes constant hard exercise; firm lines about his mouth told that he was a man

who could command others and make them obey; his whole bearing was that of a gentleman who, respecting himself, makes others respect him. As he looked for the first time into his face Dick felt this was a man into whose hands he could put himself, tell him all his story, and take any advice he offered; but his own deficiencies, and still more the knowledge that he showed himself at a horrid disadvantage, made him stutter and talk to no purpose.

Hardie led him to the toilet-table, and put down the candle; then, after a pause, said gravely, as if expecting an answer: 'Well?'

'I am told there's lots of work going on here. I thought perhaps you could take me on,' stammered Dick.

'There is lots of work, and no end of fellows who *think* they can do it. What can you do?' he asked abruptly.

Dick drew his face, with a gasp, out of a basin of water. What could he do? He honestly believed but one thing well. 'Ride,' he answered from the folds of a towel.

'Ride!' exclaimed Hardie, with a short laugh. 'You need not tell me that; every new chum can ride.'

Savagely Dick tugged a comb through his hair; he felt furious. He could ride, though he was a new chum, as well as most men; he would prove it, too.

'If you are ready, come along,' remarked Hardie.

'I am not fit to be seen,' said Dick, thinking of the lady, who, he felt, was more formidable even than the great Don Diego himself.

'Never mind; you'll do. My wife knows you have not brought your Gladstone bag or your valet.' Then, turning suddenly, he added, 'But, I say, your horse! Have you left him tied up all the time? He has done a hard day's work.'

Here was a fresh pitfall. Had he done right in putting the horses in the field where the *alfalfa* stood? He should have put them into the open camp, of course. Dick under no circumstances could have glossed over the truth, so told what he had done with his two horses. His host led the way back to the dining-room without a word in reply. In time, when he learnt to know Hardie, he understood that if he had looked after himself and neglected his horses he would have received scant favour from the master of Las Tres Aromas.

A delightful evening was now before him. In after-years the very memory of it was a pleasure. To sit at a clean, well-served table; to enjoy a

variety of well-cooked dishes; to listen to intelligent conversation, lightened by kindly chaff and accompanied by much laughter; above all, to see and hear a lady once more. How pleasant these things are that we take as a matter of course, like bread and butter, forgetting, because we have them always, to consider how good they are! Dick got hot all over when Mrs Hardie first spoke to him, but soon found himself talking freely of his home and his people, and laughing over a story of school-life at Harrow.

Then one of the older men who sat at his hostess's right hand cried out, 'Harrow! You were at school at Harrow? Your name is Milner? Are you Ted Milner's young brother? By Jove! you are his image; I see it now—only he cut his hair a trifle shorter.'

The mean, squalid life of the past months seemed to slip from him; he was once more amongst his equals; a man to be respected, who had a right to claim friendship with this friend of his brother, and to expect more from life than mere meat and drink.

When dinner was finished all gathered round the fire. The coffee proved as good as the fragrance Dick had already enjoyed from the kitchen-window. Ted's friend gave him a cigarette, and talked to him of old days. The lady sat at one side of the fire with her bodyguard of Englishmen, chatting as she sewed. The natives sat at the other, entertained by Hardie, who had quite the air of a man doing his duty to guests not of his choosing. One of the lads melted glue on the fire and mended a polo-stick; the other brought out a banjo, and played 'Daisy Bell' very badly, but with great personal enjoyment. Round that hospitable fire every one seemed at ease and happy. By ten o'clock all were lapsing into drowsy silence, and Dick, at a word from the mender of the polo-stick, gladly followed him across the starlit *patio* to his quarters for the night. His bed was laid out on the floor of a large room; the floor was tiled, the roof had no ceiling, and the door opened directly on a narrow veranda. The whitewashed walls were decorated with pictures from illustrated papers and photographs of the mothers, sisters, and friends of the lads who shared the room. Horns, skins, and a medley of whips and articles of wearing apparel were hung up with little idea of order. It was bare enough, but to Dick it was luxurious; and he turned in with a grunt of satisfaction between clean sheets, and was soon enjoying dreamless slumber.



THE ADVANTAGES OF A TRADE.

By MEM. SAN. INST.



WHAT are we to do with our boys? This often meets one as a headline, and is more frequently asked, in all seriousness and earnestness, by the paterfamilias who has his quiver full of them. The writer has been asked for advice on this point many times, and has almost invariably replied, 'Put them to a trade.' 'What trade?' is the next query. Well, choose one of the building trades, or the engine-fitting; make him a smith, a coach-builder, or cabinet-maker; but let it be a trade which is in universal demand, and one which offers unlimited scope for the exercise of the inventive and constructive faculties.

I purpose adducing, briefly, some of the arguments I have used, and which have on several occasions proved successful; not because I am egotistical enough to believe that the arguments will be convincing in every case, but because I think it will perhaps give birth to a few fresh ideas, and start a new train of thought in some of those who have sons just leaving school.

I am aware that the principal opponent of the suggestion I make is Mamma. She thinks Willie is hardly strong enough for that heavy work, and besides, she would not like to see him wearing a workman's apron; while Johnny is so clever, and so superior, you know, that the least we can do is to article him to a profession or 'put him in an office.' Moreover, 'my family think a trade is somewhat low.'

Well, let us consider the respective merits of a profession and of a trade in the case of a robust, healthy lad, with a good education, carefully trained, and the happy possessor of a good constitution. I take it that the principal considerations in choosing a trade or profession are: (1) The initial cost of becoming proficient in the trade or profession; (2) After he has become proficient, which is the best calculated to provide him with the means of obtaining a livelihood, with the prospect of a competency in his old age, without further recourse to the paternal purse? and (3) Which offers the fullest scope for the development and exercise of his energy and ability? I assume, of course, that the same application, perseverance, and assiduity that would be needful to pass the examinations in most professions would be applied in the acquisition of a trade. Do not think that I wish to disparage for a moment any honest profession or business whatever, believing as I do that, whatever a man's occupation may be, if he gives his best efforts to it and becomes proficient, it redounds to his own credit and is a benefit to the community.

We will suppose that, perhaps owing to his

anatomical studies of the cat, or his peculiar juvenile precocity, it is decided to make our fifteen-year-old hope either a doctor or a solicitor. His education, studies, articles, coaching, examinations, and maintenance up to the time he is qualified to start in practice will cost, roughly, £700. Giving the wheel of time a spin, behold him now a fully-fledged professional man, with, in most cases, one of three things before him—namely, to take an appointment as an assistant or as a managing clerk, to purchase a practice or partnership, or to commence business on his own account. If he chooses the first, he is as a rule bound so that he cannot commence business at any time in that district; if the second, it means a further drain on his own or his parents' capital. We will assume that he takes the third course. Now, one of the points I wish to emphasise is that his success then depends not so much on his own energy and ability as on chance and his connection. If he has to work up the latter, and competition is keen—and where is it not keen?—then he has again to live on his capital for some length of time. 'To err is human;' and—unless, like the worthy alderman, he has learnt to tread the narrow path which lies between right and wrong—a very slight slip from the straight and narrow path is sufficient to deprive him of the means of livelihood, and to scatter to the winds the result of years of effort and the expenditure of much money.

This is not a fancy picture, for more than one case occurs to my mind as I write. Imagine the position of a man so situated, perhaps with others dependent on him! If he succeeds, and avoids all shoals and quicksands, he has to be very kind to the susceptibilities and idiosyncrasies of his patrons, and it is long before he can feel independent in the fullest sense of the word. He is also practically tied to one district for the rest of his life.

Assume, on the other hand, that it is decided to apprentice the boy to a trade—take, for example, that of a joiner. The premium in some cases will probably be twenty-five pounds, the term five years. During this period he will be paid an average wage of nine shillings per week. A sufficient outfit of tools would not cost more than ten pounds. The financial position would be something like this:

Premium.....	£25	0	0	
Tools.....	10	0	0	
Maintenance and clothing for five years at 15s. per week.....	£195	0	0	
Less—wages, 9s. per week...	117	0	0	
		78	0	0
		£113	0	0

At the end of his apprenticeship he would

probably earn thirty-five shillings per week. Now review his position, and look for a moment at the prospect before him. He has acquired the best of fortunes, a potentiality to obtain wealth and power of which he can never be deprived by the act of man, in the well-trained eye and hand, and the power to make and produce something useful—nay, indispensable. In any quarter of the globe he can earn his livelihood. He is asked for no credentials beyond his ability. With steadiness, perseverance, and energy (mark you, all qualifications under his own control), he can rise to wealth and influence. He is independent in the best sense of the word; and I affirm that a better fortune cannot be bequeathed by a father to a son. All the best traits of character are brought out and developed, and the lad has become one of those men who have done so much to make and maintain the prestige of this country as a manufacturing and trading nation.

As Napoleon once said every private soldier of the Empire carried in his knapsack a Field-Marshal's baton, so it may be said that every lad with a trade on his hands has the power of becoming a manufacturer, employer, and of possibly obtaining a niche in the Temple of Fame. Many names come to mind in support of this statement. Choosing a few as examples, not so much on account of the wealth some of them amassed as for the good they conferred on the community, we have Brindley, who commenced life as a wheelwright; Smeaton and Watt, mathematical instrument makers; Henry Bell, a stonemason and millwright; Rennie, a millwright; Telford, a stonemason; Maudsley, a smith; and Bramah, a joiner. Men still living—many of whose names will occur to the reader—are omitted for obvious reasons.

Let us consider in detail the routine through which a lad passes, and the experience he acquires in any one trade. As we took that of a joiner before, suppose we do so again. I should like to remark here, that it is generally best to apprentice a boy to a comparatively small firm. The advantages are that he is more directly under the notice and control of the master, who, if the boy proves himself worthy, finds it to his own advantage to bring him on as rapidly as possible, and can besides give him an insight into the office-work. Again, in a small concern he obtains a knowledge of every branch of work, while in a large firm there is a tendency to specialise, and the apprentice might be kept during the whole of his term at one class of work only. In a small shop he would learn not only to make all kinds of woodwork, but how to fix it, and this would bring him into contact with the other branches of the building trade; while in a large establishment he would very likely be always employed at the bench, making doors, sashes, perhaps staircases, but not obtaining the same general knowledge as in the other case.

To return. He acquires habits of obedience, discipline, and concentration of effort. Fixed hours have to be adhered to, and during working hours all our young friend's attention is needed for the work in hand. In a good shop conversation is not permitted, and under a good and firm foreman some tangible and effective work has to be produced. Following this comes gradually self-reliance and confidence in himself, with a desire to become more expert; and, once the desire for knowledge and proficiency is awakened, his work becomes a pleasure, and he is on the high-road to success. Another faculty brought out and developed is that of invention. I do not mean prevarication or perversion of the truth. A man applying for employment once told the employer that, among his other virtues, he had never made a mistake. 'Oh!' said the latter, 'you will not suit me. I should be afraid that if you made a mistake you would not know how to rectify it.' There was much common-sense in that remark, as well as in the proverb that the man who never made a mistake never made anything. The unexpected always happens; difficulties arise that have to be surmounted, and mistakes are made which have to be remedied, not by beginning again *de novo*, but by an intelligent adaptation of the materials to hand, and by arriving at the prearranged goal by a slightly different road. One job is, perhaps, to put in a new shop-front, where much shoring and bracing has to be done; another to make and fix a staircase in an old house; a third to build a conservatory; and so on, every fresh piece of work demanding the exercise of different faculties and enriching our friend with new ideas and experiences. The same remarks apply to other trades.

Now, without overstraining the point or exaggerating, how should matters stand at the end of five years' apprenticeship? The callow youth has become a man in the fullest sense of the word, who,

With self-dependent power, can time defy,
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.

We assume that he has studied at the technical school in the evenings, or has taught himself drawing and geometry, and kept up his arithmetic. If he has a social fall, like a cat he will land on his feet; he can obtain his living anywhere. The consciousness of this gives him the true dignity of manhood. There is no need for him to act the part of a sycophant, a tool, or a time-server. If he commences business on his own account, he has the same chance of success as other men; if he fails, he is no worse off than when he commenced. During many years' experience of the building trade, I have never known a really capable artisan idle owing to the want of employment.

How different the above prospect to that of

the object of a parent's false pride! Placed, perhaps, in an office or a warehouse as a clerk, apprehensive of his employer's changing moods, his sphere and prospects limited, utterly in his employer's power, because he cannot obtain another situation without his good word; a moment's yielding to temptation, a slight step from the straight and narrow path, and then a headlong fall, without the power of recovery.

Another advantage of having a trade is that if the young man chooses any other walk of life at the end of his apprenticeship, he always has his trade to fall back upon if necessary. Thus he can afford to be more enterprising, speculative if you like, than his brother who has no trade.

In a society such as ours many professions, trades, and occupations are necessary, and my object in writing this paper is, as I said before, not to disparage any, but to bring before parents some of the advantages of a good trade, and to advocate this as a means of giving a lad a good start in life, with a moderate outlay; of making his success depend on his own energy and efforts, instead of on the favour of others, and of giving him an opportunity of becoming an independent man and a useful and productive citizen, who in his own small way, and humble or perhaps illustrious sphere, will probably do something toward leaving the world a little better than he found it.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

By GUY BOOTHBY.

CHAPTER XVIII.



UNCTUAL almost to the minute, nine o'clock on the following day found Browne exchanging greetings with the *concierge* at the foot of the stairs, who by this time had come to know his face intimately.

The latter informed him that Mademoiselle Petrovitch was at home, but that Madame Bernstein had gone out some few minutes before. Browne congratulated himself upon the latter fact, and ran upstairs three steps at a time. Within four minutes from entering the building Katherine was in his arms.

'Are you pleased to see me again, darling?' he inquired after the first excitement of their meeting had passed away.

'More pleased than I can tell you,' she answered; and as she spoke even Browne could see the love-light in her eyes. 'Ever since your telegram arrived yesterday I have been counting the minutes until I should see you. It seems like years since you went away, and such long years, too.'

What Browne said in reply to this pretty speech it does not behove me to set down here. Whatever it was, however, it seemed to give great satisfaction to the person to whom it was addressed. At length they sat down together upon the sofa, and Browne told her of the arrangements he had made. 'I did not write to you about them, dear,' he said, 'for the reason that in a case like this the less that is put on paper the better for all parties concerned. Letters may go astray, and there is no knowing what may happen to them. For this reason I thought I would keep all my news until I could tell it to you face to face. Are you ready for your long journey?'

'Yes, we are quite ready,' said Katherine. 'We only wait for you. Madame has been very busy for the last few days, and so have I.' She men-

tioned madame's name with some little trepidation, for she feared lest the old subject, which had caused them both so much pain on the last occasion that they had met, might be revived. Browne, however, was careful, as she was, not to broach it.

'And when will your yacht leave England?' she inquired after he had detailed his arrangements to her.

'On Monday next at latest,' he answered. 'We shall not be very far behind you.'

'Nevertheless it will be a long, long time before I shall see you again,' she continued in a sad tone. 'Oh Jack, Jack, I cannot tell you how wicked I feel in allowing you to do so much for me. Even now, at this late hour, I feel I have no right to accept such a sacrifice at your hands.'

'Stop,' he replied, holding up his finger in warning. 'I thought we had agreed that nothing more should be said about it.'

At this juncture there was a sound of a foot-step in the passage outside, and a few seconds later Madame Bernstein entered the room. On seeing Browne she hastened forward and greeted him with all the effusiveness of which she was mistress. 'Ah, Monsieur Browne,' she said, 'now that I see you my courage returns. As Katherine has doubtless told you, everything is prepared, and we are ready to start for Marseilles as soon as you give the order. Katherine is looking forward to the voyage; but as for me— Ah! I do hate the sea more than anything in the world. That nasty little strip of salt water which divides England from France is a continual nightmare to me, and I never cross it without hoping it may be the last time.'

Browne tried to comfort her by telling her of the size of the vessel in which they were to travel, and assured her that, even if she should be ill, by the time they were out of the Mediter-

ranee she would have recovered. Seeing that no other consolation was forthcoming, madame was compelled to be content with this poor comfort. Though Browne had already breakfasted in the solid, substantial English fashion, he was only too glad to persuade Madame Bernstein and his sweetheart to partake of *déjeuner* at one of the famous cafés on the Boulevards. After the meal madame returned to the Rue Jacquarie in order to finish a little packing which she had left to the last moment; while Browne, who had been looking forward to this opportunity, assumed possession of Katherine, and carried her to one of the large shops in the Rue de la Paix, where he purchased for her the best dressing-bag ever obtained for love or money; to which he added a set of sables that would even have turned Russian royalty green with envy. Never had his money seemed so useful to Browne. These commissions executed, they returned to the Rue Jacquarie, where they found Madame Bernstein ready for the road. The express was due to leave Paris for Marseilles at 2.15 P.M. Twenty minutes before that hour a cab drove up to the door, and in it Browne placed Madame Bernstein and Katherine, following them himself. Wonderful is the power of a gift! Browne carried the bag he had given Katherine that morning down to the cab with his own hands, and, without being asked to do so, placed it on the seat beside her. He noticed that her right hand went out to take it, and held it lovingly until they reached the station, where she surrendered it to him again.

When they made their appearance on the platform an official hurried forward to meet them, and conducted them forthwith to the special saloon carriage Browne had caused to be bespoke for their use that morning. As she stepped into it Katherine gave a little grateful glance at her lover to show that she appreciated his generosity. Poor as she had always been, she found it hard to realise what his wealth meant. And yet there were many little signs to give her evidence of the fact—the obsequious railway officials; his own majestic English servant who brought them a sheaf of papers without being instructed to do so; and last, but by no means least, the very railway carriage itself, which was of the most luxurious description. On Madame Bernstein's entering the compartment she placed herself in a corner, arranged her travelling-rug, her smelling-salts, her papers, and her fan to her satisfaction; and by the time she had settled down the journey had commenced. The train was an express, and did not stop until it reached Laroche at 4.40. Here afternoon tea was procured for the ladies; while on reaching Dijon, two hours and a half later, it was discovered that an unusually luxurious dinner had been bespoke by telegraph, which was served in the second compartment of the carriage. Having done justice to it, they afterwards settled themselves down for

the night. It is a very significant fact that when Browne looks back upon that journey now, the one most important fact that strikes his memory is that Madame Bernstein fell asleep a little after eight o'clock, and remained so until they had passed Pontanevaux. During the time she slept Browne was able to have a little private conversation with Katherine; and whatever trouble he had taken to ensure the journey being a successful one, he was amply compensated for it. At ten o'clock the polite conductor begged permission to inform mesdames and monsieur that their sleeping apartments were prepared for them. Browne accordingly bade the ladies good-night.

As the young man lay in his sleeping compartment that night, and the train made its way across France towards its most important seaport, Browne's dreams were of many things. At one moment he was back in the Opera-House at Covent Garden, listening to *Lohengrin*, and watching Katherine's face as each successive singer appeared upon the stage. Then, as if by magic, the scene changed, and he was on the windy mountain-side at Merok, and Katherine was looking up at him from her place of deadly peril a few feet below. He reached down and tried to save her, but it appeared to be only a question of length of arm, and his was a foot too short. 'Pray allow me to help you,' said Maas; and, being only too grateful for any assistance, Browne permitted him to do so. They accordingly caught her by the hands and began to pull. Then suddenly, without any warning, Maas struck him a terrible blow upon the head; both holds were instantly loosed, and Katherine was in the act of falling over the precipice when Browne awoke. Great beads of perspiration stood upon his forehead, and, under the influence of this fright, he trembled as he did not remember ever to have done in his life before. For upwards of an hour he lay awake, listening to the rhythm of the wheels and the thousand and one noises that a train makes at night. Then once more he fell asleep, and, as before, dreamt of Katherine. Equally strange was it that on this occasion also Maas was destined to prove his adversary. They were in Japan now, and the scene was a garden in which the Wistaria bloomed luxuriously. Katherine was standing on a rustic bridge looking down into the water below, and Maas was beside her. Suddenly the bridge gave way, and the girl was precipitated into the water. Though she was drowning, he noticed that Maas did nothing to help her, but stood upon what remained of the bridge and taunted her with the knowledge that if she were drowned her mission to the East would be useless. After this no further sleep was possible. At break of day he accordingly rose and dressed himself. They were passing through the little town of Saint-Chamas at the time. It was a lovely morning;

not a cloud in the sky, and all the air and country redolent of life and beauty. It was a day upon which a man might be thankful for the right to live and love. Yet Browne was sad at heart. Was he not about to part from the woman he loved for nearly two whole months? Brave though he was in most things, it must be confessed he feared that separation as a confirmed coward fears a blow. But still the train flew remorselessly on, bringing them every moment nearer and nearer their destination.

When they reached it they drove direct to a hotel. Here they breakfasted, and afterwards made their way to the steamer. Browne's heart was sinking lower and lower, for never before had Katherine seemed so sweet and so desirable. Once on board the vessel they called a steward to their assistance, and the two ladies were shown to their cabins. As they afterwards found out, they were the best that Browne could secure, were situated amidships, and were really intended each to accommodate four passengers. While they were examining them Browne hunted out the chief steward, and the stewards who would be likely to wait upon his friends. These he rewarded in such a way that if the men only acted up to their protestations the remainder of the passengers would have very good cause to complain. Having finished this work of bribery and corruption, he went in search of them, only to be informed by the stewardess that the ladies had left their cabins and had gone on deck. He accordingly made his way up the companion-ladder, and found them standing beside the smoking-room entrance.

'I hope you found your cabins comfortable,' he said. 'I have just seen the chief steward, and he has promised that everything possible shall be done to make you enjoy your voyage.'

'How good you are!' said Katherine in a low voice and with a little squeeze of his hand; while madame protested that if it were possible for anything to reconcile her to the sea it would be Monsieur Browne's kindness. Then the warning whistle sounded for non-passengers to leave the ship. Madame Bernstein took the hint, and, having bade him good-bye, made her way along the deck towards the companion-ladder, leaving the lovers together. Katherine's eyes had filled with tears, and she had grown visibly paler. Now that the time had come for parting with the man she loved, she had discovered how much he was to her.

'Katherine,' said Browne in a voice that was hoarse with suppressed emotion, 'do you know now how much I love you?'

'You love me more than I deserve,' she said. 'I shall never be able to repay you for all you have done for me.'

'I want no repayment but your love,' he answered.

'Si vous n'êtes pas un voyageur, m'sieu, ayez l'obligeance de débarquer,' said a gruff voice in his ear.

Seeing that there was nothing left but to say good-bye, Browne kissed Katherine, and, unable to bear any more, made for the gangway. Five minutes later the great ship was under way, and Katherine had embarked upon her voyage to the East.

RAILWAY ENTERPRISES IN CHINA.

By BENJAMIN TAYLOR, F.R.G.S.



THE scramble for railway concessions in China has of late succeeded the scramble among European nations for territory in Africa. In the commercial partition of the Flowery Land all have been eager to obtain a share—so eager, in fact, that some concessions have been fought for and won that will never be heard of more. Rightly or wrongly, we have all come to think that the awakening of China which the Marquis Tseng predicted some years ago has already begun, and that Britons must 'look alive' ere she is done rubbing her eyes. We are probably expecting too much, both as to the proximity of the uprising and the immediate probable consequences of it. Yet, with such an immense field for industrial development as the Chinese Empire presents, it is natural that expectation should be exuberant. The great Yang-tse-kiang itself, of which so much has been heard in diplomatic circles, drains an area of six hundred thousand square miles, peopled by the most industrious and

naturally commercial people under the sun. There is in this basin a population of one hundred and eighty millions, at present carrying on trade (in so far as recorded) to the extent of about thirty million pounds sterling per annum; and Mr Archibald Little, who knows this region so well, predicts that the annual value will become three hundred millions sterling. It is no wonder that the teeth of the man of commerce water at statements and estimates such as these. It is no wonder that the railway contractor, the engineer, and the railmaker glow with anticipation when reminded that, while Europe has a mile of railway for every two thousand four hundred inhabitants, China has yet not even a mile for every million of her inhabitants. Undoubtedly there is a tremendous amount of business to be done in supplying China with railways, if and when she really wants them.

It is doubtful if the prospects of railway-making in China would be so attractive were it not for the rich deposits of coal possessed by the

empire. Coal is said to have been found in every province; and there are good reasons for believing that, in the more or less dim and distant future, China may be the greatest coal-producing country in the world. In Shan-si, in the north of China, is a continuous field, thirteen thousand five hundred miles in area, of anthracite coal, said to be equal to the best Pennsylvanian, in seams up to forty feet, and nowhere less than fifteen feet, in thickness. In the same province is also a rich bituminous deposit. The south-eastern part of the province of Hû-nan was reported by Richthofen to the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce to be 'one great coalfield' of twenty-one thousand seven hundred square miles in extent. Some of the most important of the recent railway concessions have reference to coalfields, though it may be stated that some of the mines are well situated for water-carriage. The coal deposits of Sze-chuen have been frequently referred to by travellers, and Mrs Bishop found an enormous coal traffic on the Kialing River. All the mines of the interior have been until now worked in a primitive slipshod fashion by the Chinese themselves. At Kaiping, however, in the province of Pe-chi-li, the mines have for some time past been worked under European management, in connection with a railway to the seaboard; and from the Fangshan-hsien mines Peking is supplied with coal.

Near to the coal-seam of Shan-si are large deposits of iron ore, which the Chinese have hitherto smelted by native methods. This primitively conducted industry is already of great extent. To what extent it may grow, with railway connection and European technical skill, who can say? In several other parts of China coal and iron ore are found in close proximity.

China is better supplied with waterways, both natural and artificial, than any other country in the world, except, perhaps, Holland; but away from these waterways the cost of transport is enormous, notwithstanding the cheapness of labour. It amounts, according to Mr A. R. Colquhoun, to as much as a shilling per ton per mile in some cases. Coal, it is said, costs sometimes two shillings per ton per mile from the mines to the nearest towns not in communication by water. Now, in Great Britain we send coal from mine to market at a cost of from a halfpenny to a penny per ton per mile, and in the United States the cost of carriage is as low as a farthing per ton per mile. A comparison of these figures gives some idea of the extent of the economic revolution which railways may effect in China. Water-carriage compares favourably in point of cost with other countries; but even water-carriage may be made cheaper still by the introduction of light-draught steamers in shallow waters, at present only navigated by laboriously worked junks. Mr Archibald Little has indicated very clearly what a scope there is for steam navigation on the upper Yangtse through the famous gorges.

The belief seems to be pretty general that the industrial development of China depends on the extension of railways. But the growth of a railway system in that land of magnificent distances and stupendous prejudices must be very slow. It may not be generally known that the first railway in China was built so long as twenty-three years ago. It was only a short one, from Shanghai to Wusung, and it had only a short career; for, whilst the rails were laid in 1876, they were torn up by the authorities in the following year, in deference, it was said, to the superstitions of the people. But the people eagerly used this railway as long as it was open, and the rails, when torn up, instead of being sacrificed to the outraged Earth-spirit, were quietly deported to Formosa, and there utilised by a high Chinese official for a colliery railway. The next line built in China proper was also in connection with collieries—namely, from the Kaiping mines (in which Li Hung Chang is largely interested) to the sea-coast, and then to the forts at Taku, on the Gulf of Pe-chi-li. This was the beginning of the existing Chinese railway system, such as it is. There is one line from Tien-tsin to Kaiping, and thence to Shanhaikwan in Manchuria, and another of about seventy-five miles from Tien-tsin to Peking, which last was opened in 1897.

We are indebted to Major Tate for the following description of the Tien-tsin-Peking line:

We left Tien-tsin at 11.30 A.M. in the mail-train for Peking. To this train, and to that which starts from the Peking terminus at the same hour for Tien-tsin, there is attached a carriage known as the Postal or Custom-house car. It is run entirely by the Customs Department, at the head of which is Sir Robert Hart, and Chinese passengers are not admitted into it. An official of the Customs Department accompanies each car, issues and collects the tickets, and looks after the luggage. The fare charged is double first class. The ordinary first-class carriages have uncushioned wooden seats only; into them are admitted only holders of first-class tickets, but not infrequently Chinese passengers who have second or even only third class tickets. The manners of these persons are uncongenial, and their presence in the carriage apt to be unpleasant. (There are *coupés* holding up to four persons attached to each first-class carriage; and by payment of one extra first-class fare these *coupés* can be reserved. I never, however, found it necessary to take one.) In addition to this, as the train is on the corridor principle, Chinese passengers of all classes are continually using the first-class compartments as thoroughfares. The Chinese railway officials exercise no authority or supervision in these matters. Hence the necessity for some conveyance on the line in which Europeans can be secure from these unpleasantnesses. To have carriages on an Imperial Chinese Railway to which Chinese were not admitted was a difficulty. The Post-office Branch of the Imperial Customs Department solved it by obtaining the right to run on each mail-train a car of its own, and to that car the Chinese authorities think fit to admit Europeans only. The distance from Tien-tsin to Machiapu, the terminus for Peking, is about eighty miles. The mail-train covers this in four hours. On 28th March the train was quite punctual; when we returned on the 31st

March it started nearly an hour late, and was proportionately late in reaching Tien-tsin. The trains on Chinese railways cannot as yet be relied on to run up to time.

This remark, however, may be applied to railways not a hundred miles from our own homes. The terminus at Machiapu is about four miles from Pekin. A concession to construct an electric tramway from Machiapu to the capital has recently been granted to a German contractor.

After railway communication was established a year and a half ago between Pekin and the coast, the next step was to establish communication with the interior. A line has already been constructed southward from Pekin as far as Paoting, which it is proposed to carry right through the heart of China to Hankow on the Yang-tse River, with a branch to the mines of Fangshan-hsien, on which the capital depends for fuel. This line is in course of construction by a Belgian company, which is said to be backed by Russian capital; and a glance at the map will show how important it will be, not only as a link between these two great cities, but also as a commercial highway tapping the busiest waterway of the country. At the present rate of progress, however, it will be many, many years before it is completed. A fourth line has been recently opened between a place called Tiehshanpu in the province of Hupeh to a point on the Yang-tse, some seventy miles below Hankow. This line was built by the Viceroy in order to bring forward iron ore from the iron-mines in Hupeh to the ironworks which he has erected at Hanyang, at which it is said a prosperous and growing industry is now being carried on. Then in August last a new line was opened between Shanghai and Wusung, to replace that destroyed in 1877—so slowly do things move in China.

These lines, then, constitute the present railway system of China. They form the nucleus of a scheme of vast designs which a succession of concession-hunters have put forward. These designs are all more or less part of a general scheme for the railroading of China put forward by Dr Kreitner a few years ago. This scheme began with a connection of the Russian railway system with China—a connection now to be effected, under the Russo-Chinese agreement, by means of the Trans-Manchurian line in course of construction, and to be completed by the middle of 1903. The construction of the much-talked-of line between Shanhaikwan (the present terminus of the Kaiping railway) and Newchang has, however, been allotted to British capitalists, represented by the Hong-kong and Shanghai Bank; but the line is to be owned by the Chinese Government, and the Russians at first made difficulties as to the control and conditions of management, but their protest was afterwards withdrawn. These lines will connect with Kreitner's projected North China Railway, of which the present line from Pekin to Paoting may be considered the first portion.

Another line forming a part of this system is to be constructed by an Anglo-Italian company, which has obtained the right to work the coal and other minerals in Shan-si, in order to bring the mineral down to Pe-chi-li.

One of Kreitner's plans, for a line from Pekin to Shanghai, crossing the Yang-tse River near Chinking by means of a train-ferry, with a branch connecting with the coal-mines in Shantung, has now taken a modified form under what is known as the Anglo-German agreement. Under this arrangement a railway is to be constructed by Germans and Britons jointly—the Germans to have the management as far as the southern frontier of Shantung, in which province they hold concessions, and the remainder to be under British management, ultimately as far as Canton. Dr Kreitner also planned a South China railway system, starting from Canton to Fushan, Samshui, Woochow, and thence westward towards Yunnan, with connecting lines in the valleys of the Yang-tse-kiang and Si-kiang. An American company has obtained a concession for, at any rate, a portion of this great scheme, which is said to present a great many engineering difficulties; and a French company has obtained a concession to build a railway from Pakhoi to Nanning, and thus to reach the valley of the Si-kiang (or West River) from the south. Dr Kreitner also sketched a route for a railway from the treaty-port of Foochow on the coast to the treaty-port of Kiû-kiang on the Yang-tse, to serve the tea and tobacco districts; but we are not aware that anything is yet being done to carry out this idea. Farther south, however, preparations are being made to connect the new British protectorate of Kaulung (Kowloon, opposite Hong-kong) by railway with Canton.

There are other two projects for connecting the Chinese railway system of the future with the outer world. The French have obtained permission to build a line from Laokai on the Red River (Tongking) to the capital of the province of Yunnan; but some people say this line will never be built by the French, as the effect of it would be to divert traffic to the West River which at present finds an outlet in Tongking. The other is the long-talked-of Burma-Chinese railway, with which the names of Mr A. R. Colquhoun and Mr Holt Hallett are associated. Various routes for this line have been proposed, and experts differ considerably as to the engineering difficulties to be encountered; but any line which can be constructed to bring the railways of Burma into touch with those of China will, of course, bring the Indian and Chinese Empires into close daily communication, with large benefit to each. The Russians are busily engaged in building a railway between Newchang (Niu-chwang) and the ports of Port Arthur and Talienwan, of which ports they hold a 'lease' from the Chinese Government.

Several other concessions have been reported as having been obtained by foreigners for the construction of railways in China. Some of these are more than doubtful, and others will never be heard of again; so we have confined attention to those projects which have actually reached, or seem about to reach, the region of practical business. But certainly not the least important of the enterprises for the industrial development of China is that in which Mr Pritchard Morgan has taken a prominent part. This has now reached the length of a formal contract, which has been concluded between British capitalists and the Commissioner of Mines in Sze-chuen, for the working of the coal, iron, and petroleum in that province, on payment of a royalty of five per cent. to the Government. Sze-chuen is said to be the richest mineral-bearing and industrial province in China.

In conclusion, it may be pointed out that although our Western ideas of progress and prosperity, by which we mean civilisation, are bound up with railways and telegraphs, those of Eastern peoples are not. It would be rash, therefore, to jump to the conclusion that the teeming millions of the Chinese Empire are pausing for the advent of the iron horse to rescue them from the stagnation

of ages. The Chinese people are not unprosperous, and are fairly content with their own condition. It is a fallacy to assume that the race is degenerate because the Government is weak and the country is old. A civilisation which has lasted for over two thousand years can hardly be considered rotten, however inferior we may regard it to our own. The Chinese are both an industrious and an industrial people, who have managed to thrive all these centuries without railways. Two things have prevented this busy people from having hitherto felt any pressing need for the railway. One is the peculiar self-containedness of their industry, which limits the interchange of products between different parts of the Empire; the other is the extensive system of inland communication afforded by rivers, streams, and canals.

We cannot cover China with a network of railways unless the people want them and will use them; therefore the work of railway building will have to be cautious, and the process of constructing a Chinese railway system must necessarily be slow. Besides, foreign capitalists will be rash indeed to pour millions into the remote interior of China until they have more assurance that their property will be safeguarded than the present Government seems able to give.

HIGHLAWS.



It was an evening in October, clear and chilly. Up here in the hills the shadows looked black in the cold starlight; and the lamplight shining through the uncurtained windows of Highlaws farm took an additional tinge of flame-colour, in contrast with the gray-blue of the atmosphere without.

The stillness which lay over the hillside was broken by a heavy footfall on the dry ground, as James Drummond, head-shepherd at the farm, came up the flagged path leading to the house-door, and, after a moment's hesitation, entered. The flood of crimson-and-gold light which was released as the door opened wavered uncertainly for an instant, and then buried itself in the darkness beyond. The man's figure showed itself, a black outline against the vivid background framed by the door-posts, and then the door closed and the starlight reasserted itself.

In the glow of the farm kitchen Drummond stood almost dazzled by the sudden change, and the well-known voice of the farmer's wife bade him welcome. David Inglis, the farmer at Highlaws, was sitting by his own hearth, his head bent, and his whole air betokening deep depression. The fifty years which had passed over his head sat but lightly on him; 'his eye was not dimmed, nor his natural strength abated;' and the sturdy north-countryman had been well able to meet

with a brave heart the trials of life, and to hold up his head amongst his fellows. But a trouble had come upon him, so unexpected and so crushing that all gladness and all possibility of hope seemed gone from his life. It was on this day that David Inglis had made his usual journey to the estate steward's office for the purpose of paying his rent.

For five generations he and his ancestors had been tenants on the same farm, and had grown to look on the place as almost their own. The ten years' lease by which the farm was held had been hitherto renewed, as a matter of course, at the end of each decade. One of these periods was drawing to an end, and Inglis had intended on that day to make a formal application for renewal. But after his rent had been duly paid, the steward, Mr Kilburn, had told him, as gently as he could, that in six months' time he would be required to vacate the farm of Highlaws. Inglis was at first incredulous, then, when he fully understood, stunned by the blow. He hardly listened to the steward's kind explanations and offer of any other farm on the estates which should be to let, and which Inglis might desire.

When the poor man at last grasped that he was really to leave his farm, he begged to know what possible reason there could be for turning him out after so many years of tenancy. Kilburn made him sit down, and told him the facts as clearly as

he could. Highlaws was, he said, as Inglis of course knew, near the best grouse-shooting on the estate, and the new owner, looking about for a spot on which to build a shooting-lodge, had settled upon it, as affording the best situation. In fact, he intended to alter and add to the farm-house, and live there for a month or two in the shooting season.

'But did you tell him, sir,' gasped Inglis, 'that my great-grandfather had the farm, and it will most like kill me to leave it?'

'I said all I could in your favour,' replied the steward. 'You see, Captain Forrester has spent most of his life in India; and it seems, also, that his wife took a fancy to Highlaws, and thought it beautiful, and he refuses her nothing.'

The old farmer sighed deeply. 'I'll have to tell my wife,' he said simply.

'You must not think,' added Mr Kilburn, 'that Captain Forrester is not unwilling to turn you out. He told me to treat you most liberally, and to find you another farm, so that you might remain on the estate.'

'Thank you, sir; but I don't know that I'll be wanting that. I'll have to go in May, I'm thinking.'

'Yes, Inglis; and I need not tell you how sorry I am about this. If I can do anything, don't hesitate to come to me.'

'You are very kind, sir. I will be getting home now;' and David Inglis left the office with a dazed expression on his usually calm face, and returned to his home in a trance of pain and despair. His wife was much alarmed by his appearance on his arrival, and the news which he brought soon threw the whole household into consternation.

Margaret Inglis, a strong and brave woman, although perhaps understanding best of all what these tidings meant, at once determined to try to avoid bitter feelings, and support her family under this trial. Her son, David, a lad of eighteen, and destined to succeed his father in the farm, seemed overcome by the news, and at once quitted the house, followed by all the sheep-dogs, to face his trouble alone on the hillside. But Lovice, the only daughter, and her mother's darling, did not exhibit the maternal fortitude under affliction. When she fully understood what had happened, and saw that there was no redress, she burst into tears, and her sobs echoed through the quiet room.

'Hush, hush, dearie!' said Mrs Inglis softly.

'Oh, it is a shame!—a sin and a shame!' cried the passionate girl—'to turn us out of our own home. They ought not to be allowed to do it. It's real wicked; it is!—'

'Lovice, my girl, don't say that. The Captain can do what he likes with his own;' and Margaret's voice trembled.

'But does he know, mother? Lady Alice has a sweet face. I'm sure she would never let him

do it.' The last words were whispered with some hope.

'It was Lady Alice herself who chose this house for the shooting-lodge. It is very hard, my dear; but it's not for us to kick against the pricks. We must e'en go when we get notice,' returned the mother, laying a fond hand on Lovice's shoulder.

The daughter laid her head down on the table and cried afresh; and Mrs Inglis was regarding her with some anxiety, and more pity, when James Drummond's entrance startled them both. The shepherd came forward slowly; he had heard the news in the farm-yard; and although his manner was diffident, his face was very sad.

'You'll be to seek another place, James,' said the farmer, rousing himself, and speaking with some bitterness. 'There'll be no more work for you here.'

James Drummond raised his eyes from Lovice's bowed head, and turned them slowly on his master.

'I'm real sorry,' he said. 'The Captain will not know what he's doing this day, turning away old tenants.'

'We're not just turned away,' put in Mrs Inglis quickly. 'We'll get any other farm that's to get; and there's more than one in the low country, but they'll never be like Highlaws.'

'Don't talk of low-country farms, Margaret,' cried her husband. 'Me, that was born and bred in the hills, to live down there among the trees—with little bits of half-acre fields—shut away from the grand air off the moors, and never able to go out without knocking my head against another man's house wall.'

'No, no, David; don't take on so,' said Margaret, tears coming into her brave eyes; 'we'll be happy still, whatever comes.'

But David Inglis sank back in his chair and covered his face with his trembling hands. His wife did not disturb him, but she moved to the door, and stood looking out into the night, listening for the return of her son.

Meanwhile Drummond approached the spot where the lamplight shone on Lovice's golden head. She did not move as he came near, but her sobs ceased somewhat. After some moments he spoke quietly.

'Lovice,' he said, 'you're in sore grief to-night; but things will mend. There's many another place besides Highlaws that you'll be happy in yet.'

Ungrateful for these comforting words, Lovice raised her head and confronted the startled shepherd with burning indignation on her tear-stained face.

'And do you think, James Drummond,' she cried, 'that I'll be thinking of enjoying myself when my father has been turned out of house and home, all for a lady's whim? No; I care not where we go, I'll never be happy but at Highlaws;' and the sobs broke out afresh.

'There's many a worse thing been done for a lady's whim, Lovice,' returned James musingly; 'and it's of your parents you should be thinking, not sitting crying. They'll be looking to you now,' he added more gently.

Lovice did not answer, but, rising, followed her mother to the house-door. There they were joined by Drummond, after a fruitless effort to gain the farmer's attention.

Mrs Inglis was gazing out into the night with her hand on her daughter's arm; and as the shepherd came near she faced round and said quickly, 'Will you just look if you can see David on the hill? I doubt he's somewhere with the dogs, poor lad.'

Receiving an affirmative reply, she turned back into the house, leaving her daughter still leaning on the door-post. Drummond looked at the girl in silence, pity and regret in his kind eyes; then, seeing that she took no notice of him, with a quiet good-night he moved away.

The moon had risen since he had entered the farm-house, and her pale light flooded the valley. White fleecy clouds chased each other across the blue-black sky, and a low wind was moaning in the distance. The shepherd gazed at the Queen of Heaven, murmuring to himself meanwhile:

'As soon as evening shades prevail
The moon takes up her wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth.'

'Ah, well! we do need light from above, that's sure,' said Drummond to himself; 'and the world would be a dark place without it. But I must look for the lad; he'll be sorrowing alone.' And as he walked over the grassy knolls, whistling softly in the hope of thereby attracting the attention of the dogs, the calm beauty of the night passed into his soul, and soothed his spirit with thoughts of peace and hope.

A year later the quaint farm-house of Highlaws was being rapidly transformed into a comfortable shooting-lodge, and the hills were still grazed by numerous flocks of sheep, the property of Captain Forrester, and under the charge of his head-shepherd, James Drummond. David Inglis had not been obliged to go into that dreaded low country. His wife's brother, the tenant of a hill-farm on the same estate, had died suddenly the winter before, and the desolate widow, alone and in failing health, had begged her brother-in-law to come to her house and direct her affairs. And David Inglis had gone, being strongly urged to do so by Mr Kilburn, who thought this a good way out of the difficulty. He had been most liberally treated on leaving Highlaws, and was beginning to think that he could not do better than take the Green Knowe Farm off his sister's hands. The wrench of being forced to leave his home had made a visible change in the farmer; he was greatly aged in appearance, and left things

much to David, who was growing tall and strong, and 'all he should be,' according to his mother.

That same mother always said that *she* had no time for complaining, she had so much else to do. Indeed, in her inmost soul was hidden deep thankfulness that the shock had not killed her husband, as at one time she had feared it might. 'All things,' she often said, had 'worked together for good;' and though Green Knowe was not their own old home, it was a fine bit, and they might there live with a contented mind, and that, they knew, was a continual feast.

But in Lovice's heart, although outwardly she showed no bitterness, there were still angry thoughts of the unconscious Lady Alice. She could never be brought to see that her father had been justly treated. The longing for her former home was still strong upon her, and Green Knowe was a land of exile. The many duties which devolved upon her were always well attended to; and to outsiders she was still the same pretty and cheerful daughter of the house that she had been before the change. But those who knew her well saw an alteration. It was as if some weight lay ever upon Lovice's mind; some dark memory clouded the brightness of her spirit with a constant shadow. Her mother wondered if anything, other than the pain natural at leaving her early home, pressed on her daughter's heart. She was wise enough to refrain from questioning the girl, but watched her with some anxiety. The only other person who had made any study of Lovice's moods was James Drummond, and he did not come much to Green Knowe Farm during the first months the Inglishes spent there. But as the summer fled and the long, dark nights of winter set in, the shepherd came often to visit his former employers. As time went on his old master got accustomed to the situation, and would ask questions about the sheep and pastures in James's charge, as he had been wont to do. On one of these evenings Lovice grew impatient of her father's interest in matters which no longer concerned him; and throwing down the work she was engaged upon, she caught up a shawl, and abruptly left the house. A pained expression crossed Drummond's face as he observed Lovice's impetuous action. Mrs Inglis, noticing his discomfort, said quietly, 'Lovice is tired to-night; she works real hard. But it is cold out there.'

'Yes, it will be cold,' answered the man gratefully; 'and I'll say good-night, Mrs Inglis, for I must be getting home.'

He was, however, detained by David for some last words; and when at last he passed out into the night the figure he sought was nowhere to be seen. Slowly making his way in the direction of the field-path which led him homewards, Drummond stumbled over a dark form leaning against the gate through which he had to pass.

'Lovice, my girl,' he asked gently, 'is that you?'

No more distinct answer than a stifled sob reached him, and putting his hand on hers, he found she was icy cold. To unfold the shepherd's plaid which he wore on his shoulders, and place it round the shivering girl, was the work of a moment. Then he stood patiently beside her, waiting for her to regain self-control. The sobs became less, and Lovice raised a tear-stained face, hardly discernible in the dim light.

'You had best tell me the trouble,' said her companion; 'you'll feel better for telling somebody.'

'I can't; I'm ashamed. It's just nothing,' she whispered hurriedly, beginning to cry again.

'Then shall I tell you, Lovice?' asked the shepherd, placing a steady hand on her trembling arm. 'It is this,' he continued; 'you are bearing malice and hatred in your heart, Lovice Inglis, towards those who, not knowing it, did you harm. If you can't forgive, do you expect to be forgiven?'

'It is true, James,' answered the girl after a pause. 'I hate the Forresters for turning us out; but that is not all. Things are all so different; both the old places and—old friends.'

'Friends! But, Lovice, what friend would desert you because you were living elsewhere?' There was astonishment and some impatience in Drummond's voice.

The girl hung her head and murmured, 'But they are not so near—and'—

A bright light broke on James Drummond's mind; for an instant he contemplated his inmost heart by its brilliance, and then he spoke with some emotion.

'See here, my girl,' he said; 'you are surely not thinking that any changes in your father's affairs would alter my friendship for you. Friendship, did I say? Ay; but it's far more than friendship I feel for you, Lovice, for you know well I have loved you dearly this many a year. Oh, my dear! don't turn away; listen to me this night, anyway. Lovice, will you not come back to Highlaws with me, and forget that you ever left it? No; now, why shouldn't I put my arm round my own plaid? Whist, dearie, there's naught to cry for.'

And the stars and the sheep-dogs looked on unconcernedly at a scene of which *they* had often seen the like.

'You'll have to forgive Lady Alice now, you know,' said James presently; 'but I'm thinking you'll soon like her well.'

'Oh, I'm afraid I've been very wicked,' replied Lovice; but there was not much penitence in the glad voice. 'I don't feel that I hate her now, James; and it wasn't so much that she took me away from my old home as that she'—

'That she what? Tell me what she did,' insisted the lover.

'She separated me from you—that was the trouble,' confessed Lovice at last.

THE FIJIAN FIERY ORDEAL.

OUR TRIP TO BEGA (BEUG-GA).



FATE having sent me to the Fiji Islands for some years' residence, I find the manners and customs of the natives very interesting and worthy of study. It has occurred to me that I might occasionally send home to my English friends some brief records of their sayings and doings, as they come under my notice during my journeys from Suva—the capital—to different parts of this lovely country. The following is an account of an excursion I lately made, and tells of one of the old traditions of the land.

It was quite early one lovely morning last April that our small party of friends started from Suva, getting on board the *Huroto* soon after 8 A.M. Half Suva seemed to be going, for many people who have lived here half their lives have never been over to Bega to see the 'Fire-walkers.' It is only one tribe of natives who can do this; and the legend is that once, long ago, the gods promised one of their chiefs, in return for some service rendered, that he and all his people should have this power of walking over and touching fire and not being burned.

People are always trying to find out the trick, as they say; but there is no trick and no secret. Their feet have been examined, both before and after the performance, and they show no signs of preparation.

Well, we started. The trip was not as pleasant as it might have been. Every one held a handkerchief to his nose; there were horses on board, brought down from Sydney, and the smell was awful. We went down the coast to Rewa, where the passengers changed into the *Maori*, the small inter-island steamer, and a pretty tight fit they were. We could only just find a corner to sit down in; then we began threading our way carefully through the reefs round Bega. It was awfully hot there, in the calm water under the lee of the island; and we were glad when we saw the little white coral beach we were to land at. The *Maori* got close in, and we landed in boats. The water was beautifully clear; and, looking over, one could see the bottom covered with many sorts of lovely coral. The island is thickly wooded, coco-nuts growing right down to the sea-edge. Among the trees close to the beach rose the blue smoke, showing the furnace. A

brilliantly picturesque crowd of natives was waiting to receive us, dressed in the pretty native dress: a bright *sulu* to the knees, and a short-sleeved, low-necked pinafore, some of silk or velvet. Young palm-trees had been planted on the beach for the occasion, and the stems of these were gaily decorated with bright flowers. A temporary avenue of fern and palm leaves led us to the clearing, where, in a shallow pit, we saw a huge piled-up fire of blazing logs. This had been burning for several days, and the heat was so great that we hardly cared to go very near. We sat down under trees to wait; and the various cameras—sixteen, I think—took up their position. It was very amusing to see the natives swarming up the tall coco-nut trees and throwing down nuts for our refreshment. During this interval the centre of attraction was the chief's little son, a boy of about four years, simply shining with oil. His costume was most fascinating: yards of fine white *tappa* wound round and round his waist, and tied in a huge smart bow behind; over this a deep fringe made of dried grass, white, green, and red, and bright flowers. He was really a picture. We were beginning to feel very hungry; and though we were to have lunch on board later on, we were not sorry to join a party that was having a very orthodox lunch on the beach.

At last the proceedings began. Some men, gaily decorated with garlands of flowers, began removing the blazing logs. Some they pulled out by hitching a loop at the end of a pole over them; others they simply picked up in the most matter-of-fact way. When all the wood was removed we saw the bottom of the pit had a pile of large stones, red-hot, in it; these they now proceeded to level in a very ingenious way. About a dozen men, armed with long poles, placed these poles behind any heap of stones, a rope—the stem of a bush creeper—was passed behind the pole, a crowd of natives seized each end, and, with a sort of call, answered by a musical sort of shout and chant, they pulled the ends of the poles along, scattering the hot stones. This was done again and again till all was level and smooth. Then, to the astonishment of the natives, a Dr Hocken, a scientific man, insisted on hanging a thermometer over the stones. One hardly needed a thermometer to prove that the heat was real; however, he had it slung across until it went up to 288 degrees and began to melt; then he was satisfied. When all was ready, suddenly from out of the bush came a file of garlanded men, who, without any hesitation, walked down and across the hot stones, back again, and round, winding in and out; then, as they walked, piles of green stuff were thrown down to them, upon which they promptly sat, and were soon almost hidden by the dense clouds of sickening smoke and steam which arose. After a time they came out, and various people looked

at their feet, without being any the wiser when they had finished. Then large bundles of native food—yams, taro, &c.—neatly tied up in leaves, were placed on the stones to cook. I seized a small native boy, and, giving him my handkerchief, told him, as far as my limited knowledge of Fijian would allow, to go and put it on one of the stones to be burnt. This he could not understand at all; he went off with it, and then returned, looking wistfully up at me, wondering, no doubt, whether I was a dangerous lunatic. However, at last one of the men picked up a stone from the edge and brought it. He evidently was not a hardened performer, for he handled it very gingerly, holding it with leaves. It burned an entirely satisfactory hole in my handkerchief. I shall send it home as a witness to my story.

Some one had brought a huge tin of biscuits, so dear to the native hearts, and started races and scrambles for them; the excitement was intense and the chattering of the crowd deafening.

The party began to get into the boats; and when it came to my turn the boat had been pushed off and was afloat. Some one said to me, 'Would you very much mind if you were carried to the boat?' and before I could answer, or think whether I minded or not, I was whisked off my feet by a huge native, and planted in the bow of the boat as easily as if I had been a doll! Our journey back was uneventful—marked only by a second lunch on board the *Maori*, and a tea when we got on board the *Haurotu*. I think we all did our duty to both, so you see our appetites are not affected by a tropical hot season.

Among our party was a dear little Fijian princess, Adi (Lady) Elenoa, the ten-year-old daughter of Ratu Sala, whose picturesque title is Tui Cakan (King of the Reefs). She is a pretty little thing, with glorious eyes, and very graceful in her native dress. She is staying with an English lady, a friend of mine, who has undertaken to break her in gently to English ways, and, alas! English clothes; for Elenoa is to go to Sydney to school, and, when old enough, is to be trained as a doctor. My friend is coming round in the *Clyde* to stay with me when I go to Ba, and Elenoa and her nurse are to come also.

EXILE.

STEEL-DARK sea and sunset sky,
Waters cold in the dying light;
Depth of calm that seems to sigh
Ere the coming of the night;

Homeland mountains shadowy blue,
Sinking o'er our milk-white trail;
Quiver of the throbbing screw,
Crashing westward with the mail.

Memory lost in hopeless grief,
Closed the book, the story done:
God grant such as me relief
Ere the rising of the sun.

C. R. LONGFIELD.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

REMINISCENCES.

By Lieutenant-Colonel Sir R. LAMBERT PLAYFAIR, K.C.M.G.

V.—ALGERIA PAST AND PRESENT.

[A melancholy interest now attaches to the publication of these *Reminiscences*, Sir Lambert Playfair having died (on the 18th of February) since they began to appear in these columns. Their author took a lively interest in the appearance of these sketches of his official career, which must now be regarded as chapters in the posthumous autobiography of a distinguished administrator, diplomatist, and author.]

AFTER leaving Zanzibar I went to Algiers, where I occupied the position of Consul-General for nearly thirty years. During all this time it was my duty and my pleasure to travel over the country in every direction, and write all that I saw or did. Whatever, therefore, I may have to say now must be a twice-told tale. I will restrict myself to two articles on this most interesting country: (1) 'Algiers before and after the French Occupation,' and (2) 'Bruce in North Africa.'

It is not easy to compress the former within the limits of a magazine article, and so I am obliged to pass by the three hundred years of Roman occupation—the most prosperous epoch in the history of North Africa, known chiefly to us by its monuments; and even the African Church, whose great glory was to have contributed some shining names to the army of the martyrs, and to have produced such men as Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine, became so weakened by disturbances between opposing sects and races that it fell an easy prey to the enemies pressing the Roman Empire on every side.

If I go back as far as the fifth century at all, it is that I may tell the beautiful story of St Salsa, which has been recently brought to light by the Bollandist Fathers of Belgium. I was the first to tell it in English, and it will bear repetition.

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The small village of Tipasa, near Algiers, is full of Roman remains. The ancient city, which bore the same name, was a somewhat important commercial centre, built on elevated ground overlooking the sea, to the west of its small harbour. Christianity was introduced here at a very early period; but in the fourth and fifth centuries, though paganism had been deprived of official support, the great mass of the people still continued to adore the local deity—a bronze serpent with a golden head—a relic perhaps of the Punic worship of Eshmoun. The parents of Salsa were pagans; but she had been baptised, and, though only fourteen years of age, was animated with the most enthusiastic faith. One day they took her, in spite of her reluctance, to a feast in honour of the Brazen Serpent. She protested fearlessly against the sacrifices and impure rites which took place; and when the spectators were sunk in drunken sleep she took the head of the serpent and cast it into the sea. She returned with the intention of throwing the body in also; but it made so much noise in falling that it awakened the sleepers, who rushed upon the girl, stoned her to death, and cast her body into the sea. The waves carried it into the adjacent harbour, close to the vessel of a certain Saturninus, which had just arrived from Gaul; a tempest suddenly arose, and Saturninus, then asleep, had a vision that if he did not give burial to a body in the sea, near his vessel, he would inevitably perish. At first he paid no attention to this warning; the gale increased; and, as all hope of safety appeared gone, he leapt into the water, and his hand was miraculously guided to the girdle of the maiden. He took the body in his arms, and rose to the surface; immediately the storm ceased. Saturninus and his companions buried it in a humble chapel near the port; the piety of the faithful converted this into a Basilica, which was enlarged at various periods. On the

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APRIL 8, 1899.

floor is still seen a mosaic pavement containing an inscription in honour of the saint, in which may be read the punning sentence: '*Martyr hic est Salsa, dulcior nectare semper.*' Salsa means 'salt' as well as the saint's name. This is of great interest, as it is the only resting-place known of an African saint and martyr.

Again, I will pass over many years occupied by the Vandal invasion; the destruction of their power by the Byzantines under Belisarius, and the great Mohammedan invasion by Okba-bin-Nafa in 647, when the Christians were utterly defeated and the African Church was swept away.

About the middle of the eleventh century another Mohammedan invasion occurred. The Khalifa Mostansir let loose a horde of nomad Arabs, numbering, it is said, two hundred thousand people, who, starting from Egypt, spread over the whole of North Africa, carrying destruction and blood wherever they passed; thus laying the foundation of that state of anarchy which rendered possible the interference of the Turks. It was no brilliant and ephemeral conquest, like that of Okba; the land was overrun by a foreign people, who speedily absorbed the Berber nation or drove the remains of it into the mountains.

As early as 1390 the Barbary corsairs began to trouble the seas; but it was not till the fall of Granada that their ravages became really serious. After the death of Ferdinand of Spain in 1516, the Algerines called in the assistance of the celebrated Turkish corsair, Baba Aroodj—or Barbarossa, as he was called by Europeans—who, under the guise of an ally, made himself master of the place, and, though nominally a vassal of the Porte, really became an independent ruler. Year by year the Barbary corsairs became more audacious; they could not support themselves without roaming the seas for plunder, which they did without the least fear or apprehension, as far even as the shores of England. At other times, carrying with them renegades as guides, they deliberately landed on the coasts and islands of the Mediterranean, pillaged towns, and carried off their inhabitants to the most wretched captivity. It seems incredible at the present day that they should have been allowed the undisputed right of interfering with the commerce of the world, and enriching themselves by the ransom of the best blood of Christendom. The only explanation is that one nation found these corsairs a convenient scourge for others, and hesitated at no means to increase its own influence with them. On the other hand, it must be avowed that the Algerines were not singular in their mode of making captives. Every state in Europe held it lawful to enslave an infidel. The common law of England, as well as the Inquisition, doomed infidels to the stake. All that can be said of the Algerines is that they made the trade in Christian slaves their principal branch of commerce, and that they continued their detestable practices to a period

when they were generally reprobated by public opinion and the laws of nations. When the institution of Christian slavery was at its height there were from twenty thousand to thirty thousand captives at a time in Algiers alone, representing every nation in Europe and every rank in society, from the Viceroy to the common sailor; men of the highest eminence in the Church, literature, science, and arms; delicately-nurtured ladies and little children, doomed to spend their lives in infamy, the majority of whom never returned to their native land.

Père Dan, in his *History of Barbary*, relates the daring raid made by two pirate vessels on Baltimore in Ireland. He says:

Murat Rais, a Flemish renegade, went to Ireland, where, having landed during the night with two hundred men, he carried off two hundred and thirty-seven persons—men, women, and children, even those in the cradle. That done, he brought them to Algiers, where it was pitiable to see them exposed for sale; for then they separated wives from their husbands, and infants from their fathers. They sold the husband to one and the wife to another, tearing the daughter from her arms, without any hope of seeing her again. I heard all this at Algiers from several of the slaves, who assured me that no Christian could witness what took place without melting into tears, to see so many honest girls and so many well-brought-up women abandoned to the brutality of these barbarians.

Another very audacious capture took place off the shores of Ireland shortly after this affair—that of the Rev. Devereux Spratt, with one hundred and twenty of his countrymen. His journal is in the possession of the family of his descendant, the late Admiral Spratt, who very kindly communicated it to me. He says:

I embarked in one John Filmer's vessel with about six-score passengers; but before we were out of sight of land we were taken by an Algerine pirate, who put the men in chains and stocks. The thing was so grievous that I began to question Providence, and accused Him of injustice in His dealings with me; until the Lord made it appear otherwise by ensuing mercy. Upon my arrival in Algiers I found pious Christians, which changed my former thoughts of God, which was that He dealt more hard with me than with other of His servants. God was pleased to guide for me and those relations of mine taken with me in a providential ordering of civil patrons for us, who gave me more liberty than ordinary; especially to me, who preached the Gospel to my poor countrymen, amongst whom it pleased God to make me an instrument of much good. . . . After this God stirred up the heart of Captain Wilde to be an active instrument for me at Leagourn, in Italy, amongst the merchants there, to contribute liberally towards my ransom. Upon this a petition was presented by the English captives for my staying amongst them. It he showed me, and asked me what I should do. I told him he was an instrument under God of my liberty, and I would be at his disposing. He answered, No, I was a free man, and should be at my own disposing. Then I replied, 'I will stay,' considering that I might be more serviceable to my country by continuing to endure afflictions with the people of God than to enjoy liberty at home.

Of one episode in this wretched state of things

the English have every reason to be proud. In 1816 Lord Exmouth was sent on a mission to the Barbary States to obtain the release of a number of slaves belonging to powers in alliance with Britain. During the negotiations which followed, Lord Exmouth himself, our Consul, his wife, sister, and daughter, were treated with the utmost insult and ignominy; and when a rupture with the British fleet appeared inevitable, the Dey sent orders to Bona to arrest all Italians there under British protection. These orders were executed with the most rigorous ferocity. At least one hundred persons were murdered while attending mass, as many more were wounded, eight hundred were taken prisoners, and an indiscriminate plunder of their effects took place. To avenge this insult, Lord Exmouth was sent to Algiers with two line-of-battle ships, ten frigates, and seven vessels of smaller size. A Dutch squadron under Admiral Van Capellan co-operated with him. They arrived at Algiers on 27th August 1816, and a flag of truce was sent on shore to communicate the ultimatum of the British Government, and demand the instant liberation of our Consul, who had been imprisoned in irons. No answer was given; whereon the fleet bore up, and each vessel took up its appointed station. The English flagship, the *Queen Charlotte*, anchored half a cable's length from the Molehead. A gun was fired from the shore batteries, a second and a third followed, the remainder being drowned by the thunder of the *Queen Charlotte's* broadside. The action became general. The Dutch squadron behaved with admirable gallantry. The enemy's flotilla of gunboats advanced, when a single broadside sent thirty-three out of thirty-seven to the bottom. The whole of the Algerine frigates were burnt at their anchors and blown up, and before night the sea-defences were in ruins. On the following morning the Dey acceded to all Lord Exmouth's demands, the first of which was the abolition for ever of Christian slavery. In the British squadron one hundred and twenty-three men were killed and six hundred and ninety wounded; the Dutch had thirteen killed and fifty-two wounded. The losses of the Algerines were estimated at seven thousand. The total number of European slaves restored to liberty was three thousand and three.

In spite of this chastisement the audacity and perfidy of the Algerines continued unabated, and the most solemn treaties were regarded as so much waste-paper. The subject of the dispute which eventually caused their downfall was the claims of a Jew named Bakri, on account of stores supplied to the French Government during the Napoleonic wars. At one of the interviews which the French Consul had with the Dey, the latter struck him on the face with a fan. This conduct, for which he refused any reparation, served as an excuse to the French Government to send an expedition against Algiers; and, after a very ineffi-

cient blockade of three years, the town was taken possession of by the French, almost without a struggle, on the 6th of July 1830. France was as much surprised as the rest of the world at the result of the expedition. It was sent to avenge an insult; but no one for a moment contemplated the creation of so magnificent a colony as Algeria has since become. No provision even for the occupation of Algiers had been made; no project of organisation had been devised; all was uncertainty and disorder, and no one could foresee what the next step would be. The conquest, however, proceeded from day to day; and it was not till four years later that a royal *ordonnance* established regulations for the conduct of the public service. A dual government was devised, in which, however, the military element was supreme; and for many years this was productive of the most deplorable results.

At first the conquerors were totally ignorant of the manners and customs of the people whom they were called on to govern; great difficulties and serious mistakes were therefore inevitable. The whole country remained in the possession of a hostile people, some of whom had never been subdued since the fall of the Roman Empire, and the remainder were firmly resolved to defend their independence, newly acquired by the collapse of the Turkish power. Even when these had been reduced to submission everything had to be created, and the discordant elements which the country contained had to be united into one harmonious whole. The first part of the history of Algeria was purely military; but as security began to be established, European colonisation followed rapidly in spite of the active hostility of the Arabs, and the scarcely concealed opposition of the military *Bureaux Arabes*. The French make no empty boast when they declare that since their flag was first planted at Algiers not a day has passed without being marked by some act of progress. No element in the population has remained stationary, although they have not increased in as rapid a manner as in colonies under the British flag. The natives at the time of the conquest were calculated at two and a half millions; now they amount to more than three and a half, in spite of the terrible loss of one-sixth of the whole number during the great years of famine. The European element, which was conspicuous by its absence at first, amounted to three hundred and eleven thousand in 1879, and has now increased to five hundred and thirty-seven thousand; of these about one-half are French, the remainder are foreigners of various nationalities, principally Spanish, Italians, and Maltese, who are not looked upon with an eye of favour by the French, but who have had, and still continue to take, a very important share in the great work of transforming a savage and almost uncultivated country into one of the richest and most productive in the basin of the Mediterranean.

It would be impossible within my limits to give even a sketch of all the military operations and successive attempts at government that have been made in the past. I have given a sufficient summary of them in my *Handbook to Algeria and Tunis* (Murray). The work carried on in Algeria may be called *colonisation de luxe*. France has been transported to Africa; the country has been covered with French towns and villages. Naturalisation is thrust upon the resident foreigners; an air of permanence and solidity pervades everything; the railways are as good as the best in France; the roads cannot be surpassed; there is hardly a hydraulic work in the world more remarkable for solidity and beauty of construction than the harbour of Philippeville; and the irrigation works, though not uniformly successful, are splendid in their conception.

The growth of cereals has always been the staple industry in Algeria; but of late it has become unremunerative, and the returns both of European and native culture are very small. Even amongst Europeans agriculture is in a very elementary condition. No forage is used save what grows spontaneously; no manure, or very little, is put on the land; no cattle are kept beyond what are required for ploughing; the land is impoverished, badly kept, and full of weeds and noxious insects, which smother and devour the crops. Ninety-eight per cent. of the land sown every year is devoted to the growth of cereals, and too little of it to the rearing of cattle. The great obstacles to agriculture are the uncertainty of seasons, and the impossibility of competing with such countries as America, Russia, and India, where land is abundant and, in the last two at least, labour is cheap.

The great obstacle to commercial success in Algeria is the exaggerated protective tariff which has been introduced here, as in all French colonies. I will only take the trade between it and Great Britain as an example. In 1872 the imports into Algeria from England were twenty-three millions of francs; they gradually decreased till 1894, when they were less than ten millions. The exports to England in 1872 were twenty-four millions; in 1894 they were under fifteen millions. The trade between England and Algeria has been nearly extinguished; and, as I cannot trace in the Custom-house returns any signs of increase between France and her colony, I am forced to conclude that the protective tariff has been prejudicial to the interests of commerce in general.

One of the most important of the products of Algeria is phosphate of lime, a substance of the most vital importance to agriculture. The principal deposits occur near Tebessa, at an elevation of two thousand four hundred feet above the sea, in beds of from eight to twelve feet thick, separated from each other by layers of limestone and marl.

They consist entirely of the débris of sharks and other marine animals, in a greater or less degree of disintegration. We are all familiar with the spectacle of solar heat and light stored up for our use in coal-measures; here is something analogous—countless myriads of marine animals have lived and died in bygone ages to produce food for our generation. The exploitation of this phosphate mountain is owing to the energy and intelligence of one of our own countrymen, Mr Crookston of Glasgow; and it is being successfully carried on in spite of the protective policy of France, its intolerance of foreigners, and the hostility of the press in Algeria.

Another precious product of Algeria is its celebrated Numidian marble. The finest quarries are at Arzew, in the department of Oran. I visited them for the first time in 1880; and in one of my Consular Reports I stated:

I almost fear to say all I wish on this subject, lest I should be charged with exaggeration; but, in sober truth, during the two days I spent in examining the ground in every direction, I passed from one marvel to another, and left in amazement at the magnitude of the treasure which has lain so long, I will not say concealed, but exposed to the most superficial glance there.

I sent a slab of it to Mr Ruskin, who wrote:

I cannot enough thank you for the lovely slab which reached me yesterday. I have been meditating on it ever since. I think it is nearly the loveliest and most instructive marble I have ever seen, and, indeed, I hope to make some use of it in the interior of our museum—of the like of it I mean, for this must remain at Brantwood, whose little museum of the stones I have specially studied will, I hope, be useful after my death.

Another beautiful stone is what is generally known as Algerian onyx, found near Tlemcen; but it has been quite thrown into the shade by a recent discovery made near Constantine. This also is an alabaster. Some are almost colourless, or of a faint yellow tint, but exceedingly delicate and translucent; other varieties, finely striated, have been stained with iron, and present every colour from white to primrose, passing into pink and deep-red. The formation of this in bygone ages is the same as may be seen at present at Hammam Meskoutin. Great volumes of boiling water, highly charged with carbonate of lime, rise from the earth; and, as it cools, the carbonate is precipitated in the form of cataracts, cones, or striated bands. There are many other qualities of marble, all very beautiful and well situated for transport. Iron ore exists more or less all over the country, as do zinc, copper, and other minerals.

I have sketched very briefly the history and the modern resources of Algeria; I wish I could have given a more favourable account of its prosperity; but, as I have said, a rigidly protective policy and the intolerance of foreign enterprise have greatly retarded its advancement.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XIX.



AS soon as the mail-boat which was carrying Katherine and Madame Bernstein to the East was out of sight Browne turned to his man, who was waiting beside him, and said: 'Now, Davis, a cab, and quickly too. We must not miss that train for London whatever happens.'

As it happened, they were only just in time. He had scarcely taken his seat before the train began to move out of the station. Placing himself in a corner of the carriage, he endeavoured to interest himself in a book; but it was of no use. Though his material body was seated in the carriage being whirled away across the green plains of Southern France, his actual self was on board the great mail-boat which was cutting its way through the blue waters, carrying Katherine mile by mile farther out of his reach. Dreary indeed did Europe seem to him now. It was a little before twelve o'clock when the train left Marseilles; it was nearly four next afternoon when he sighted the waters of the Channel at Calais. Much to his astonishment and delight, Jimmy Foote met him at Dover, and travelled back to town with him. During his absence Browne had entrusted their arrangements to his care; and in consequence Jimmy carried about with him an air of business which at other times was quite unusual to him.

'I have been down to Southampton,' he reported, 'and have seen Mason. He was hard at work getting the stores aboard, and told me to tell you he will be able to sail without fail early on Monday morning. When do you think we had better go down?'

'On Sunday,' said Browne. 'We may as well get on board as soon as we can.'

Though he spoke in this casual way, he knew that in his heart he was waiting the hour of departure with an impatience that bordered almost on desperation. He longed to see the yacht's head pointed down Channel, and to know that at last she was really in pursuit of the other boat which had been granted such a lengthy start. On reaching London they drove together to Browne's house. It was Saturday evening, and there were still a hundred and one things to be settled. Upon his study-table Browne discovered upwards of fifty invitations from all sorts and conditions of people. He smiled cynically as he opened them, and when the last one had been examined, turned to Jimmy.

'Thank Heaven, I can decline these with a clear conscience,' he said. 'By the time the dates come round we shall be on the high seas, far beyond the reach of dinners, dances, and kettledrums.'

I wonder how many of these folk,' he continued, picking up one from the heap and flicking it across the table to his friend, 'would have me in their houses again if they knew what I am about to do?'

'Every one of them, my boy,' the other replied; 'from the Duchess of Matlock downwards. You might help a thousand Russian convicts to escape from Saghalien, and they will pardon you; but you are doing one other thing for which you must never hope to be forgiven.'

'And what may that be?' Browne inquired.

'Why, you are marrying Miss Petrovitch,' said Jimmy. 'If she were a famous beauty, a great heiress, or even the daughter of a peer, all would be well; but you must remember that no one knows her; that, however much you may love her, and however worthy she may be, she is nevertheless not chronicled in the *Court Guide*. To marry out of your own circle is a sin seldom forgiven, particularly when a man is a millionaire and has been the desire of every matchmaking mother for as long as you have.'

'They had better treat my wife as I wish them to, or beware of me,' said Browne angrily. 'If they treat her badly they'll find I've got claws.'

'But, my dear fellow, there you are running your head against the wall,' said Jimmy. 'I never said they *would* treat her badly. On the contrary, they will treat her wonderfully well; for, remember, she is your wife. They will accept all her invitations for dances in London, will stay with her in the country; they will yacht, hunt, fish, and shoot with you; but the mothers, who, after all is said and done, are the leaders of society, will never forget or forgive you. My dear fellow,' he continued, with the air of a man who knew his world thoroughly, which, to do him justice, he certainly did, 'you surely do not imagine for an instant that Miss Verney has forgotten that'—

'We'll leave Miss Verney out of the question, Jimmy, if you don't mind,' said Browne, with rather a different intonation.

'I thought that would make him wince,' said Jimmy to himself; and then added aloud, 'Never mind, old man; we won't pursue the subject any further. It's not a nice one, and we've plenty else to think about, have we not? Let me tell you, I am looking forward to this little business more than I have ever done to anything. The only regret I have about it is that there does not appear to be any probability of our having some fighting. I must confess I should like to have a brush with the enemy, if possible.'

'In that case we should be lost men,' Browne replied. 'No; whatever we do, we must avoid coming into actual conflict with the authorities. By the way, what about Maas?'

'I saw him this morning,' Foote replied. 'I told him what arrangements we had made, and he will meet us whenever and wherever we wish. He seemed quite elated over the prospect of the voyage, and told me he thought it awfully good of you to take him. After all, he's not a bad sort of fellow. There is only one thing I don't like about him, and that is his predilection for wishing people to think he is in a delicate state of health.'

'And you don't think he is?' said Browne.

'Of course I don't,' Jimmy replied. 'Why, only this morning I was with him more than an hour, and he didn't cough once; and yet he was continually pointing out to me that it was so necessary for his health—for his lungs, in fact—that he should go out of England at once. It is my idea that he is hypochondriacal.'

'Whatever he is, I wish to goodness he had chosen any other time for wanting to accompany us. I have a sort of notion that his presence on board will bring us bad luck.'

'Nonsense,' said his matter-of-fact friend. 'Why should it? Maas could do us no harm, even supposing he wanted to. And he's certain not to have any desire that way.'

'Well,' said Browne, 'that is what I feel, and yet I can't make out why I should do so.' As he said this he pressed the ring Katherine had given him, and remembered that that was his talisman, and that she had told him that while he wore it he could come to no harm. With that on his finger, and his love for her in his heart, it would be strange indeed if he could not fulfil the task he had set himself to do.

It is strange how ignorant we are of the doings, and indeed of the very lives, of our fellow-men. I do not mean the actions which, in the broad light of day, lie in the ordinary routine of life, but those more important circumstances which are not seen, but make up and help to weave the skein of each man's destiny. For instance, had a certain well-known official in the office of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who stood upon the platform of Waterloo Station waiting for the train that was to carry him to the residence of a friend at Woking, dreamt for an instant that the three gentlemen he nodded so affably to, and who were standing at the door of a saloon-carriage in the same train, were leaving England next day in order to cause considerable trouble to a Power that at the moment had shown signs of being friendly, what would his feelings have been? He did not know it, however; so he seated himself in his comfortable smoking-carriage, lit a cigar, and read his Sunday paper quite unconscious of the circumstances.

It was nearly eight o'clock before they reached Southampton. When they did they made their way to the harbour, where a steam-launch from the yacht was awaiting them. The *Lotus Blossom* herself lay off the Royal Pier; and when they reached her Captain Mason received them at the gangway.

'Well, Mason,' said Browne, 'is everything ready for the start to-morrow?'

'Everything is ready, sir,' Mason replied. 'You have only to say when you desire to get off, and we'll up anchor.'

Browne thought that he would like to get under way at once; but it could not be. He looked along the snow-white decks and upon the polished brasswork, and thought of the day that he had left the boat when she was anchored in the harbour of Merok, to accompany his guests on their walk to the falls, and of the wonderful things that had happened since then. Before many weeks had passed over their heads he hoped that Katherine herself would be standing on these selfsame decks. He pictured the delight he would feel in showing her over his trim and beautiful vessel, and thought of the long conversations they would have on deck at night, and of the happiness they would feel when they were speeding towards safety once more with the rescued man on board. What they were to do with her father when they had got him was one thing he wanted to leave to Katherine to decide. He was awakened from these dreams by Foote, who inquired whether he intended to allow his guests to remain on deck all night, or whether he was going to take them below.

'I beg your pardon,' said Browne. 'It's awfully rude of me to keep you standing here like this. Come along.'

They accordingly made their way down the companion-ladder to the saloon below. Everything had been prepared for their reception, and the stewards were already laying dinner as they entered. Having finished that important meal, and drunk the toast of a pleasant voyage, they ascended to the deck once more, when Foote and Maas made their way to the smoking-room, while Browne went up to the bridge to have a talk with the captain. When he descended again, he announced to his guests that the yacht would be got under way as soon as it was light in the morning, and that the first coaling-place would be Gibraltar.

'Bravo!' said Jimmy, rapping the table with his pipe. 'Thank goodness, by midday we shall be well out in the Channel.'

At the same moment Maas's cigar slipped from between his fingers and dropped on the floor. He bent down to pick it up, but at first could not find it. By the time he had done so the conversation had changed, and Browne had drawn his watch from his pocket. A cry of astonish-

ment escaped him: 'Have you any idea what the time is?'

They confessed that they had not.

'Well, it's nearly twelve o'clock,' he said. 'If you won't either of you take anything else, I think the best thing we can do is to get to bed as soon as possible.'

So tired was Browne that night that he slept without waking until well on in the following morning. Indeed, it was past nine o'clock when Davis, his man-servant, entered and woke him; he sat up, and rubbed his eyes as if he could very well have gone on sleeping for another hour or two.

'By Jove! we're under way,' he said, as if he were surprised to find the yacht moving. 'Where are we, Davis?'

'Off Swanage, sir,' the man replied. 'Captain Mason couldn't get away quite as early as he hoped to do; but he's making up for lost time now, sir.'

'What sort of a day is it?' Browne inquired.

'Beautiful, sir; it couldn't be no better if you'd ordered it special,' said Davis, who was a bit of a wag in his way, and was privileged as such. 'There's just a nice bit of swell running, but no more. Not enough to shake the curls of a schoolmistress, in a manner of speaking.'

This Browne discovered to be the case when he ascended to the deck. The yacht was bathed in sunshine, and she sat as softly as a duck upon a large green swell that was as easy as the motion of a rocking-horse. Far away to starboard the pinewood cliffs of Bournemouth could be descried; while a point on the starboard-bow was Poole Harbour and Swanage headland, with Old Harry peering up out of the sunlit waves. Browne ascended to the bridge, to find Foote and Captain Mason there. The latter touched his cap, while Foote came forward and held out his hand.

'Good-morning,' said Jimmy. 'What do you think of this, my boy? Isn't it better than London? Doesn't it make you feel it's worth something to be alive? I wouldn't change places this morning with any man in England.'

'And you may be very sure I would not,' said Browne; then, turning to the skipper, he inquired what the yacht was doing.

'Thirteen knots good, sir,' the latter replied. 'We shall do better, however, when we've put Portland Bill behind us.'

As he spoke the breakfast-bell sounded, and simultaneously with it Maas appeared on deck. Browne and Foote descended from the bridge to greet him, and found him in excellent spirits.

'I feel better already,' he said as they went down the companion-ladder and took their places at the table. 'How beautiful the air is on deck! Alchemists may say what they please, but this is the Elixir of Life. What a pity it is we cannot bottle it, and introduce it into the

crowded ballrooms and dining-rooms during the London season!'

'That's rather an original notion,' said Jimmy.

'Fancy, after a waltz with a heavy partner, taking her off to a room set apart for the purpose, seating her in a chair, and, instead of asking her the usual insipid question whether she would have an ice, or coffee, or claret cup, inquiring what brand of air she preferred—whether she would have a gallon of Bournemouth, which is relaxing, or Margate, which is bracing, or Folkestone—shall we say?—which is midway between the two. It could be laid on in town and country houses, and, combined with the phonograph, which would repeat the nigger minstrel melodies of the sands, and the biograph, which would show the surrounding scenery, would be a tremendous attraction. Having purchased one of these machines, pater-familias need not trouble his head about taking his family away for the annual trip to the seaside. Rents would not affect him; he would be free of landladies' overcharges. All he would have to do would be to take his wife and bairns into a room, turn on the various machines, and science would do the rest.'

'Perhaps, when you have done talking nonsense,' said Browne, 'you will be kind enough to hand me the *pâté de foie gras*. I remember so many of your wonderful schemes, Jimmy, that I begin to think I know them all by heart.'

'In that case you must admit that the majority of them were based upon very sound principles,' said Jimmy. 'I remember there was one that might have made a fortune for anybody. It was to be a matrimonial registry for the upper ten, where intending Benedicts could apply for particulars respecting their future wives. For instance, the Duke of A., being very desirous of marrying, and being also notoriously impecunious, would call at the office and ask for a choice of American heiresses possessing between five and ten millions. Photographs having been submitted to him, and a guarantee as to the money given to him, meetings between the parties could be arranged by the company, and a small commission charged when the marriage was duly solemnised. Then there was another scheme for educating the sons of millionaires in the brands of cigars they should give their friends. For a small commission, Viscount B., who has smoked himself into the bankruptcy court, would call at their residences three times a week, when he would not only show them how to discriminate between a Trichinopoli and a Burma Pwé, which is difficult to the uninitiated, but also between La Intimidación Excelsos of '94 and Henry Clay Sobranos, which is much more so.'

'I remember yet another scheme,' said Maas quietly as he helped himself to some caviare from a dish before him. 'You told me once of a scheme you were perfecting for forming a

company to help long-sentenced burglars of proved ability to escape from penal servitude, in order that they should work for the society on the co-operative principle. If my memory serves me, it was to be a most remunerative

speculation. The only flaw in it that I could see was the difficulty in arranging the convict's escape, and the danger that would accrue to those helping him in case they were discovered.'

THE WEST INDIES PAST AND PRESENT.

By E. D. BELL.



T has been said that the land is happy which has no history; and if this can be accepted as the ideal, the reverse would no doubt be found in lands which not only have a history, but a history whose principal incidents are of fire and flood, earthquake devastation, pestilence, and economic disaster. Such lands are our British West Indian islands, and we purpose sketching briefly the series of events which, in the present century, have reduced them to their deplorable condition.

'Their deplorable condition.' To one acquainted with them there is something strangely unreal in the thought that lands so richly blest in climate, soil, and geographical position should be in such a condition. Indeed, their state is, perhaps, the saddest irony to be found in contemporary political economy. Take the island of Jamaica, for example. Her name is derived from the Indian word *xaymaka*, meaning water and wood, in obvious reference to her grand fertility. She has an area of four thousand one hundred and ninety-three square miles, of which only about six hundred and forty-six are flat, and form a fringe along the seashore surrounding the mountainous interior of from three thousand five hundred to three thousand six hundred square miles. These mountains rise to a height of seven thousand three hundred and sixty feet, and afford every possibility of tropical and semi-tropical climate. The superb nature of the soil, watered by more than two hundred rivers, is such that she produces a larger number of products of the highest quality than any equal area known. Her rum fetches a price from forty to a hundred per cent. higher than any other; her pimento monopolises the market; her fruit—particularly the bananas, pine-apples, and oranges—are admitted by travellers to be a revelation to those who are only acquainted with the productions grown elsewhere. Coffee from her Blue Mountains commands a higher price than the far-famed Mocha, which most persons erroneously consider the finest—an idea due to the fact that our best coffee is only grown in small quantity and rarely appears on the market. Her ginger is universally acknowledged to be the best; and although sarsaparilla no longer holds the position it once had in the pharmacopoeia, the Jamaican variety is the only

one the physician cares to dispense. And yet, with all the advantages of the soil which grows these things, what is the history of her agricultural and commercial development during the present century? Its unfortunate nature may be shown in a single sentence: whereas the average yearly exports of the three great staples—sugar, coffee, and rum—for the five years 1802 to 1807 were valued at £3,852,621, for the three years 1894 to 1896 the average was only £636,380, or less than one-sixth of what they were ninety years ago.

The first blow was struck at the prosperity of the British West Indies when, in 1807, the slave-trade was suppressed. This was certainly a righteous thing, and, in the moral development of the nation, it was, like the later abolition of slavery, an inevitable thing. But we are here concerned with its economic results rather than with its ethical justification. By closing the slave-market it made labour more difficult to obtain and more expensive; and a progressive shrinkage in cultivation and production began. Still using Jamaica as our example, we find that in the five years 1828 to 1833—the last year before the commencement of the abolition—the average yearly value of the three staples had fallen to £2,791,478. This was a considerable loss, amounting to £1,061,143, or twenty-eight per cent. on the exports of 1802 to 1807. Nor did the damage end there. Large numbers of the estates could only continue working by becoming heavily mortgaged, and thus prepared the way for their final ruin at a later time. While the planters were struggling with these difficulties the great blow of the abolition fell upon them. From the 1st of August 1834 the slaves were to be free; but they were to remain attached to the estates as apprentices for six years. Owing, however, to a strong agitation in England for the early completion of emancipation, apprenticeship was terminated on the 1st of August 1838, and the planters were thus deprived of two years of the free labour promised them in part compensation. The effects very rapidly developed themselves. In 1834 the exports of the staples were £2,501,000; in 1839, the first year of complete freedom, they fell to less than a million, to £994,899—a decrease of more than sixty per cent. in five years. Large numbers of the manumitted people became independent settlers, especi-

ally in those colonies which, like Jamaica, had a considerable amount of unoccupied or abandoned land. Not only did labour thus become more expensive, but in many cases it was impossible to obtain it in such quantities as would enable the agricultural system to be maintained. A case may be quoted in illustration. On certain estates in Jamaica there were in 1832 just under forty-two thousand slaves; in 1847, fifteen years after, only about fourteen thousand labourers, or about one-third the number needed, could be got to work on them, the remainder having gone off to live the lives of ease so readily attained on the prodigal soil of the country. Under these circumstances the shrinkage of cultivation was inevitable; and it is not surprising to read that within those fifteen years one hundred and sixty-eight thousand acres of cane and one hundred and eighty-eight thousand acres of coffee were abandoned by the despairing planters. And their condition was truly desperate. The British Government had paid them £5,853,975 in compensation; but, as their slave-property was worth more than this, they were brought face to face with a great financial loss at the very moment when additional burdens were being placed upon them for the payment of labour; while in many cases the mortgagees, feeling uncertain as to how the colonies would progress under the altered condition of things, foreclosed, and large sums of money were thus diverted from the planters, who never had even the opportunity given them of attempting to retrieve their ruin.

It has already been admitted that the abolition of slavery was a righteous thing; but it is permissible to believe that even righteous things may be performed in an unrighteous or at least in an inexpedient manner. Most persons are familiar with the views put forward by Wilberforce and the noble band of associates who, with him, led the agitation which culminated in the abolition, and there is no need to detail them here; but it may have the interest, at least, of novelty to many to know how the matter would be regarded, especially in the light of post-abolitional history, by any enlightened representative of the planting interest in the West Indies to-day. When the English sent an army across the Border to compel the Scotch to let their young princess, Mary Stuart, marry Edward VI., the Earl of Huntly remarked that he disliked not the match, but he hated the manner of wooing. Any enlightened planter of to-day would acknowledge that the abolition was right; but he would almost certainly hold that the method was unfortunate. Consider what it was that took place. Practically the whole of the peasantry and nearly the whole of the artisan class were enslaved; and these people, constituting the great bulk of the population, on a single night passed from the discipline of slavery to the independent condition of the free labourer, and the whole

economic and industrial system of the colonies was destroyed in an hour. It is, indeed, very difficult to realise the immensity of the revolution. If, by the passing of an impossible law, it were decreed that every employer of labour in Britain should continue to pay his workmen the wages he is now paying, and, in addition, give them fifty per cent. of the profits of their labour, it would be a vast change, but it would, perhaps, scarcely equal that of which we are speaking. No; what should have been done was this: it should have been decreed that after a certain day all children born of slaves should be free, and that on another day, thirty to forty years from the first, all slaves still living should be declared free. By this means a generation of free-men would have grown up amid the slave population, and as these died off would have taken their places without difficulty or confusion. They would have been born and reared on the estates, and the idea of remaining to labour on them among their own people would have suggested itself instinctively. Had some such method as this been adopted, the long agony of the last two generations might have been saved to the West Indies.

But to return. A small remnant of the planters still endeavoured to work their estates under the changed condition of things. It is possible that in time they might have succeeded in regaining something like their old position, protected as their sugar was in the British market. But fate was not yet done with them. In 1846 free-trade was proclaimed. Just before this decision was made Spain had determined to abolish slavery in her West Indian possessions; but no sooner was it made known that England had declared for free-trade than the purpose was withdrawn, and the bells of Havana are said to have been rung for joy at the prospect of competing with slave-grown sugar against the sugar of the British West Indies. It is a strange illustration of how, in the complexity of the forces which mould the social development of man, results are achieved which are not only unforeseen, but irretrievably opposed to our purposes and sentiments. The apostles of free-trade were, doubtless, as excellent humanitarians as any in England; but they unwittingly riveted the chains of the Spanish slaves for forty years, and doomed hundreds of thousands to the continuance of a fate compared with which that of the British slave was a benignant one.

The effects of free-trade were felt immediately. In 1847 the planters of Jamaica petitioned the British Government, and pointed out that, whereas the actual cost of manufacturing a hundredweight of sugar in the colony was twenty-two shillings and sevenpence halfpenny, by competition with the slave-grown sugar of Cuba they were compelled to sell at fifteen shillings, or two-thirds the bare cost of production, apart from any ques-

tion of profit. They implored the Government to impose protective duties, to which request an inflexible *non possumus* was the reply. The state of affairs became still worse; estates continued to be abandoned, and the exports of the staples to decrease until, in 1856, they touched the lowest point to which they had hitherto fallen—£563,500, or about fifteen per cent. of what they were fifty years before. The total exports of the products of the cane for the three years 1854 to 1856 for the three principal sugar islands, Barbadoes, Jamaica, and Trinidad, and the mainland settlement of British Guiana, averaged about £3,110,000; and it is important to note, as showing the place of the sugar-cane in the life of these colonies, that even in the decayed state of the cultivation as it then existed they amounted to more than eighty per cent. of the total value of the exports. After this, however, a slight improvement was noticeable, and in the three years 1864 to 1866 the average rose to £3,583,000, in round numbers, and it began to appear as if the worst were past. This was owing to the fact that the remarkable incapacity for government which characterises the modern Spaniard was steadily disintegrating the commercial system of Cuba; and as that declined, so the British West Indies prospered. In 1868 the smouldering discontent of the Cubans broke out into the revolt which, after lasting for thirty years, has recently ended in the destruction of Spanish dominion. The British colonies reaped the benefits of this disorder, and in 1874 to 1876 their exports of the cane products rose, on the average, to £4,438,000. Other influences were, in the meantime, operating in such a manner as to assist this development. The generation of freedmen who had left the estates on the abolition was dying off, and their children were returning to regular labour. In this they were assisted by the pressure very properly put upon them by the Government in expelling them from abandoned estates upon which they had 'squatted.' The anger of a section of these 'squatters' because they were disturbed in their illegal possession was a chief cause of the Jamaica rebellion of 1865.

From 1880 to 1884 our colonies, although producing quantities far beneath what they had done in the palmy days when the century was young, were moving strongly on the upward path, and hopes began to be entertained that the cloud had passed for good. But the planter was reckoning without the bounty system. He had fought out one of the finest economic struggles of the century. Staggered by the suppression of the slave-trade in 1807, he had been all but completely overthrown by the abolition in 1838. As soon as he began making a few tentative movements for the recovery of some portion of his lost ground he was crippled by the proclamation of free-trade, and compelled to compete

with paid-labour sugar against the slave-grown sugar of the Spanish colonies. He fought out that battle, and he won it; and now, when he might fairly have hoped that the field was clear, the spectre of the bounty system rose before him. The manner of its development was peculiar, and serves as another illustration of the growth of unforeseen results in social adjustments.

In the bounty countries a tax was imposed on all sugar manufactured, on the supposition that it was intended for home consumption; if, however, the sugar were exported, the tax was refunded. Now, taking Germany for our example, this tax was levied on the assumption that the beet would yield eight per cent. of sugar; and so long as this was approximately right there was no difficulty. But, owing to improvements in the cultivation of beetroot, the percentage of sugar which it yielded began about the middle of the century to increase, and by 1880 it had risen to about eleven per cent., while the tax still remained at eight per cent. Now, suppose a certain manufacturer worked with eleven per cent. beet to the amount of ten thousand tons, he would obtain eleven hundred tons of sugar; but under the eight per cent. tax he would pay on only eight hundred tons. If he now exported the sugar the tax would be returned him, not merely on the eight hundred he had paid for, but on the total quantity exported. If he exported the eleven hundred tons, he would thus get back the tax on the eight hundred tons, and, in addition, a sum equivalent to what he should have paid on the extra three hundred. It is this which constitutes the bounty—so much clear money which goes into the pocket of the manufacturer literally for nothing. It amounts at present to about £4 a ton on the average; and it obviously gives him an immense advantage over his cane-sugar rival, since it enables him to sell at a price which, otherwise, would never pay him. Indeed, cane-sugar can really be manufactured, and *is* manufactured, at a cheaper rate than beet-sugar, and would, on this ground alone, drive the latter from the market could it meet it on equal terms. Furthermore, in sweetness and in flavour it is distinctly superior to the other, as can easily be proved by dissolving equal quantities of the two in equal quantities of water, and tasting the solutions. So that the bounty system is practically a system by which a substance of expensive manufacture and inferior quality is enabled to crush out a substance of cheap manufacture and superior quality. It would be difficult to improve upon the economic irony of this position.

We have seen that for the three years 1874 to 1876 the exports of cane-products averaged £4,438,000. For the three years 1884 to 1886, under the increasing pressure of the bounty system, they fell to £3,771,000, and in 1894 to 1896 there was a still greater fall to £2,870,000.

They are still falling rapidly; and if the present state of things continues, the practical extinction of cane cultivation in these colonies can only be a question of a decade or two. Recently the planters, who for many years have been making efforts to get the British Government to impose countervailing duties on the bounty sugar, renewed their attempts, and they resulted in our Government inviting the countries principally concerned in the maintenance of the system to a discussion of the whole subject. The conference, however, came to nothing. The principal bounty-giving countries—Germany, Austria, and Belgium—were willing to abrogate the system if France agreed; but France will only agree if the British Government will threaten countervailing duties. This, unfortunately, the British Government does not see its way to do, since such a line of conduct would be a violation of the accepted economic policy of free-trade. As far, therefore, as the abolition of the system is concerned, the planters stand precisely where they stood before.

In other directions suggestions are being made and plans worked out for ameliorating the distress of the colonies, but none of them gives the promise of rapid and complete relief which would be achieved by the subversion of the bounty system. It has been proposed, for example, that the colonies should be separated from England and united with the States. This, from a purely economic standpoint, would be the very best thing that could occur for them, since the United States is not only their natural market, with which they carry on about half their whole trade, but the States would have no hesitation in applying, for their benefit, the protective measures of which they are so much in need. There is no likelihood, however, of this occurring, as the strong attachment of the colonists to the British connection would form an insuperable bar. When it was suggested some months ago in Jamaica the proposal simply withered away before the calm disdain of the people, as any one acquainted with them might have foreseen. Another idea put forward has been the incorporation of the islands with the Dominion of Canada. The Canadians themselves have for many years been urging this upon us; but so long as the great tariff war was going on between Canada and the States it was not worth our while to enter into a compact which would have cost us our best customer, and one whom Canada is not yet sufficiently developed to be capable of replacing. Now that there is some prospect of a reciprocity treaty being drawn up between them, the idea may be said to pass into the region of practical politics; and it may be added that the imperial spirit, of which Canada has given so many striking proofs, would make union with her very grateful to the vast majority of West Indians, apart from questions of economy. The British Government, also, has at

last taken up the matter seriously, and has voted sums of money for the relief of planters in St Vincent and elsewhere whose plantations were destroyed by the recent storm; and although the sums are inadequate, they indicate a recognition of responsibility; while it is intended to subsidise a line of fast steamers between the colonies and Britain to aid in the development of the fruit-trade. This will be valuable, as affording a new outlet for capital, though it cannot directly assist the man whose capital is already sunk in a sugar plantation. Of the scheme associated with the name of a prominent merchant, to start a great sugar-refinery in Barbadoes, it can only be said that its efficacy, supposing it to be effective at all, could only exist so long as the bounty countries did not raise their bounties. The destruction of the bounty system, either by the withdrawal of the bounties or the imposition of countervailing duties, is the only certain method of saving the sugar industry of the British West Indies; any other device can, at the best, but retard a disaster which it cannot avert.

Yet, despite the uncertainty of the outlook, no one acquainted with these colonies can easily bring himself to believe that their future is dark. The Greek of Byron tells us that—

Standing on the Persian's grave,
I could not deem myself a slave;

and the Jamaican, for example, who has stood upon the Blue Mountains and beheld the luxuriant wealth and beauty which surround him on every side finds it difficult to realise that he is a native of a community whose history is written in misfortune. We believe, no less than we hope, that the cloud which has so long overshadowed them will pass away; that their great possibilities of soil and climate will successfully assert themselves; and that their inhabitants will yet hold a place of happy achievement in the economic system of the world.

[We append a note which contains an enlightened opinion from a man on the spot. The *Times'* Correspondent at Kingston has pointed out that the negroes are practically in possession of the West Indies, and upon them is rapidly devolving the entire burden of upkeep. Of the 90,667 properties in Jamaica, 70,740 are small holdings, not exceeding five acres in extent. Of the 108,795 taxpayers, 78,991 pay amounts under £1, and 15,734 amounts under £2; which shows that the small holder is paramount. The negroes however, it is pointed out, will not become a self-supporting race until they learn the fundamental virtues of self-help, thrift, and continuous and intelligent industry. Meanwhile, the recent recommendations of the Royal Commission are being carried out, the cardinal policy being to prevent the abandonment of a single acre of cane, and further to simplify methods and cheapen the production of sugar.]

THE MAKING OF A MAN.

CHAPTER II.—DICK GETS A CHANCE.

WHAT are you going to do with the lad?' asked Macdonald the next morning as he stood, riding-whip in hand, chatting to his hostess before starting for his own place, some twelve miles distant.

'I am sure I don't know,' answered Hardie. 'He looks a duffer. They seek work, the idiots, and don't know what work is. I had rather any day have the rawest *gaucho* to deal with; they do what they are told, and ask no questions. Look at Tod—the prig that he is—only fit to twang a banjo; even that he can't do well. He turns my hair gray.'

'Give him time; give him time. He is new out of the nursery,' said Macdonald cheerily.

'What possessed the lad to come here? I must send him packing. I can't have loafers about.'

'Wait a day or two,' his wife said earnestly. 'He looks so ill and depressed; and he is a gentleman. Can't you give him a chance?'

'Because he is ill, and depressed, and a gentleman—three remarkably good reasons.' Both men laughed heartily.

'Well,' she continued, laughing in her turn, but not to be silenced, 'he is a gentleman. And I know that is no reason; but it is a reason for treating him with a little consideration.'

'I know his people,' added Macdonald. 'What would they say if they saw him now? They are the smart society sort. I suppose they had no money to start the lad in the old country.'

'I guess the style,' growled Hardie. 'The boy is shipped off to go to the bad if he chooses, and generally he does choose pretty quick, while the money that might have started him is spent on folly.'

'If you can't keep him, send him on to me,' said Macdonald. 'I must try and keep him out of mischief for old Ted's sake, and for the credit of the old school. In this hole of a country it is hard enough for a lad to run straight if left to himself.'

Mrs Hardie beamed on him without saying a word. She knew that silence is at times more persuasive than speech.

Her husband paced up and down the corridor, thinking out some project, she guessed by his set mouth and knitted forehead. He stopped in front of her, and said, 'Well, wife, to please you I will put this fine gentleman you have discovered in charge of El Plato.'

Both his listeners exclaimed in astonishment, El Plato being an *estancia* he had newly rented. In native hands it had been utterly neglected, and required to be organised afresh and put into working order.

'I must have a white man there.'

'Don't put him in to please me,' cried out his wife.

'Pastor is a rogue; none worse,' Hardie went on to say; 'but he is too useful to part with yet awhile. They say in the kitchen Milner can talk Spanish fairly well; he can't be an utter ass. I can spare no one else at present to keep an eye on Pastor, so I shall tell him he can have the berth or clear out.'

'Well, it is a chance for the lad,' said Macdonald thoughtfully. 'I wish he may do you credit, Mrs Hardie.'

'Oh, I know how it will be,' she answered, with a smile. 'If he is a failure I am scoffed at; if he is a success, Jim takes the credit of having discovered him.'

'No, no!' Hardie declared. 'He is your choice, for better or for worse.—Come along, Macdonald, and let us tackle the lad.'

They walked off to the *palenque*, where Dick stood by himself, after having seen the other young fellows ride off to work. After a few questions, Hardie, to Dick's surprise and great satisfaction, offered him the position of *mayordomo* at El Plato.

'You are young for that sort of work; but if you care to take it on trial, it will suit me to put you in. I want some one I can trust there to look after the place—see that the men do not idle or neglect the stock. The native in charge knows his work and is a capable man; all he wants is a white man over him, to keep him straight. I am over most days, so you won't be left quite to yourself. Take it or leave it; but make up your mind before night.'

'All right, sir,' answered Dick. 'I don't require to think about it. I'll take it, and be glad of a chance'—

'Good!' Both men were pleased at the lad's quick decision.

'We will ride over this afternoon and settle you there,' added Hardie.

Dick could not realise his good fortune, and, whistling gaily, set to work saddling his horse. He held up his head and did not hesitate to talk freely when spoken to. Hardie saw the change and was satisfied. 'He has some grit in him after all. The wife is right, as usual, I believe.'

It was an hour's ride from Las Tres Aromas to El Plato. As they galloped along Dick learnt that it was a very different place from the *estancia* made by Hardie himself, and run on modern theories. El Plato was a native *ranchito* standing in the open camp, and stocked by *criollo* (country-bred) cattle. In spite of the poor account he got of the place, and the anything but

pleasing portrait of Don Pastor, the *capataz* in charge, Dick felt only delight in entering into his new duties.

Dick was no coward, and had knocked about amongst rough characters and desperadoes of many nationalities since he landed in the New World, so was not much troubled by this Don Pastor, whom Hardie described as the biggest villain in the *partido*.

'I see you have a revolver. Can you use it?' he asked.

'Well, I believe it is not loaded,' confessed Dick. 'I have never had to use it; but it is as well to make a show of having one.'

'I am with you there,' replied his companion; 'it is a mere farce carrying arms about here. But you are alone with rather a reckless set of men at El Plato. Keep your shooter loaded, and let them know it. Nothing like letting them see you are prepared for them,' he added somewhat grimly.

That evening, as Dick watched his new master ride away, he felt that a loaded revolver was the best friend he had by him, for the *capataz* and his men did look a ruffianly lot.

CHAPTER III.

I am monarch of all I survey;
My right there is none to dispute.



EARLY the next morning Dick stood at the open door of his house, full of self-importance and satisfaction. He could not flatter himself that it was his own merit or his deserts that saw him *mayordomo* of the *estancia* of El Plato. He did not try to overlook the fact that he was very incapable of filling the position; he clearly understood that he had been chosen only because he had happened to be on the spot, and because Don Diego had no time at present to attend to his new acquisition, and therefore was not very particular as to who was put in charge. Yet he had a great ambition to succeed. For some minutes he stood there, heedless of the bitter cold of early dawn, keen hunger, and the remembrance of a horrible night. The two-roomed mud-hut representing the mansion-house of the estate had fallen into the possession of a horde of rats and numerous insects, less alarming, perhaps, but capable in a quieter way of causing as much annoyance.

It was midwinter. The sun had sprung up, as he watched, into a dome of brightest blue. The air, sharp, clear, and dry, was as exhilarating as a plunge into a sea of clear, cold water. Such a morning filled one with confidence and sent all doubts flying away. Before him lay the small round pond that gave the place the name of 'The Plate.' With its clean-cut margin, unbroken by stone or brushwood, and reflecting with metallic lustre the white light of the morning, it

certainly was suggestive of a tin plate cast on the greensward. A few tumble-down buildings grouped round a *patio*, with a draw-well in the centre, a *corral* enclosed with a fence of rough posts supporting wires not one of which was drawn taut, overshadowed by a fair-sized willow-tree, now almost leafless, comprised his kingdom. Two rough-looking men, a young woman, and a baby made up the sum-total of his subjects.

Having made a survey, he turned his thoughts to the work of the day. First he must have breakfast. In his zeal, the night before, he had assured Hardie that anything would do for him; he would take the food the *peones* prepared for themselves. Nothing need be specially cooked for him.

'Yes,' Hardie had answered; 'feed with them, gossip with them, be their very good friend, and then expect them to take orders from you.'

'I see,' cried Dick hastily; 'it will be better to get the woman to cook and wait on me.'

'Arrange it as you will,' was the reply. 'Only be sure that you live like a white man.'

Dick had all his life been satisfied to live as his parents or schoolmasters arranged things for him; more recently, as the man he worked for ordered. Now he must be the one to plan and make laws for others to obey. Shouting to Don Pastor to come and speak to him, he, in as masterful a voice as he could assume, gave his orders, and explained that he intended that day to ride round the fences and inspect the wells. This was not a very easy task in a language far from familiar, and to a man much older than himself, and of a very formidable appearance. All went well. To his satisfaction, the man carried out his orders promptly and pleasantly. Don Pastor had, however, his own ideas.

'What does Don Diego mean,' said he to José, his fellow-*peon*, 'by sending a white-faced little boy to boss a man like me?'

José had a very wholesome fear of his patron, and was somewhat sick of hearing Pastor swearing at him and all other Englishmen, and answered, 'Don Diego is no ass; he always gets what he wants. He gives one man work, and orders another to go, without two words about it. No, no, *amigo*' (friend); 'there must be something in the lad, or he would not be sent here to suck *maté*, and sleep, and watch what is done.'

'*Bueno* [good]. He can wait. He gives his orders now; but soon he will take them. A soft-headed *gringo*, like Panchito; we will soon show him who is the best man here.'

Panchito, which may be translated into Frankie, was the lad Dick had seen at Las Tres Aromas playing the banjo and talking the worst of Spanish. The boy prided himself on being the familiar friend of the *peones*, who treated him with kindly contempt, openly disobeying his orders when no other Englishman was present, and easily learning from him all they wished to know of the patron's private affairs.

Following this first successful day, a week or two passed fairly well. The *peones* did their work with the usual good-humour and courtesy of the *gaucho*. This good-humour, it is true, was rather forced on Pastor's part; for he adopted it to encourage his youthful master to drop into familiar ways, hoping in course of time to make him his tool. Dick, however, in fear of Jim Hardie, stood very much on his dignity. He talked little with the men, except when they worked together, and spent his few spare hours of leisure in his own quarters. He found great interest in putting the place in order, and, after he had done that, in making what improvements he could. Hardie in every way encouraged him, letting him fetch materials and borrow tools from the larger *estancia*. A clever little terrier helped him to wage war against the rats; a course of hard scrubbing and a thorough cleansing in time freed the house from other pests. With his first month's pay he bought some gaily-striped *ponchos* to cover his bed and serve as rugs on the uneven floor. With the help of fresh paint, and a few pictures stuck on the walls, the room began to look less dreary; at the best it was inferior in every way to a labourer's cottage in England.

Many long, weary evenings were spent by Dick fighting against loneliness and depression. Happily for him, Mrs Hardie discovered that he was fond of books, and never let him say good-bye to her without inquiring if he had anything to read; she would lead him to the bookshelf and help him to choose something entertaining. On cold nights he would go to bed early, wrapped in every warm garment he possessed, with a candlestick of his own designing stuck in the wall above his head. With the heroes and heroines of fiction he spent many delightful hours. Sometimes he would fall asleep, to wake with a start when his book dropped from his hand with a thud on the floor, recalled from dreams of scenes more familiar than that bare, gloomy room. The moon shone coldly through the chinks of the corrugated iron roof; out in the night the owls and strange birds cried eerily, or the wind in wild fury swept across the plain. Then he would put his arm round the faithful Jerry, and delight to feel the dog's friendly nose on his cheek; forgetting his loneliness, he would soon be sound asleep, and waken in the best of spirits to the cheerful morning and the duties of the day.

ART AND LITERATURE IN THE SCHOOLROOM.



MR TOMLINSON, in his useful guide to Northumberland, tells us that a sweeter village than Ford could hardly be imagined outside of Arcadia; and most visitors will be inclined to agree with him. After the eye has taken in the vast outline of Ford Castle—where James IV. slept ere the ill-fated battle of Flodden, which took place on an adjoining ridge of the Cheviots—and sufficiently admired the trim and cosy red-tiled cottages, with their equally trim gardens, and the ornate fountain to the memory of the Marquis of Waterford, most likely the visitor will enter the village schoolroom. No one visiting Ford should go without viewing the interior walls, which have been beautifully decorated with water-colour paintings from the brush of Lady Waterford, in illustration of the lives of good children. This talented and benevolent lady passed away on 12th May 1891, in her seventy-third year, beloved by all; and the fragrance of her memory and good deeds will long linger in Ford, where her grave is adorned by a fine marble cross by G. F. Watts, who also painted her portrait.

Lady Waterford spent the leisure of twenty-two years in adorning the walls of Ford Schoolhouse with pictures of children, drawn from the Bible. The subjects range from Cain and Abel to St Paul and St John; the last picture, 'Saul at the Feet of Gamaliel,' being finished in 1883. With a genuine love for children, she showed a happy

genius in transferring the countenances of those around her to canvas; and even one of her own servants and the schoolmaster helped as models. One of her secular pictures, of which over three hundred were exhibited in London in 1892, was entitled 'The Sixth Standard.' Another of her pictures on exhibition at a different time being simply signed L. Waterford, a critic asked, 'Who is Mr Waterford, this new genius, reviving the glories of the Venetian school?'

Mr Holman Hunt has regretted that these pictures in Ford Schoolroom have been done in such perishable materials. The last time we saw them we fancied they were getting somewhat dingy. They were painted in water-colours, on prepared paper laid on canvas and stretched on frames, and executed in her ladyship's studio at the Castle. The same artist acknowledges that 'her art came from the exercise of a very beautiful mind, and from a very diligently—although somewhat unmethodically—trained faculty for design, her taste for colour being also both remarkable by natural endowment and by cultivation.' It was natural that, although Lady Waterford had practically retired from what is known as society after the sudden death of her husband in the hunting-field in 1859, the fame of the place and the attraction of this gifted lady should have drawn visitors and friends from far and near. The visitors' book kept at the schoolhouse has a record of many notabilities, including the

names of Mr Gladstone, Sir Edwin Landseer, Earl Grey, the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Duke of Buccleuch, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the Duchess of Teck, the Queen of the Netherlands (once a guest at the Castle), &c.

The third Marquis of Waterford first met Louisa Ann, daughter of Lord Stuart de Rothesay, at the Eglinton Tournament, where only the fact that she was an unmarried lady prevented her being crowned the Queen of Beauty. Eighteen years of happy wedded life came suddenly to an end by the accident to the Marquis; and ever afterwards, until her death, her hand and heart were occupied in philanthropic works; and what needlework is to many a lady, reading and painting were to Lady Waterford. She visited the sick and poor in all weathers, ministered to their temporal and spiritual necessities, and held mothers' meetings and Sunday and week-day classes. For more than thirty years she visited regularly a poor woman, long an invalid. Mr Neville has given a record of her activities and artistic work at Ford in his *Under a Border Tower*; while Mr Hare has a fuller biography in his *Two Noble Lives*.

The rector of Ford remarked at the opening of the schoolhouse that 'great stress is laid in the new rules of the Committee of Council on Education on reading, writing, and arithmetic in the instruction of our schools. They think that these are the branches of education most necessary for those who have to work for their living. They are indeed very necessary for making our way in the world; but they are not all or the chief things.' He then pointed to the illuminated examples of goodness enshrined in beautiful forms upon the walls, ever afterwards to be a source of inspiration to the children, and destined to be indelibly fixed in their memories. Many of the children passing through this school have done well in life in every way, and those who when children were models to Lady Waterford, men and women grown, are scattered to various parts of the world. What Lady Waterford did for Ford Schoolroom has been done for several buildings in Edinburgh by Mrs Traquair, notably for the Song-school of St Mary's Cathedral.

We do not know whether John Ruskin ever saw the pictures in Ford Schoolroom; but what Lady Waterford carried out with refined taste and nobility of purpose was publicly suggested by the great art-critic about 1883, in connection with a society of which he was president, Mr Matthew Arnold and Lord Leighton being also members. The object of the society was 'to bring within the reach of boys and girls in our Board and other schools such a measure of art-culture as is compatible with their age and studies.' A catalogue was suggested, with lists of prints, photographs, and etchings which the society was prepared to bring under the notice of schools, as well as a model collection of pictures of simple natural objects, such as birds and their nests, trees, and

scenes of rural life, of heroic adventure and historic interest. Thus the town child, with fewer opportunities than country-bred children, was to be made familiar with the common objects of the country.

This society is now known as the Art for Schools Association (29 Queen Square, London, W.C.), of which Mr Ruskin is still president; and since its foundation over forty thousand standard pictures have been sold through its agency. The catalogue embraces a list of four hundred photographs, engravings, etchings, and chromo-lithographs, from the works of old masters and living artists, as well as studies from nature of birds and beasts and flowers. These are supplied at a reduced rate to elementary and secondary schools.

The country child also requires attention, according to Miss Cobbe. She relates an incident which took place on her return after a lengthened absence to her country home, when she addressed a youth formerly under her tuition.

'Well, Andrew,' said Miss Cobbe, 'how much do you remember of all my lessons?'

'Ah, ma'am, never a word.'

'Oh Andrew, Andrew! and have you forgotten all about the sun, the moon, and stars, the day and night, and the seasons?'

Andrew scratched his head and replied, 'Oh no, ma'am,' he said. 'I do remember now. And you set them on the schoolroom table, and Mars was a red gooseberry, and I ate him.'

Ruskin reminds us that we have hitherto been contented to do our educational work surrounded by cheap furniture and bare walls, and supposed that boys learned best when they sat on hard forms and had nothing but blank plaster above and about them whereon to engage their spare attention. In his own forcible way, he says that 'the best study of all is the most beautiful, and that a quiet glade of a forest or the nook of a lake-shore is worth all the schoolrooms in Christendom when once you are past the multiplication table; but, be that as it may, there is no question at all but that a time ought to come in the life of a well-trained youth when he can sit at a writing-table without wanting to throw the ink-stand at his neighbour, and when, also, he will feel more capable of certain efforts of mind with beautiful and refined forms about him than with ugly ones. When that time comes he ought to be advanced into the decorated schools, and this advance ought to be one important and honourable epoch of his life.'

Ruskin is here doubtless writing from experience, as some of the most powerful educating influences of his life came from travelling at home and abroad, afterwards sketching and writing, the foundation being laid by the early driving excursions with his father in England and Scotland.

It is worthy of notice that the latest Scotch Code embraces a scheme of 'nature knowledge' whereby junior scholars shall acquire, 'by means

of observation and inquiry, a knowledge of common objects, natural phenomena, and the surroundings of the school.'

Mr T. C. Horsfell in 1884 drew attention to what the Committee of the Manchester Art Museum was prepared to do in lending to schools pictures of beautiful scenery, interesting buildings, and historical scenes, with engravings of flowers, trees, and animals. It was intended to continue the series so as to include sculpture and beautiful common pottery. Later Mr W. G. Page, of Boston, U.S.A., recommended historical portraits and scenes from history for grammar-schools, and the best products of the art of Greece and Rome for high schools. He advocated classification of subjects, as Greek, Roman, and Egyptian rooms, and one to illustrate English history.

From a recent report of the United States Commissioner of Education, who gives prominence to this subject, we learn that an attempt was made to decorate a schoolroom in Boston in 1870 with ten casts of antique sculpture and eleven busts, at a cost of about £300. This attempt in a girls' school was made as 'a simple but efficient means of introducing an æsthetic element into the educational system of the United States.' Some years later schools in Chicago, Cambridge, Newhaven, Brooklyn, Milton, Salem, and Quincy had been adorned with photographs, engravings, and casts. In one instance the walls of the schoolroom were tinted in a quiet grayish tone, forming a background upon which were hung engravings, photographs and prints of some of the most famous pictures of the world, and also portraits of statesmen, heroes, and authors. In one room were pictures of Venice; in another views of Rome and of Florence. Brooklyn School Report said that beautiful pictures and impressive statues in schools were distinctly an educational factor. We hear of the extravagances of modern School Boards; but what will the ratepayer think of this sentiment?—'When it comes to be understood that the schoolroom is to be made as pleasant and well furnished as the model home, then the school is likely to take the place it should as a social factor.' The silent beauty, we are further told, irradiating from such decoration would quicken and purify the taste of the scholar without at all encroaching upon school-time. In a catalogue of works of art suitable for decorating schools which was prepared for an exhibition at Brooklyn there were four hundred and twelve entries, including photographs, engravings, statuary, pottery, and etchings.

A law was passed in the State of New York in 1895 in order to provide additional facilities for free instruction in natural history, geography, and kindred subjects by means of pictorial representations and lectures. This has been done by the kind of lantern known as the stereopticon. The instrument is easily manipulated, and writing or drawing upon ground glass, done with a common lead-pencil, shows well. Regular lantern slides

can also be used without limit. A practical teacher says in the *School Journal*: 'A city can buy a thousand views at the price of the same number of intermediate geographies. The slides will, however, be practically intact when the books are worn out. For educational service, then, the slides are not so expensive as books.' The gain is said to be great, from preferring to words and symbols the thing itself. The outlines of stream and hill, with physical productions, have a better chance of being remembered. In the same way, panoramic views of history may be presented, and pictures may also be made a useful handmaid in the teaching of physiology, astronomy, and geology. The magic-lantern has also been found useful in many English schools, especially to illustrate the geography lesson.

We need say very little here about literature in the form of reading-books for the schoolroom, so amply and ably catered for by many rival publishers. From the horn-book of a past generation we have travelled a long way. Our school-books may be somewhat less solid than those of the past, but never were they more attractively set forth or better illustrated. Good literature and good pictures elevate the taste and cultivate and enrich the understanding of the pupil. Such a work, although scarcely a schoolbook, as Gardiner's *Student's History of England*, with its hundreds of excellent illustrations, would have been impossible a generation ago. With such perfect and suitable instruments of education as our elementary and advanced 'Readers,' in proper hands, surely all the reasonable and unreasonable demands of that imperious dictator, the Education Code, may be abundantly satisfied.

SOWING.

Sow thou thy seed of corn and wait awhile.
 See the snow falling and the ice-spray gleam
 Above its hiding place. Hear the wind scream
 And the wild tempest sweep o'er mile and mile
 Of sullen landscape. Watch the rain-cloud's vial
 Empty above it, and the fitful beam
 Of sunlight thwart the field, until a seam
 Of tender green shoot up to greet thy smile.
 And lo! God's miracle is wrought once more
 Of life from death—from loss, most wondrous gain:
 The corn-field glitters with its golden store
 On the same land where late the storm and rain
 Beat on the bare, brown earth. Thy sowing o'er,
 Thine but to wait and pray lest faith should wane!

Sow thou thy seed of love, O heart, and wait.
 Though it lie hidden—though thy doubts and fears
 Whisper to thee 'tis lost, and thy sad tears
 Fall on the ice-bound soil of bitter fate—
 Surely the seed will live: Spring sets the gate
 Of life wide open. See! though hid for years,
 Love seeks the light of love—its tender spears
 Shall gladden thy sad eyes at last, though late:
 E'en but the blade perchance and not the bloom.
 Ofttimes God seeth that Love's flower rare
 Hath no perfection this side of the tomb,
 But needeth for its growth the purer air
 Of His sweet Paradise: after earth's gloom
 Love hath its blossoming—not here, but There!

KATE MELLERSE.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

NEXT TO GODLINESS.

By JOHN FOSTER FRASER, Author of *Round the World on a Wheel*, &c.

NEXT to being scrupulously clean, it is certainly a delight to be unscrupulously dirty. I know, because I've tried both. I am struggling back into the intricacies of civilisation—bathing, shaving, putting on clean shirts. During the two years I was roaming with my bicycle through seventeen countries, breaking records, and nearly breaking my neck, cycling round the world, it was not always so. I confess, but with no glee, there were times when I did not have a decent wash for a month; there were times when I certainly did not have a wash at all for a week—day in and day out I went unwashed, unshaven, and uncombed; and once, during the time I crossed China, I never let a razor touch my chin for five solid months. But my glory, the one thing of which I am really proud, is that for over two years I never climbed into the case-armour of a stiff shirt, and never had a starched collar round my neck. That is something I will look back upon when I am old and lack teeth.

I believe it was an Italian who made the discovery that the English were a dirty race, because they washed all over every morning. Within the last five years I've been in twenty-nine, or maybe it is thirty, different countries; and the only man on earth who, I found, washed himself more than the Englishman in England was the Englishman in India. He lives in his tub, smokes in it, reads books in it, and if it was not necessary for him occasionally to come out and dress, eat, play polo, and make love, I verily believe that in the next generation he would be web-footed.

In Russia they dole water out to you in an exasperating and niggardly way. Should you be so startlingly audacious as to want a wash all over, you must pay a rouble for the luxury; and, as I am a poor man, I frequently went without a bath, and saved my rouble. And there is no compromising matters, as I have known it done

in seaside lodgings. There is no sticking the basin on the floor, and sponging yourself down, and making a general mess of the room; for they do not give you ewers or basins in Russia. Over the washstand you often find a big brass funnel kind of arrangement, and by pushing up a button that plugs the pipe the water trickles out. It is disagreeable. If you are in a hurry to wash your hands for lunch, the confounded thing runs all down your shirt-sleeves and makes a pool in the elbow. Altogether you are provoked to a frenzy of rage. In the very best hotels, however, I have found an even more vicious contrivance. In appearance it is a cross between a ship's cabin washstand and an old-fashioned hurdy-gurdy. An innocent but ornamental little brass pipe sticks out, nose upwards. You do not know how the water is extracted until you catch sight of a pedal on the ground. You press this with your foot. You are hazy whether it is a hard pedal or a soft pedal, or how much water there is; whether the squirt is vigorous or weak, or, indeed, whether there is any water at all. Anyway, if you are a novice you plant your foot down firmly. At once you feel that you are being played upon by a fire-hose. In your spluttering and cursing you forget to move your foot, and when you duck your head, and so remove resistance, the spray gushes all over the bedroom like a whirligig exhibition fountain. Or you approach the thing gingerly, and press the pedal gently, watching the spout all the time with blinking eyes, in the way you edge a cork out of a champagne bottle. Then, to your disgust, you find there's something wrong with the workings, or that there is no water in the can to be squirted out. Russians certainly do not give you much to wash in, but they provide as much entertainment as can reasonably be expected at the price.

Yet if Russia disappoints, there should be something wonderful in scented Arabia, and in Persia with its peach bowers, and Turkey with its luxuriant delights. I have been in all these

countries. But whether it is my liver or my ancestry that are to blame, or my utter lack of poetic sentiment, I do not know; anyway, I have never got enthusiastic over an Eastern bath. A Turkish bath such as you have in Turkey is as like to the Turkish bath you have in London as a doss-house is to the Hotel Cecil. There is only one man I have a grudge against; and he is dead. They called him Thomas Moore, and he wrote a poem entitled *Lalla Rookh*. *Lalla Rookh* has done more harm to a credulous, untravelled public than all the high-falutin guide-books that were ever written. The baths are by no means poetical. They are clammy. The pure white marble is often impure whitewash. True, you get a bit of marble, frequently cracked, to sprawl on, but there are cockroaches about, and the bathman is probably sore-eyed.

I am one of the few infidels who have ever been in a Persian harem. It was the harem of the governor of a great city; but he had gone holiday-making into the hills with his ladies, and I was therefore able to go where otherwise I would have lost my head if I had even peeped. A little fantastic, certainly; but, oh! so tawdry, garish, and inartistic! The bath-chambers were vault-like, and the alabaster slabs seemed to have been fitted by a man with oblique eyes. There ought to have been an odour of scented voluptuousness about it all. There was only an odour of stale soapsuds.

The Persian, like other Mohammedans, has a curious belief that running water is pure. That is why he never washes in a basin, but always in a stream. He never lets the water trickle from the hand towards the elbow. He keeps his fingers hanging over the water, and laves the water on his arm, so it runs towards the hand. And, as running water is pure, you can every day see dozens of women doing the week's washing in the town stream; while, a few yards lower down the stream, jars of water are being drawn for drinking and cooking purposes.

It is a great blessing that in some religions cleanliness is, after all, really next to godliness. It's a splendid combination of sanitation and sanctimoniousness that makes the Hindus and the Buddhists immerse themselves once a day. An uncleanly Oriental is very unclean. Even a cleanly one, what with the oil he puts on his raven hair and the grease with which he occasionally smears his body, runs it pretty close in the matter of offending Western nostrils when the weather happens to be torrid. The grandest sight of soul-saving ablutions is at Benares, on the banks of the Ganges, when the entire Hindu population come down to bathe in the sacred river. They stand to the waist in the water, sometimes motionless, watching the glint of the sun on the ripples, and maybe plunge and splash in the holy stream. Bathing is part of their religion, and they bathe with the same steady

ardour as a Scotch elder of the Kirk persists in putting on his 'blacks' on the Sabbath morning. Neither the bathing nor the 'blacks' exactly constitute religion in themselves; but where would be religion in either the Scot or the Hindu without them?

The Buddhists make washing part of the means of progression toward the shadowy region of Nirvana. Many an evening on the banks of the Irawadi, in far-off Upper Burma, I have watched the flippant-hearted Burmese floundering and tumbling and laughing and screeching as they joyed in the merry carnival. The Burmese are a bright, clean-bodied, gaudily-garbed race, except that they will saturate their hair with a vile-odoured oily slime. They bathe twice a day in the Irawadi from pure love of bathing. The day may have been oppressive and sultry. At sundown the entire populations of the riparian hamlets come to the bank and spend a merry hour. And, truly, a charming memory in my world-wanderings is the recollection of many a time watching a group of Burmese maidens bathe. There is no blush on my cheek just now as I write that I specially made it a point most evenings to watch them. Soft and hazel-brown of skin they all are; plump and sturdy-limbed; their eyes lustrous and mischievous, and a pretty winsomeness of grace about their manner of walking; they are as frolicsome as lambs, and have about as much care for the morrow. There was always something so Eden-like in their conduct that I admit to being charmed. Their playful screams as they bobbed in the water, the little pranks of jokes they practised on one another, and, above all, the coyish innocence that always marked their behaviour made the spectacle of their evening ablutions very near fairy-like. The Burmese girl, when she enters the water, wears a long wide-folded skirt that reaches under her shoulders and across her bosom, and is fastened by a twist of the cloth doubled in by her side. On the bank she leaves another skirt, dry. When her half-hour of fun is over she steps out in her dripping garment. No towel is used. She opens the dry skirt, throws it over her head, and then, by a movement of the body, the wet gown drops to the ground as the other one slips in its place. It is all done quickly, neatly, modestly, while all the time the girl is smiling with a Garden-of-Eden smile.

But the Chinese—ah, those Chinese! I do not know all the corners of the earth, to be sure. But for inborn love of dirt that heathen Chinese would be hard to beat. A Chinaman never looks so dirty as when he is trying to clean himself. He gets a little wooden tub, rather like a small salt-butter keg sawn down, and in this is poured half-a-pint of scalding-hot water. The tub is carried outside, and placed on the ground. Then the Chinaman produces a nasty, mousy-tinted piece of cloth—much like old dish-cloths I have

seen on straying into my back-kitchen—and he drops it in the hot water. He squats down by the side of the tub, and, after rinsing and squeezing the rag, proceeds to rub the hot, clammy thing all over his face and his shaven head and his hands. No towel is used for drying purposes. That occasional lick with the hot dish-cloth is about all the washing the average Celestial indulges in. At the close of a high-class Chinese dinner steaming cloths are always brought round, so that the guests may refresh themselves and get awakened up after their gormandising by a rubbing of their hands and faces.

And then there are the Japanese. Truly, the adjoining peoples of the East have as much variety of character as the residents in a suburban row of houses. While the Chinese don't like water at all, the Japanese have a mania for it, especially boiling hot. Every inn has a big tub perpetually on the boil. That tub is common property. You go into the bathroom, undress, throw a ladle of hot water over you, lather yourself with soap, throw more hot water over you till all the soap is removed, and then you climb

into the bath, and sit there for an hour, or two hours if you like, or until somebody else wants to come in. It is hardly in accordance with English ideas to get into a bath where half-a-dozen people have been before you; but the Japanese think nothing of it. I always made diligent inquiry so that I might be the first user of the bath that day.

And here is a point that English folks might learn from the Japanese. The reason we are inclined, in this country, to catch cold after taking a hot bath in the daytime is that we do not take it hot enough. If only you have the water as near boiling-point as possible, there is no fear of you getting cold afterwards. The Japanese revel in these hot tubs. They take them three and four times a day. In some districts of Japan, I believe, the people are amphibious; for months at a time they live practically in the water. A Japanese once called upon me, and he apologised, at the outset of our conversation, for being so unmannerly and dirty, for he had only had time to take two hot baths that day.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XX.



HAD a bombshell fallen through the skylight of the saloon and settled itself in the centre of the table, it could scarcely have caused greater consternation than did Maas's simple remark. Browne felt that his face was visibly paling, and that guilt must be written on every inch of it. As for Jimmy, his mouth opened and shut like that of an expiring fish. He could scarcely believe he had heard aright. He had certainly once in an idle moment joked in the fashion Maas had attributed to him; but what had induced the latter to remember and to bring it up now, of all times, when their nerves were so tightly stretched? Maas's face, however, was all innocence. He seemed not to have noticed the consternation he had caused, but ate his caviare with the air of a man who had said something worthy, the point of which had fallen a trifle flat. It was not until the meal was over and they had ascended to the deck once more that Browne found an opportunity of having a few words with Jimmy.

'What on earth did he mean by that?' he asked. 'Do you think he can have heard anything? Or do you think he only suspects?'

'Neither,' said Jimmy. 'I'll tell you what I think it was; it was a perfectly simple remark, which by sheer ill-luck just happened to touch us in the wrong place. It was, as the shooters say, an unintentional bull's-eye. But, by Jove!

I must confess that it made me feel pretty bad at the moment.'

'Then you think we need not attach any importance to it?'

'I'm quite sure we need not,' his friend replied. 'Look at it in this way: If the man had known anything he most certainly would not have said anything about it. If we had suspected him of knowing our secret, and had put ourselves out in order to bring him to the point, and he had kept silence, then we might have thought otherwise; as it is, I am positive we need not be afraid.'

As if to reassure them, Maas said nothing further on the subject. He was full of good-humour, absorbed the sunshine like a Neapolitan, and seemed to enjoy every hour he lived. He also did his best to make the others do likewise. He talked upon every conceivable subject, and did not feel in the least annoyed when the others appeared occupied. They passed Plymouth soon after twelve next day, and said good-bye to Old England shortly afterwards. How little those on board guessed what was to happen before they could see her shores again! Five days later they were at Gibraltar, anchored in the harbour beneath the shadow of the batteries. Though he grudged every minute, and though he had seen the Rock a dozen times before, Browne accompanied them ashore, explored the Galleries, and lunched at the Officers' Mess.

'What rum beggars we are, to be sure!' said

young Bramthwaite, of the 43d Midlandshire, to Browne as they lit their cigars afterwards. 'Here are you, posting off for the East, and as anxious as you can be to turn your back on Old England; while I, poor beggar, am quartered here, and am longing to get home with all my might and main. Do you think, if I had your chance, I would go abroad? Not I.'

'Circumstances alter cases,' returned Browne. 'If you were in my place you would want to be out of England. You should just have seen London as we left. Fogs, sleet, snow, drizzle, day after day, while here you are wrapped in continual sunshine. I don't see that you have much to grumble at.'

'Don't you?' said his friend. 'Well, I do. Let us take my own case again. I am just up from a baddish attack of Rock-fever. I feel as weak as a cat—not fit for anything. And what good does it do me? I don't even have the luck to be properly ill, so that I could compel them to invalid me. And, to make matters worse, my brother writes that they are having the most ripping hunting in the shires; from his letters I gather that the pheasants have never been better; and, with it all, here I am, like the Johnny in the heathen mythology, chained to this rock, and unable to get away.'

Browne consoled him to the best of his ability, and shortly afterwards collected his party and returned to the yacht. The work of coaling was completed, and Captain Mason, who resembled a badly-blackened Christy Minstrel, was ready to start as soon as his owner desired. Browne, nothing loath, gave the order, and accordingly they steamed out of the harbour, past the Rock, and were in blue seas once more. They would not touch anywhere again until they reached Port Saïd.

That night on deck Browne was lamenting the fact that the yacht did not travel faster than she did.

'My dear fellow,' said Maas, 'what a hurry you are in, to be sure! Why, this is simply delightful. What more could you wish for? You have a beautiful vessel, your cook is a genius, and your wines are perfect. If I had your money, do you know what I would do? I would sail up and down the Mediterranean at this time of the year for months on end.'

'I don't think you would,' said Browne. 'In the meantime, what I want is to get to Japan.'

'I presume your *fiancée* is to meet you there?' said Maas. 'I can quite understand your haste now.'

There was a silence for a few moments, and then Maas added, as if the idea had just struck him: 'By the way, you have never told me her name.'

'Her name is Petrovitch,' said Browne softly, as if the name were too precious to be breathed

aloud. 'I do not think you have ever met her.'

'Now I come to think of it, I believe I have,' Maas replied. 'At least, I have not met her personally, but I have met some one who knows her fairly well.'

'Indeed!' said Browne, in some astonishment. 'And who might that some one be?'

'You need not be jealous, my dear fellow,' Maas replied. 'My friend was a lady, a Miss Corniquet, a French artist. Miss Petrovitch, I believe, exhibited in the Salon last year, and they met shortly afterwards. I remember that she informed me that the young lady in question showed remarkable talent. I am sure, Browne, I congratulate you heartily.'

'Many thanks,' said the other; and so the matter dropped for the time being.

Port Saïd and the work of coaling being things of the past, they proceeded through the Suez Canal and down the Red Sea; coaled once more at Aden, and later on at Colombo. By the time they reached Singapore, Browne's impatience could scarcely be controlled. With every day an increased nervousness came over him. At last they were only a few hours' steam from Hong-kong. It was there that Browne was to interview the famous Johann Schmidt, of whom Herr Sauber had spoken to him in Paris. What the result of that interview would be he could only conjecture. He wanted to get it over in order that he might have his plans cut and dried by the time they reached Japan, where Katherine and Madame Bernstein must now be. If all went well, he would soon join them there.

At ten o'clock on a lovely morning they entered the Ly-ee-moon Pass, steamed past Green Island, and at length came in sight of the crowded harbour of Victoria. Once at anchor, the steam-launch was slung overboard and brought alongside, Browne and his friends took their places in her, and she forthwith steamed ashore. None of the men had seen the wonderful city they were now visiting before, so that all its marvels, its wealth, and its extraordinary mixture of races were new to them. Though they had encountered him in his American hybrid condition, it was the first time they had been brought into actual contact with their marvellous Yellow Brother, who in Hong-kong may be seen in all the glory of his dirt and sumptuousness. Reaching the Praya, they disembarked, and ascended the steps. Accosting an English inspector of police whom they met, they inquired in what direction they should proceed in order to reach the Club. He pointed out the way, and they accordingly set off in search of it. Turning into the Queen's Road, they made their way along it until they reached the place in question. Browne had a letter of introduction to one of the members, given to him in London, and he was anxious to present it to him in order to learn something, if possible, of

Johann Schmidt before going in search of him. Leaving his two friends outside, he entered the Club and inquired for the gentleman in question. The servant who received him informed him that the member was not at the time in the building.

'Can you tell me his address?' said Browne. 'It's just possible I may find him at his office.'

The man furnished him with what he wanted, and showed him how he could reach it. Rejoining his companions, Browne proceeded down the street, passed the Law Courts, and went in the direction of the Barracks. At last he reached the block of buildings of which he was in search. The name of the man he wanted was to be seen on a brass plate upon the door. He entered, and accosting a white-clad Englishman in an enormous solar topee, whom he found there, inquired if he could tell whether his friend was at home.

'I believe he is,' the man replied. 'At any rate, if you will wait a moment I'll soon find out.' Leaving them, he departed down the passage, to presently return with the information that the person they wanted to see was in his office.

Footo and Maas returned to the street, while Browne entered a cool and airy room at the farther end of the passage. Here, seated at an office-table, was another white-clad Englishman. He had a cigar in his mouth, and possessed a handsome face and a close-cropped beard.

'Mr —?' said Browne, after he had thanked his conductor for his courtesy.

'That is my name,' the gentleman replied. 'What can I have the pleasure of doing for you?'

'I have a letter of introduction to you,' said Browne, producing the document in question from his pocket, and handing it across the table. 'I believe we are common friends of George Pellister?'

'George Pellister!' cried the man. 'I should rather think so; when I was home three years ago he was awfully kind to me. So you are a friend of his? Pray forgive my not having come out to greet you. Come and sit down. How long have you been in the island?'

'Only an hour and a half,' Browne replied.

'An hour and a half!' the other repeated. 'I had no idea there was an English mail-boat in. The P. & O. only left yesterday.'

'I didn't come in a mail-boat,' said Browne. 'I've got my own tub. We left London on the 7th of last month.'

The man behind the table opened his eyes in surprise. Gentlemen who travelled as far as Hong-kong in their own steam-yachts were few and far between, and had to be treated with proper respect. He accordingly found an opportunity of opening the letter of introduction. Had Browne been watching his face he would have seen the expression of astonishment that spread over it as he realised that

his visitor was no less than the fabulously wealthy John Grantham Browne, of whose doings in the social and sporting world he had so often read.

'I am very glad indeed that you have called on me,' he said, after he had somewhat recovered from his astonishment. 'While you are here you must let me do the honours of Hong-kong, such as they are. Of course I can put you up at the Club, if that's any use to you, and show you all there is to be seen, though I fear it will bore you fearfully after London. How long are you staying?'

'Well,' said Browne, 'I'm afraid I shall not be able to remain very long on the outward voyage. I should not very have called here at all but that I had some rather important business to transact. I'm on my way to Japan.'

'Indeed!' said the other. 'Well, I shall be only too happy if you will let me help you in any way I can.'

'It's not a very big matter,' said Browne. 'All I want to know is the address of a certain person living in Hong-kong whose name is Schmidt—Johann Schmidt.'

'Johann Schmidt?' said the other. 'I am not quite certain that I know this particular one; there are so many of that name here, and I dare say a large proportion of them are Johanns. However, I will send some one to find out; and if you will take tiffin with me at the Club, my clerks shall make inquiries while we are doing so.'

Browne thereupon explained that he had two friends travelling with him, with the result that the other replied that he would only be too happy if they would join the party. They accordingly adjourned, and, picking up Maas and Footo in the street, proceeded to the Club. Tiffin was almost at an end, when a servant entered and placed a card beside their host's plate. He glanced at it, and, turning to Brown, he pushed it towards him.

'If I'm not mistaken, that is the man you want,' he said. 'I think it only fair to tell you that I know the fellow, and he is rather an extraordinary character. Between ourselves, he does not bear any too good a reputation.'

'Oh, that doesn't matter to me in the least,' said Browne. 'My business with him is purely of a commercial nature.'

After that no more was said on the subject, and when they rose from the table Browne proposed that he should go in search of the man in question. 'I am anxious, if possible, to leave Hong-kong at daybreak to-morrow morning,' he said; and added, by way of explanation, 'I am due in Japan, and have no time to spare.'

'I am sorry to hear that,' said the other. 'I had hoped you would stay longer. However, while you are away, your friends had better remain with me. I will do my best to amuse them.'

Browne thereupon rose to take leave. His host accompanied him to the street, and, having put

him in a *rickshá*, told the coolie where he was to take him.

'I am exceedingly obliged to you for your kindness,' said Browne as he shook hands. 'Will you not let me return it by asking you to dine with us on board my boat to-night? She is the *Lotus Blossom*. I don't suppose you will have much difficulty in finding her.'

'I shall be delighted,' said the other. 'At what time do you dine?'

'At half-past seven,' said Browne.

'*Au revoir*, then, until half-past seven.'

They waved hands to each other, and Browne laid himself back in the *rickshá*, mumbling as he did so, 'Now for our friend Johann Schmidt.'

THE TELEPHONE.



WENTY years ago the telephone was pronounced a 'scientific toy.' The other day the president of the Institution of Civil Engineers, in his presidential address, stated that there were upwards of one hundred and fifty thousand telephones in use in the United Kingdom; that speech is now practically possible between any two post-offices therein; that many important towns in England and in France are *en rapport*; and that it is theoretically possible to talk with any capital in Europe. It was stated, too, that it is practically possible for every house in the United Kingdom to speak to every other house—a prospect so appalling to the average British householder that it may be hoped that this is rather the dream of the sanguine scientist than a possibility to be contemplated by the sane and sensible citizen!

Need it be said that the telephone, like the telegraph, is the invention of a Scotsman—Mr Alexander Graham Bell, son of the late Alexander Melville Bell, whom the writer well remembers as a professor of elocution in Edinburgh something like half-a-century ago? Who shall say that Graham Bell's knowledge of the 'art of speaking,' derived from his father, did not lead up to the invention of the telephone, which is a combination of Greek words designed to mean sound, just as telegraph is 'far writing' or 'far writer'? Before Mr Bell left Edinburgh for America he used to amuse himself by 'speaking' along a thread from one end of the room to the other—not a bad substitute for a telephone over a short distance.

Inventions are generally crude to begin with. It was emphatically so with the telegraph, the first theoretical system requiring a separate wire for each letter of the alphabet, and Cooke and Wheatstone's original apparatus requiring five wires. But the telephone came wonderfully perfect from the hands of Graham Bell, the receiving or listening portion having hardly been improved at all, except that it can be fitted on the head and applied to each ear, thus leaving the hands free to write down any message requiring record. The transmitting or speaking portion, however, has been greatly improved, the first step in this direction having been the introduction of the Gower-

Bell transmitter, which, in its turn, was superseded by the improvements of Elisha Gray, Edison, and Hughes. The latter, one of the most ingenious, and withal most modest, of our inventors, devised the microphone, the application of which to the telephone has gone a long way towards securing perfection in that apparatus. There is an amusing story told how Professor Hughes, when engaged on the microphone, being anxious to record the 'tramp of the fly,' could not get flies enough in the winter to experiment with, and how he sent to a neighbouring confectioner to help him in his difficulty! Hughes was not the man to be balked, his patience being only equalled by his modesty. But with increased sensitiveness in the apparatus came increased difficulty in resisting outside influences, and in working the telephone on the ordinary telegraph wire. An 'earth return,' which is good enough for the telegraph, is not good enough for the telephone; and hence the many troubles of the early days, and, indeed, some of the troubles of to-day. A 'noisy' telephone is no use at all; and what is known as the 'fried-fish sound' is fatal to intelligible communication. Then, 'foreign' sounds are equally distracting, as when you get, in answer to a question as to the health of a friend, an inquiry as to your lowest quotation for steam coals, or an offer of steel rails at so much per ton. You are lucky indeed if you get nothing more disconcerting than this, for the telephone is an admirable transmitter of 'strong language;' and frequently the wrath of one subscriber who fails to get connected with the number asked for is poured into the unwilling and astonished ear of another, who may be struggling for connection in the opposite direction.

Most of the early difficulties of the telephone were due to this cause and to the use of overhead instead of underground wires. The metallic circuit, or 'twin-wire' system, was the only remedy; but, for obvious reasons, this could only be adopted gradually, and mostly on new lines. The displacement of one system, and its replacement by a more costly one, involved questions of finance which the struggling companies of the early days could not face with indifference; and for a long time the public had to be satisfied with a more or less inefficient and irritating

system. Nevertheless, the business continued to increase, and it soon became necessary to consider how far it was likely to interfere with the Postmaster-General's monopoly in regard to the transmission of telegrams within the United Kingdom. In 1878 an Act was passed which decided that the term 'telegraph' shall, in addition to the meaning assigned to it by the Telegraph Act of 1869, include any apparatus for the transmission of messages or other communications with the aid of electricity, magnetism, or any other like agency. Then followed, as a necessary corollary, the proceedings instituted in 1880, which resulted in the Pollock-Stephens judgment, in which it was held that 'the telephone is a telegraph within the meaning of the Act, and that conversations held (for payment) through the telephone are infringements of the Postmaster-General's exclusive privilege.' No fault could be found with the action of the Post-Office in the matter, seeing that it was bound to assert the legal rights held by it in trust from, and on behalf of, the nation. The pity is that it did not at once enter into the fruits of victory, and take over the telephone business, as it had a few years previously taken over that of the telegraph. Instead, it decided to grant licenses, on royalty, to the telephone companies, of which several have existed during the past eighteen years, each in its turn to be swallowed up by some competitor, and all, eventually, to be embraced in the octopus-like arms of the National Telephone Company.

The poor telephone has had a thoroughly bad time since its introduction into this country; and if it could think as well as speak, it would have many bitter things to say of its so-called 'friends,' from whom it is a thousand pities it was not 'saved' at the outset of its career. Mr Preece, in his presidential address at the Institution of Civil Engineers in November last, said: 'The progress of the use of the telephone in Great Britain has been checked by financial complications. It fell into the hands of the company promoter; it has remained the shuttlecock of the Stock Exchange. It is the function of the Postmaster-General to work for the public every system of intercommunication of thought which affects the interests of the whole nation. Telephoning is an imperial business, like the post and the telegraph; it ought to be in the hands of the State. The public and the press have frequently kicked violently against the present régime. Committees of parliament have sat and deliberated upon the question, and the report of the last committee is now under consideration. Two causes exist to impede the desirable absorption: the fear of being "done" by watered and inflated capital, and the assumed bad bargain made in absorbing the telegraphs in 1869. The former is a mere bugbear. The public does not want to purchase stock; it wants to acquire a plant and business which can be easily and fairly valued. The latter is a gross fallacy; the business

of the telegraph companies—practically an unlimited monopoly—was purchased on absolutely fair terms—namely, twenty years' purchase of the net profits. . . . If a syndicate desired now to repurchase the business and acquire the plant they would have to find a capital of over *thirty millions sterling*.'

Naturally there has been much capital wasted in telephonic enterprise, and overlapping systems now merged into one have conducted neither to economy nor efficiency. It is with the telephone just as it was with the telegraph before its acquisition by the State—class interests have been studied rather than the interests of the community at large; and England has been left behind by other countries, notably by little Switzerland and even by Sweden. The telegraph companies boasted thirty years ago that there was no case for acquisition by the State, as their systems were almost exclusively used by well-to-do people, Stock Exchange men, and the like, and ridiculed the idea of the telegraph being extended to every village post-office as chimerical in the extreme. The telephone does not exactly go that length; but its system of subscription implies almost as much, because it charges the private individual nearly as much for an occasional 'talk' as it does the City man, who may have his mouth or his ear at the end of the wire all day long. A system of 'tolls,' as in Switzerland, is much desiderated—that is, a system whereby you pay for just as much as you get, and no more. No doubt this would involve a kind of account-keeping and lead to expense; but there must be ingenuity enough in the world to minimise this, and to render it almost imperceptible in individual transactions.

Until comparatively recently the Telephone Company owned not only the local, or exchange, system, but the trunk service as well. The Post-Office now owns and works the latter, with the result that it is the most extensive in Europe; while the exchange service, which is almost wholly in the hands of the company, and chiefly confined to 'subscribers,' is much behind that of some Continental countries. Within the London telephone area, containing a population of over six million persons, there are only two hundred and thirty-seven call-offices open to non-subscribers for the transmission of messages; while in Stockholm there are seven hundred for a population of only a quarter of a million. Probably there are local conditions which would tend to modify this statement so far as Stockholm is concerned, and possibly the service is carried on under conditions which are more or less peculiar to Continental countries. One expert witness, indeed, before the recent select committee pointed out that the Stockholm telephone area embraces a large tract of country extending to a radius of forty-two miles around the town, and covering an area of something like one thousand two hundred square miles. Probably the population is not

great outside Stockholm itself; but it is only fair to make some allowance for the exceptional area in proportioning the telephonic facilities of the Swedish capital to its population. Again, it was stated that in Sweden the subscriber to the telephone is called upon to find part of the capital out of which the system is provided—that is, he has to pay a sort of ‘entrance fee,’ which practically amounts to the cost of the apparatus, leaving only the cost of constructing the line to be otherwise provided for. Still, in Sweden the cost of the service is very low, being only something like £4, 10s. as compared with £17 in London. This is brought about by the tremendous competition between the State and the company, the result being that both systems are worked at a heavy loss. In Germany, where the system is entirely in the hands of the Government, the rate is uniformly £7, 10s.; but here again the service is said to be carried on at a loss. Nor is it a good service, for it is entirely on the single-wire system; and so much inconvenience is experienced in Berlin from this circumstance that the authorities contemplate introducing the ‘metallic circuit’ everywhere at a very large cost. It is only in Hamburg, Berlin, and Cologne that telephonic development has reached any very marked degree in Germany. Their trunk system will not compare for a moment with ours, England having something over nine hundred trunk services now at work, while Germany has something under six hundred. Still, the fact remains that, while Berlin, with little more than a million and a half of population, has over thirty-six thousand telephones, London, with its four millions and a half, has less than twenty-six thousand; and, again, Hamburg, with a trifle over half a million inhabitants, has thirteen thousand five hundred telephones; while Liverpool, with eight hundred thousand people, has only about eleven thousand. Cologne, again, is phenomenally developed in the matter of telephonic facilities, there being one telephone to every thirty-six of the population—a proportion which speaks badly for the restfulness of the ‘City of Smells.’

Throughout the whole of Switzerland the number of telephones per head of the population is about one per hundred; but, on the other hand, in the large towns, where the exchanges are very fully developed, the number increases to such an extent that in Geneva it is one in twenty-three, in Lucerne one in twenty-four, in Bâle one in twenty-nine, in Berne one in twenty-seven, and so on in numerous other instances. The rates in Switzerland are partly by subscription and partly by toll—the subscription ranging from £4 for the first year to £1, 12s. for the third and subsequent years, and the toll being levied on every separate ‘talk,’ or conversation. They have carried the system so far in Switzerland that they have what are called Communal Parish Call-Offices, and these sometimes develop into sub-exchanges, from

which telegrams and ‘phonograms’ are delivered, the latter being a sort of express letter, of which the contents are telegraphed or telephoned. It is extraordinary to what an extent the telephone has been developed in quite small countries and states; such, for instance, as the Grand-Duchy of Luxemburg, in Finland, in Norway, and even in Jutland. In some of these even the villages of two hundred or four hundred inhabitants have their exchange, while nearly all have their call-office or other telephonic convenience. In Jutland the service is carried out by small local companies as a rule, the maximum rate being £4, 3s. 4d. per annum, and the minimum £2, 10s. per annum. In neighbouring Schleswig-Holstein, where the service is carried on by the German Government, the German uniform rate of £7, 10s. is charged; so that there must be a leakage somewhere if the local companies pay, seeing that it has been stated that the German system does not pay. On the whole, it is probable that the Swiss system is the most perfect and most widely extended; but here again there is a strong suspicion that it is carried on at a loss, although it is very difficult to get at the actual facts of the case. The matter is important, however, as bearing on the comparison with the English system, as it is pretty certain that a service which did not pay its way would not be tolerated in this country.

It would be idle to expect that the telephone will greatly increase in this country under existing conditions. It is in the hands of an irresponsible monopoly, whose main object is dividends, and the sword of Damocles, in the shape of an expired license, will descend upon it in a dozen years from now. It is probable, indeed, that after five years from now the company will cease from making any further extension of their system, taking advantage of the remaining seven years of their license to try and get back their capital, or some portion of it. The chairman, who is a very old parliamentary committee hand, said as much before the committee, and the committee naturally expressed its surprise at such a prospect; and no wonder, seeing that seven years’ stagnation would mean retrogression, and something worse. But this is not likely to happen, for the committee recommends not only competition by the Post-Office against its own licensee, but by the local authorities under a license from the Government. The chairman of the Telephone Company professes not to be greatly alarmed at the prospect of such competition; and no doubt he has the important point of possession on his side. Local authorities, even assuming that they have the power to work telephones, would be under the same rule as to termination of license as the company, and they will probably be slow to expend the ratepayers’ money on an undertaking which they may be compelled to relinquish in a dozen years or so. Besides, competition in telephoning is not an un-

mixed blessing, two or more systems in a given area being likely to lead to a rather more chaotic state of things than that existing at present. A multiplication of wires alone is a great evil, from a physical as well as an electrical point of view; and a want of uniformity of system is calculated to produce almost as great inconveniences as competition is designed to remedy. Municipal telephones would necessarily be limited to municipal areas, but these are not always, if ever, coincident with telephone areas; so that Edinburgh and Leith, for instance, as well as Manchester and Salford, Liverpool and Birkenhead, would have to be worked separately, although for commercial purposes they are one and the same town. On the whole, there seems only one way to secure efficiency, economy, and uniformity, and that is for the Post-Office to take over the existing system, or to provide a system of its own, to be eventually linked on to the telegraph system, of which it is naturally and necessarily a part. Meanwhile a Bill has been prepared by Mr Hanbury and the Chancellor of the Exchequer which proposes to enact that further telephonic communication be provided by the Post-Office, which will thus enter into competition with the Telephone Company. The provision was proposed to be carried out in part by the Post-Office and in part by municipalities of 50,000 inhabitants that might apply for licenses.

The considerations dealt with so far have been of a purely commercial or business character, the writer not being at all clear that an increase of the telephone service is calculated to improve the amenities of social life. There are some who consider that life would not be worth living unless you can call the policeman, the doctor, the cabman,

the fireman, the lawyer without leaving your arm-chair. But the mere possession of a telephone suggests wants which would otherwise not be felt in ordinary social life; and it is in evidence that the subscription system, where you can talk as much as you like, has led even keen business men to spend more time at the wire than is good for them or for their correspondents. The use of the telephone gives little room for reflection, it does not improve the temper, and it engenders a feverishness in the ordinary concerns of life which does not make for domestic happiness and comfort. We can imagine, indeed, how a telephone between a man's residence and his place of business might be the cause of misunderstanding, to say the least; and how, if he were switched on to the house of his next-door neighbour by mistake, serious results might ensue. It may be convenient to order the fish for dinner without seeing it; but in that case you must trust to the fishmonger's idea of 'freshness,' and you must not be surprised if you get salmon when you ordered soles, or *vice versa*. It is possible to make life so easy that you do away with all the charm of it, to reduce the expression of human wants to a code and a number, and to become so 'civilised' that there is imminent danger of relapsing into barbarism. It is possible, too, to be always on the tenterhooks of expectation and desire: expectation of being 'called up' by some one, and desire to call some one else up. Thus may life be made miserable by the very attempt to make it easy and happy, and thus may we be reduced to the condition depicted by Matthew Arnold when men bustle through life at such break-neck speed that they 'never once possess their souls before they die.'

THE MAKING OF A MAN.

CHAPTER IV.—DICK MEETS HIS ENEMY FACE TO FACE.



LO ride round the fences once or twice a week, to superintend the building of a *puesta* (house at a gateway), to carry out many much-needed improvements, occupied every hour of the day. Dick had no time to dwell on the difficulties of his position. He must act, not think of how he should act. If, through any mistake on his part, things went wrong, he had to set matters right as best he could, without any one's help or advice. Hardie was much occupied with matters of greater importance, and was satisfied if things went smoothly at El Plato without causing him extra trouble. Occasionally he paid a hurried visit of inspection, reproaching Dick sharply if he found anything wrong through carelessness or neglect, and showing satisfaction with well-done work. Dick would have liked warmer praise, but learnt that Don Diego considered duty done required no reward; it was

expected from any man who was worth his salt. Hardie forgot that some men, like some horses, respond more to a friendly word or a caress than to the cut of the whip or touch of the spur.

In course of time Pastor began to perceive that there was small chance of his getting the young *patrón* into his power. The white-faced boy was more likely to prove himself master after all.

'It is the way of these English,' said José.

Pastor also perceived that he could not continue to pursue his hitherto prosperous, if dishonest, life at El Plato unless he ceased from his iniquitous ways. He hated Hardie, who had taken the place of an easy-going master living in Buenos Ayres, and only visiting his property at long intervals. He hated Dick still more, for his presence prevented him carrying on various little affairs of his own which brought him in a good income—such as selling the mutton and other stores belonging to the *estancia*, and allow-

ing his friends' cattle and horses to fatten on Hardie's land. Yet he had no wish to be sent away. El Plato lay between civilisation—as represented by Las Tres Aromas and within a league of it, a cluster of houses that had grown up round a *pulperia*, which, besides being an inn and drinking-bar, was store, post-office, and bank, as well as the halting-place of the mail-coach that passed twice a week—and a vast tract of country, unfenced and under no man's control, for owing to an endless lawsuit it was no man's property. Here had gathered a set of lawless ruffians, cattle-stealers and worse. Pastor was their useful ally; though about as unscrupulous as any of them, he had enough character left to allow him to frequent the bar of the *pulperia* and do business with honest men. Under the veneer of his Spanish intelligence, a *gaucho* is but a stupid savage; very soon he put himself in the wrong, and Dick reported him to Hardie, who gave him a lecture and a warning that if he gave trouble he must go. Sullenly the man went about his work, hating Dick more and more, and thinking of revenge.

One afternoon, as Dick rode round the camp, inspecting a troop of newly arrived cattle, he came across Macdonald crossing the El Plato land returning from a visit to the store. It was the first hot day of the season; a scorching wind swept over the pampas, raising clouds of dust. Macdonald readily enough accepted an invitation from Dick to come up to the house and have a cup of tea; it would be pleasanter to ride on later, as the wind was sure to fall at sundown. As they rode along together Dick noticed at a little distance off a group of cattle loitering round a well.

'I must go over and see what they are hanging round the well for,' he remarked. 'They should have finished drinking by this time, and be off feeding.'

'The sudden heat may have made them drink more,' said Macdonald, following him. 'Is your man lazy? Does he shirk drawing water?'

'He would shirk anything to spite me,' growled Dick, who was now aware that Pastor had no wish to serve him.

'No water has been drawn to-day,' cried Macdonald as they guided their horses through the mob of cattle that, with hanging heads, bellowed sullenly, and shouldered each other from the side of the trough that stretched from the well across a patch of bare earth, beaten and hardened by the feet of the animals.

'The poor brutes; they are dried up with this beastly wind and dust. I'll make Pastor draw till his arms drop off. Let us get back and send him right off here. I bet he is sleeping, and has been since I rode off after breakfast.'

They turned their horses' heads and galloped off towards the *estancia*. As they reached the gate a whirl of dust and a furious blast of wind struck

them. Not a soul was to be seen. They hurried into the house, shutting the doors and windows in a vain attempt to keep out wind and dust. Dick arranged on the table tin cups and saucers and plates, and, in honour of his guest, a pot of jam and a box of biscuits. Setting the kettle to boil on a spirit-lamp, he went out to find Pastor. He was asleep in a sheltered corner of a shed. Irritated by the heat and the dust, Dick kicked him roughly and shouted to him:

'Up with you. What do you mean by sleeping here, like a pig, leaving the cattle without water? Get over to the well as fast as you can and draw all that's wanted. Do you hear?'

The man turned with a snarl. 'Water! Who is to pull water in a *tormenta* [a storm] like this?'

'You are, and be quick about it,' cried Dick, with another kick.

'Do it yourself, boy!' Pastor was now on his feet, his bloodshot eyes full of rage, and his ugly teeth grinning beneath his bristling moustache. He towered over the lad, who, at the sight of his horrid face, flinched and drew back; but only for a moment. Dick, remembering he had a friend at hand, pulled himself together and cried out:

'Do what I tell you. If not, I will tell Don Diego that I can put up with you no longer.'

'*Bueno!* You will tell on me, and take my mark with you,' yelled Pastor; and, drawing his knife, he sprang on Dick, who dodged him, feeling for his revolver, which was not there. Pastor was expert in the cruel Spanish art of stabbing. Again the knife gleamed; but again Dick, thanks to the training of the football field, was quick and agile enough to save himself. Once again the knife was raised, but on a sudden Pastor dropped his arm and slunk off behind the shed, leaving the bewildered Dick face to face with Macdonald.

'Man, are you hurt?' cried the latter.

'No, I am right enough; but he nearly had me. He did not know you were there.'

'Had you? It was a close shave. Where did you learn to dodge a *gaucho's facón*?' (a sharp-pointed knife).

As they stepped into the house, Macdonald, holding Dick by the arm, continued: 'It was a mere chance that I saw you. The wind blew the door open, and I got up to shut it. I caught sight of you two dancing round the *patio*; I thought I heard a yell, so it seemed about time to interfere. I guess it was just about time. Do you often amuse yourself with this sort of thing of an afternoon?'

'No; it is the first time the brute has done more than threaten.'

'It is always the way when a north wind blows; some one's temper gives out.'

'If I had only had my revolver ready,' said Dick, with a glance at it lying on the table. He and Macdonald had cast off their *tiradores* (broad

leather belts, in which the revolver and knife is carried) on coming indoors. The etiquette of camp obliges a man on entering a strange house to hand over his belt to his host as a sign that he trusts his hospitality and puts himself under his protection. The habit lingers, though civilisation has almost done away with the necessity.

'It never is at hand when you want it, and always in the way when you don't,' remarked Macdonald; adding, as he noted his companion's white face, 'Come along and have some tea. Feel as if you had had a shake—eh?'

'Thanks; I am all right,' answered Dick as he set about making the tea. But, in spite of his attempts to seem indifferent, his hand shook and he looked very white.

'Does Hardie know what a *gaucho malo* [a desperate ruffian] you have to deal with?'

'Oh, he knows he is a bad lot. But, I say, don't let him think I can't boss the chap.'

'I should think it would take a bigger man than you to do that.'

'I lock the door at night, and always have my revolver handy. And Jerry is a good watch, and hates Pastor like rats.'

Jerry pricked his ears and eyed his master.

'Rats, Jerry!—rats!' cried Dick, and the dog flew yelping to the door.

'It must be pretty jumpy here alone at night. Better come along with me.'

'I can't; thanks all the same. I must see to the cattle the first thing in the morning.'

'Well, all I can do for you is to take Las Tres Aromas on the way home, and tell Hardie of this little affair.'

'Not a pleasant adventure that,' he muttered to himself as he rode away. 'I wonder if the lad realises what an escape he has made. The man was mad with rage. Poor Master Dick is in a bit of a fright. But the lad is no fool. Just as cool as old Ted. Hardie should not leave such a youngster there so long alone. It is enough to shake a fellow's nerves, or make him take to queer ways. Hardie forgets all men are not made of tempered steel like himself. Phew! what a night!' he exclaimed as his horse reeled under a gust of wind. 'I should have stayed at El Plato. I shall never get past the "Aromas" to-night.' He urged his horse to its best speed, and was not long in getting to the shelter of his friend's house, where, with very little pressing, he consented to stay for the night.

MODERN BISCUIT-MAKING.



BISCUITS are probably of very ancient date. Some are inclined to think they find an allusion to them in the first book of Kings, where Jeroboam sends his wife to consult the prophet Ahijah about his son who has fallen sick, bidding her take with her 'ten loaves, and cracknels, and a cruse of honey.' All the countries of Europe have been biscuit-making from time immemorial, and most of them have a name for the things indicating that they originally underwent a double process of cooking. *Bis-cuit* means 'twice cooked.' Even the old Romans had their *panis biscoctus* ('twice-baked bread'); and there is at least one kind of biscuit still made by a double cooking. The cracknel is first plunged into boiling water and then baked; though whether the 'cracknels' of the modern factory at all resemble the 'cracknels' of King Jeroboam's time one cannot say. Most, if not all, other kinds are nowadays 'biscuits' only in name.

The original form of the thing was simplicity itself. It was just a mixture of flour and water spread out thin, and baked till all the moisture was driven out of it. It was their extreme dryness that permitted of their being stored for eighteen months, or two years if necessary, without spoiling; and it was in order to get them as dry as possible that they were made thin, and cooked twice, and thrice, and sometimes four times

over. Not only was the moisture of the dough thus driven out of them, but the water originally embodied in the flour was evaporated also; so that ten pounds of flour would make only about nine pounds of biscuit. They were, no doubt, in the first instance, merely a form of unfermented bread especially adapted for storage, and particularly on board ship during long voyages. Hence the Roman *panis biscoctus nauticus* ('sea-biscuit').

That was pretty certainly the original form of the thing—just a thin, well-baked cake of flour and water, as dry as a chip, and so hard that a hatchet was often required to chop it up. But the arts of modern confectionery have developed this rather unappetising germ into a marvellous variety of nicknacks; and, by catering for every variety of taste all over the world, a really great industry has been developed, quite apart from the enormous trade in ship-biscuits. There are several very large concerns engaged in biscuit-making both in England and Scotland. Messrs Huntley & Palmer, of Reading, and Messrs Peek, Frean, & Co., of London, are among the largest. Other large makers are Messrs Mackenzie, M'Vitie & Price, and Middlemass & Son, in Edinburgh; Messrs Carr & Co., of Carlisle; and Messrs Gray, Dunn, & Co., of Glasgow. They represent a branch of the country's system of food-supply that may be said to have been developed almost entirely within the past two generations. One of those large firms that, about the

time when Queen Victoria began to reign, commenced business with not more than six different kinds of biscuit now make just upon four hundred ! To go over some of these factories, with their hundreds, and even thousands, of hands, their mazes of machinery, their acres of floor space, their many departments, their steam-engines and electric installations, their tramways and trucks and trollies, their packing-rooms and counting-houses and offices, their telegraphs and telephones, and their subsidiary factories—their sawmills and carpenters' shops and tin-smitheries, their artists' rooms and printing-offices—one might imagine that the whole world lived on biscuits.

By the way, it has been noted as a curious fact that several of the greatest of these businesses have been founded and largely developed by members of the Society of Friends. Nobody seems to be able to explain how this has happened. Whether some of the Quakers of the early part of the century were led to take an interest in this article of food from finding that an occasional dietary of ship-biscuits and water was good for the subduing of the intractabilities of the flesh and for promoting quietude of spirit, or whether there have been occult family relationships, we do not know. Of two of the firms who have been interrogated on the point, one says : 'We are not able to explain why this should be so, unless, indeed, it is because the trade is free from many of the objections incidental to others which would be opposed to Quaker principles.' The other replies : 'It is probable that the remark which an eminent Church dignitary made in allusion to our works may explain the matter—namely, that it is a trade which has done no harm to any one, but, on the contrary, has been a great benefit to the human race, not only amongst civilised communities, but also as providing a portable food in many distant regions where wholesome food could not be obtained.'

The unfermented sea-biscuit, as has been said, is a very old form of food, but all the multifarious kickshaws figuring in the price-lists of the large makers have been invented or evolved within the memory of people now living. What is even more remarkable is the fact that all the methods of manufacture have also been invented or evolved. The making of biscuits, when the first of these great firms began, was a matter of fists for mixing and kneading, of rolling-pins for spreading out, of hand-stamps for cutting out and marking, of peels and the ordinary oven for baking. Nowadays machinery weighs and measures out the materials, mixes and spreads, cuts and stamps, and bakes and turns them out all ready to pack up or eat, almost without the touch of human hand. It would not be literally correct, but it would be no very great misrepresentation, to say that the ingredients were pitched into one end of a machine and from the other end there came out the crisp little cakes, perfect in form, uniform in

colour, and all jogging steadily along in well-ordered battalions towards the packing-room. It would not be literally correct because, as a matter of fact, processes do not follow on in unbroken sequence, and the material has to be conveyed from one machine to another. But so far as the vast majority of sorts are concerned, the making is, every bit of it, done by machinery. The biscuits have all been evolved or invented within the present century, and so have the methods of making them, the machinery by which they are made, the steam-engines which drive the machinery, the electric light by which some of the big factories are illuminated, and nearly all the means of conveyance by which the little cakes are scattered like snowflakes all over the world. Practically the whole of it has been developed well within the present century.

The great factories, of course, differ in their extent and general arrangements as well as in their details, but the main operations are carried on in pretty much the same way in all of them. One of these establishments—and that not the largest—is said to take in 1200 truck-loads of flour every year. Such a quantity would, of course, comprise flour of various kinds, and the best makers find that they get the best results by blending these different kinds, just as tea-dealers arrive at the finest flavours by blending their teas. The flour has to be sifted, too, in order to eliminate any extraneous matter, and in some cases both blending and sifting are effected in passing the flour down from an upper floor into the 'mixers.' These mixers are huge pans made to revolve by steam or cylindrical drums, containing 'agitators' in the shape of long arms that go round and round so as thoroughly to stir up whatever is within their reach. Subsidiary machines whip up eggs with milk and butter, and these ingredients, with syrup and spices, plums and currants, peel and sugar, and whatever else may enter into the composition of the particular kind of biscuit required, are poured into these mixers, and are all worked up into a paste by the agitators. The different ingredients, however, require not only to be stirred up, but to be thoroughly well kneaded ; and for this purpose the dough is carried off to another machine, where it is poured through rollers fitted with mechanical substitutes for human fists, which pummel and squeeze it about till it has become a homogeneous mass of dough. From these 'breaking rollers' the now solid, well-compacted dough is borne off in a truck, running on a tramway, to a more complicated piece of machinery, which at a distance looks very like a large printing-machine. It is perhaps 3 feet wide and 20 or 24 feet long. The dough is put in at one end, passes between broddingnagian rolling-pins, which spread it out into thin and glossy-looking broad ribbons of exactly the thickness required for the biscuits, and a little farther on in the machine

passes under a series of dies which cut out the biscuits—big ones, half-a-dozen to the pound, it may be, or 1000 or 1200 to the pound. The formless mass of dough is heaved in at one end, and at the other come out serried ranks of perfectly-formed biscuits, all arranged on tins ready for the oven. Of the smaller kinds of biscuit, one of these machines will pass through in the course of a day of ten hours no less than two millions and a half. Two such machines would turn out in one day a biscuit for every man and woman, boy and girl, and baby in London. And yet, in addition to a bewildering maze of such machines, there is one of these biscuit-making firms employing at the present time over 5000 people!

The baking of biscuits has been reduced to an art of the greatest precision and nicety. No one ever sees an underdone or an overdone biscuit—at least, not from any factory of repute; and if you open a box of them you will find that all the biscuits of the same kind are of precisely the same shade of colour. From the mode of manufacture up to the mouth of the oven, it will be seen that in each batch the little cakes are bound to be all alike in composition, in shape, and thickness; and if they are all exposed to exactly the same heat for exactly the same length of time, they are bound to come out with exactly the same complexion. This equal baking is secured in an extremely simple way. The ovens are not of the ordinary bakers' type. They are really hot chambers, through which battalions of biscuits, spread out in orderly array on tins, continue all day long to pass in at one end and out at the other, endless chains, specially constructed, bearing them along at a speed carefully regulated

according to the time any particular kind of biscuit will take to properly bake. The lighter kinds may run through the fiery chamber in about four minutes. The heavier sorts, of course, receive longer baking, and they travel more slowly. An ingenious piece of mechanism permits of the speed being regulated with the greatest possible nicety to the requirements of each kind. Nothing remains but to convey these entirely machine-made biscuits to the vast floors where they are sorted and packed. The whole factory, from end to end—so far as the great bulk of the business is concerned—has scarcely anything in common with the biscuit-bakeries of fifty or sixty years ago.

What that bulk of business now amounts to it is difficult to realise, and the big houses are naturally somewhat chary of giving anything very precise in the way of details. But some idea of what they are capable of may be gained by an achievement of one of them after the siege of Paris. This firm entered into a contract with the French Government for the revictualling of Paris with 'ship bread'—hard biscuit, that is—and in about three weeks they passed into Paris no less than 4470 tons of it. This particular factory is not the largest in the field by a long way. It employs about 2000 people, whereas the largest of our biscuit-makers have a staff of over 5000. Yet this one factory, it has been computed, would require 720 cows to supply its milk—to say nothing about its butter—and 40,000 hens to lay the eggs it uses. It takes in every year 1200 railway truck-loads of flour and 500 pair-horse van-loads of sugar, besides plums and currants, jams and candied peel, spices and flavouring, and many other odds and ends.

IN A LANTERN GALLERY.

By BENNET COPPLESTONE.



THE Trinity House officer pointed to the great lantern above our heads. 'It revolves once in three minutes, and has six faces,' said he. 'The light shows each half-minute for six seconds, and then darkness follows for twenty-four seconds.'

'Is exact timing important?' I asked.

'The lives of ships and men hang on it,' said he; 'we are recognised by our timing. There are lights up and down Channel, mostly white like this; and it would be easy to blunder into the same revolutions as one of them. The lie of the coast is different everywhere; soundings are different; the vessel which mistook our light for some other one would likely enough be on shore within half-an-hour. Our lantern is usually driven by a compressed-air engine; that little copper tube running up through the shaft carries

air at sixty pounds pressure, and the supply lasts for twelve hours. Come up.'

He led the way up an iron spiral ladder. I saw him stoop over a pretty little brass machine, which looked like a toy, and turn a wheel regulator. The bright piston-rods pushed out slowly at first, and then, with much jerking and hissing of air, gathered speed until they were flashing up and down in the midst of a most busy rattle.

'We tell the pace by the sound,' said the officer. 'That is too fast. Now, sir, look at the gauge.'

I watched the gauge, and satisfied myself that the lantern made a complete revolution in three minutes.

'If the engine goes wrong there is the hand-crank just where you are standing. Both are not likely to fail.'

He talked of dioptric and catoptric systems, of electric arc lights whose candle-power was reckoned in millions, of alternative oil lamps, of fogs and fog-signals; but I gave little heed. My attention was diverted by the copper tube, no thicker than my little finger, which fed the busy, rattling engine.

'It works well,' I suddenly said; 'but what about the mistakes?'

He broke off his technical discourse, and looked at me rather curiously.

'What mistakes?'

'Those which you make sometimes. They are sure to be interesting.'

'Perhaps so,' said he, with a slight laugh; 'but we do not make mistakes—at least we do not talk about them.'

I returned with the officer to his whitewashed house, which stood in the middle of the station buildings. He pointed out the engine-house in which electricity was generated and air compressed, and showed me the vast storage cylinders which gave voice to the fog-siren. I lunched with him, and under the influence of hospitality he grew less official in manner.

'We are always pleased to see you gentlemen who write,' said he, 'but we are rather afraid of you. You are so much more interested in the flaws than in the perfect working of our system.'

'Our difficulty is to find the flaws,' I answered handsomely.

'Can I trust you not to print a story if I tell it: the story of how yonder little air-engine once went wrong, and how I rose in five years from keeper to be superintendent of this station?'

'Sir,' I answered, 'if the story is good—and it promises well—my instinct to tell it in my own fashion would break the fetters of any promise. I can, however, undertake so to disguise the scene and—shall I say?—the hero that the Elder Brethren will fail to recognise either. You shall see the manuscript, and satisfy yourself.'

'I have not the heart to exact more,' said he, laughing.

Then he told me the story.

'Ten years ago I entered the service of the Trinity House Corporation as an assistant-keeper. No matter why. My education was pretty good, better than some, and my desire was to rise. It is always difficult to get on, but nowhere more difficult than in a rather hide-bound service such as this is. As in the army and navy, there is a normal rate of advance, and seniority counts almost for everything. In five years I was a fully qualified keeper; I was competent to work the engines at a pinch; and I had invented an improvement in connection with buoys which the chief engineer adopted with enthusiasm; but my promotion hung in the wind. Such vacancies as occurred were filled by senior men. Then one dull, wet night in November the great chance of my life came.

'I was doing my four-hour spell in the light-house, and with me was another keeper—call him Jones. The light was at its fullest power, six million candles, and the lantern was revolving without a hitch. The outside glass of the gallery was wet with rain; but by stooping under the rays, and looking out along their track as the light swept overhead, one could see a good way—three or four miles maybe. I was busy about my work, which is always more anxious when the weather is hazy, and did not pay much heed to Jones. He was a silent, rather unsociable creature, and, as far as I can remember, we hardly exchanged a dozen words during the first two hours of our spell. About three o'clock in the morning something happened. I was stooping down to see how far the light carried, and was waiting for the broad band of glittering haze to swing round, when the roof of the lighthouse seemed to fall upon me. The shock dashed me face downwards on the iron floor. I was not unconscious; but I lay there in a weak, idle state, as if between sleep and waking, for a long time—it is impossible to say how long. My mind was singularly at ease. I was convinced that the whole lighthouse had collapsed, burying my body in the ruins, and the belief did not worry me in the least. Neither my own fate nor that of the light seemed to be of the slightest importance. I think that the rattle of yonder little air-engine aroused me. At first I was only feebly surprised that the fragile machine should have escaped the general wreck; but after a minute or two the extraordinary speed at which it was running fixed my attention. "By Jingo!" I thought, "if the lantern were not broken it would be doing a turn in about a minute." I rolled over on to my back, and as I did so a great blaze of light shone for a moment between my eyes and the darkness above. It passed in an instant. I lay still for a few seconds, and then tried to lift myself upon one elbow. The white blinding gleam flashed out again, the fringe of it striking on my eyes and nearly putting them out altogether. I had just sense enough left to turn my face away from the terrible electric arc, and to slip sideways to the floor.

'Presently my mind began to build up a new theory upon the ruins of that which I now rejected. The roof of the lighthouse could scarcely have fallen in, since the lantern was plainly uninjured and the light within was at its full power. The engine, too, was in admirable order, for it was working at twice its usual speed. I gravely thought over all the external causes which could effect so strangely partial an injury. It was clear that something must have fallen from above, killed my mate Tom Jones, knocked me down, and opened the regulator of the engine. I considered it to be in the last degree improbable that a single missile could have done so many different things; but perhaps

a large meteor had burst into fragments after striking the roof. The death of Jones was necessary to my theory, for if not dead he would, of course, have put the engine right at once. I was rather pleased with the meteor theory. The question of cause being settled, my business was to reduce the exorbitant speed of the lantern before any mischief happened out at sea. I therefore crawled hastily out of the track of the light, and worked my way towards the regulator. I was instantly seized by the band of my trousers, and hurled back against the glass of the gallery. "Keep still," cried a voice, "or I will split your skull again." The diffused rays from the lantern about the gallery were as strong as sunlight, and I saw my mate Tom Jones flourishing the iron crank of the hand-gear over my head.

"What is the game, Tom?" I asked stupidly. "I thought you were dead."

"I never was more alive," said he, laughing loudly; "and the game is the gaudiest kind of joke you ever heard of. I have been looking out for a chance to bring it off. If you will bide quiet I will tell you all about it."

"I don't want to move," I said. "I have a confounded headache."

"He laughed again. "So I should expect. This crank is a rare tool to bash a man's head with." He sat down by my side and rested the weapon on his knees. "You see, I'm rather sick of playing Providence to all the ships out there in the Channel, showing them our little glim to steer by when it's fine, and tootling on our little foghorn when it's thick. They don't properly appreciate the blessings we provide for them. Let them try us in opposition for a bit. So I just thought out a good joke, and knocked you on the head lest you should interfere. You've got no sense of humour."

"By this time I had my wits clearer, and laughed as heartily as he did.

"It's rare sport, isn't it?" Jones went on. "We show a six-seconds flash every half-minute, and ten miles away the Bentnose Light flashes for three seconds every quarter of a minute. This St Mary's Light can't be mistaken for that on Bentnose Point—can it? The vessels wouldn't find it awkward if they did—would they? Ships keep three miles clear of our Ridge, you know, until they sight Bentnose, when they run right in within a mile, and head E.N.E. Oh yes, St Mary's Light is quite distinct from Bentnose; the Trinity House take care of that. But suppose we spin our lantern at twice its usual pace, and show a flash every quarter-minute! Why, then, ships would mistake us for Bentnose, and suppose they had missed us in the thick weather. Man, they are doing it now! Our light is revolving flash for flash with that on Bentnose Point. All vessels will run right in close where they think there's twenty fathoms of water, and they will

drive full smash upon our iron teeth. The tide which throws up our shingle will toss the battered bodies of passengers and crew upon our shore—And may Almighty God have mercy on their souls!"

"He paused, and his voice, which had fallen into a kind of solemn chant, rose again into laughter. The man was mad, and I knew it, and the sweat stood out on my skin. Yet I kept my injured head cool, and gave him laugh for laugh.

"It is brave sport," I said. "But shall we enjoy the full luxury of it? What good are wrecks to us if we can't see them break their bones on shore?"

"He jumped up and ran to the seaward face of the gallery. "I can see," he cried. "I can see a ripple of breakers on the line of the Ridge, and I can see a mile beyond." He gave a mad scream of joy. "I can see the lights of a ship, a big steamer, full of men and women and kids—jolly little kids—all asleep. She's running in." The beam passed, and he fell on his knees waiting for the next flash. "Pray," he yelled. "I give them ten minutes of life. Pray for the souls of the living. Pray earnestly while there is time; but tender no vain supplication for the souls of the dead." It seems unbelievable, but I declare that the man prayed, prayed fiercely and loudly, for the souls of those whom he hungered to destroy.

"In that supreme moment my mind gripped hard at the facts. I knew that the steamer was rushing to destruction, and I knew that its one poor chance of safety rested with me. Our great light only showed to the seaward, so that even if one of the engine-hands below had looked out he would not have seen that anything was amiss. The fate of that ship lay between an armed lunatic and a wounded man, who feebly tried to lash his battered brain into thought. It was a contest of wits, for we were ill-matched in respect of force, and time was of the essence of the battle. For one instant I thought of rushing at the regulator of the engine, and shutting off the compressed air; but the odds against success were too heavy. Jones could have killed me without difficulty as I stooped; and I did not credit him with any scruples. I am no hero, and I strongly objected to throwing away my life without any sort of compensation. Perhaps a minute passed, and I still lay motionless. Then my eye lighted on the little glittering copper tube which fed the air-engine. The machine, as you know, was vertical, and the tube rose up from the top of the piston-boxes, curved over, and ran down the central shaft of the lighthouse. Just before it entered the shaft this tube passed within an inch of the iron edge of the gallery floor on which I lay. My way was clear, and I wasted no more time. Twisting my body round, I raised one foot and brought the heel of my shoe down with tremendous force on the tube, at the point where

it crossed the floor-edge. The thin copper pipe was driven against the iron, and kinked instantly. The pain to my heel was horrible, but I was on my feet in another second, and had darted round the lantern to the back of the gallery. The heavy lantern ran for a few moments, but the supply of air had been completely cut off; and presently it stopped between two flashes, showing a dark edge to the sea.

I heard Jones shriek with rage, and he came flying at me. I bolted round the lantern. He followed, and for several minutes he chased me round and round, as children hunt one another round a table. I was hugely frightened, but the discovery that he could not possibly catch me gave me infinite comfort. Jones soon made the same discovery, and then his thoughts reverted to the masked light. Now that I had disabled the engine, the lantern could only be made to revolve by means of the manual gear, the crank of which was in his hand. He darted to the pin, slipped on the crank, and bent his body to the work of restoring the lying revolutions which I had stopped. And now he was in an excellent quandary. So long as the crank was being legitimately used he was unarmed, and when he was armed the lantern was without motion. The conviction that victory lay with me set my blood dancing dangerously. I shouted; I laughed; I was almost as mad as the miserable Jones. He bent his back to turn the crank, and I made a

diversion in the rear. He whipped off his weapon and rushed at me, and I capered away in safety round the lantern. The humour of the situation filled me with a wild joy. The more Jones yelled and foamed in delirious rage the louder I laughed. I taunted him with the futility of his pursuit, and sent him trotting back to his crank-pin, only to interrupt him again and again before the lantern could be moved. I cannot recall the scene now without a tingle of pleasure.

'When the relief keepers came at five o'clock Jones was still threatening me with the crank, and I was still laughing.

"Take him away," I said, "and lock him up; he's mad."

'They secured the poor lunatic, and then carried me down, dressed my wound, and put me to bed.'

'And the steamer?' I asked, for the Trinity House officer had stopped.

'She was all right. My stoppage of the lantern set the skipper a study in common-sense, and, like a good shipmaster, he decided to give himself plenty of sea-room when lights began to play queer tricks. So he sheered off at full speed, and presently raised the real Bentnose. Thereupon he tore his hair, and, arriving in London, called at the Trinity House to complain of his wrongs. "I'll never sail that ship again," he said when my story had been told. "She's exhausted all the luck that a mortal vessel has any right to."'

THE LIGHTHOUSE OF MINOT'S EDGE.

THREE leagues from the shore in Boston Bay,
On a rocky, ragged ledge,
There rises, grim and gaunt and gray,
The Lighthouse of Minot's Edge;
And the great Atlantic's rolling tide
Breaks over it, foaming high,
As it sends a warning far and wide
O'er sand and sea and sky.

Ere that tower was raised, in the olden days,
Another lighthouse stood,
Propped on the rock upon iron stays;
And the keepers deemed it good.
Both wanderers, they, from a distant strand,
Far over the alien seas;
A fair-haired son of the Fatherland
And a dark-eyed Portuguese.

But there came a day when a storm befell
That baffled human guile,
And all day long the powers of hell
Beat on that doomed pile.
And all day long the folk on the beach
Gazed on the awful sight,
And moaned that no mortal help could reach,
And shuddered to think of night.

Night fell; and the storm raged on apace,
But the lamp was lighted true;
And the winds and the waters ran their race,
As the tide rolled thundering through.
Ah! the shocks were hard and the strain was long,
And the swaying stanchions broke;
But the lamp shone on, now dim, now strong,
For the foam rose up like smoke.

Then the great weird fog-bell, struck by the sea,
Rang out its own death-knell,
And tolled for the souls that escaped and were free,
When their faithless dwelling fell.
Then the lamp went out in that awful rout,
And the bell tolled on through the night;
One corpse was washed on the shore at morn,
One never came to light.

Their alien names are forgotten quite
By an English-speaking race,
But the fame of their gallant watch that night
Still clings to their ancient place;
And they talk in the great strong tower on the strand,
When the storm-wind rides on the seas,
Of that fair-haired son of the Fatherland
And the dark-eyed Portuguese.

S. CONSTANCE ISABELLE BRIGGS.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SCOTSMEN IN LONDON.

By W. C. MACKENZIE.



STORY is told of a Scotsman, a new arrival in London, who asked a policeman the way to the Caledonian Asylum. The policeman, who also hailed from the Land o' Cakes, looked quizzingly at his compatriot, and replied, with a grin, 'Man, ye're jist in it the noo.' The story, like so many of its kind, is possibly apocryphal, but its point is evident. Ever since the union of the crowns in the 'most dread person' of that 'most high and mighty Prince, James'—to quote the fulsome dedication in our Bibles—London has been a veritable Eldorado to pushing Scotsmen, who have worked it for all it is worth. With James came from Scotland to the Metropolis troops of needy adventurers, who found an easy and profitable employment in 'spoiling the Egyptians.' The Scots tongue became known at the English Court, and Scottish influence began to make itself felt in London. King Jamie proved a good friend to his fellow-countrymen, who consequently became the objects of jealousy on the part of the Southrons. The hereditary and implacable enmity which for centuries had existed between England and Scotland was still smouldering, and the embers were fanned by the favouritism which 'the British Solomon' took no pains to conceal. The king had the poor satisfaction of having three great English dramatists—Ben Jonson, Chapman, and Marston—in prison at once for their share in a play containing uncomplimentary allusions to his native land. The Scotch colony in London, founded and fostered under such august patronage, flourished apace; 'the loaves and the fishes' proved substantial compensations for English antipathy.

During the reign of Charles I. and during the Commonwealth the political influence of the colony appears to have been a factor of some importance; but at the Restoration it received a check. There was little in common between the bulk of his Scottish subjects and the Merry Monarch, whose distaste for anything savouring

of Puritanism obliterated his sense of the services which the Scottish Presbyterians had rendered to him when he was a crownless and a throneless fugitive.

A century after the union of the crowns the union of Parliaments was consummated—an event which considerably affected the Scottish community in the Metropolis, as well as their countrymen at home. Previous to the Union Scotsmen in London were regarded as foreigners, and, as such, suffered various disabilities which the parliamentary fusion removed. They became naturalised in England, London became their metropolitan city, and an era of unbroken prosperity set in for them. Unfortunately, the altered conditions did not have the result of rendering a Scotsman less obnoxious in English eyes than formerly; rather, indeed, was the contrary the case. Perhaps at no time was the anti-Scotch feeling in London more pronounced than during the second half of last century. Londoners had not forgotten the panic into which they were thrown when Bonnie Prince Charlie and his Highlanders reached Derby and threatened the Metropolis. Had the contemplated descent on London actually taken place, British history from that period might have had to be rewritten, and Hogarth might have found it necessary to paint a companion-picture to his famous 'March to Finchley.' But, although the danger was averted, the recollection of what might have been rankled in the minds of Londoners, and inspired them with additional antipathy towards every one and everything Scotch. Lampooners sharpened the edge of their wits against the 'beggarly Scots,' and caricaturists, with all Hogarth's exaggeration, but without his art, delighted in holding up the obnoxious nation to ridicule.

Johnson's Boswell has given us a number of his master's sallies against the biographer's countrymen. The sarcastic fulminations of the great phrasemonger against Scotsmen in London are well known; their exclusiveness, the poverty of their country, and its corollary, their pros-

perity in England, being the themes round which his ponderous wit so often played. A people who, according to him, 'loved Scotland better than truth' were not likely to escape his castigation; but it is sufficiently clear that his sarcasms were for the most part what, in modern parlance, would be termed 'chaff.' Scotsmen of his time, like their compatriots of the present day, felt uneasy when 'chaffed' about themselves or their native country. Johnson well knew their weak point, and mischievously directed the heavy batteries of his wit against it. It is noteworthy that Mr Millar and Mr Strahan, with whom he chiefly contracted for his literary work, were both Scotsmen; and his own words, in a letter to Boswell, probably afford the index of his real sentiments towards the nationality which he is often erroneously supposed to have held in detestation. 'Tell them' (the Scotch people), he wrote, 'how well I speak of Scotch politeness and Scotch hospitality and Scotch beauty, of everything Scotch but Scotch oatcakes and Scotch prejudices;' and there can be no doubt that, in spite of the frequency with which the long-suffering 'Bozzy' was alternately jumped upon, frozen out, and roasted in conversation with his terrible mentor, Johnson entertained a sincere affection for his faithful Scottish henchman.

Of the other notable Scots in London his opinion was a qualified one. 'An echo of Voltaire,' he called Hume. 'A literary charlatan' was his view of Macpherson of Ossianic fame. Of Dr Blair's sermons he said, 'Although the dog is a Scotchman and a Presbyterian, and everything he should not be, I was the first to praise them.' The Marquis of Bute, the leading Scotsman in London at that time, was the means of providing Johnson with his pension of £300 a year; and Smollett was one of those who exerted his influence in the same direction; thus showing that, in spite of Johnson's well-known attacks on Scotsmen, the latter were sensible enough to appraise them at their true value, and were ready to help the great Englishman whose personality, no less than his genius, they held in admiration.

The jealousy which Englishmen of that period entertained for Scotsmen was focussed in the person of Lord Bute, who was accused of undue favouritism towards his countrymen. The antagonism which this nobleman aroused in England caused the Scots to rally round him; national passions were set aflame; and national prejudices warped the judgment of both parties. Lord Bute, an amiable and kindly man, but not a very distinguished politician, was regarded by his compatriots as a heaven-born statesman, and by Englishmen as a person destitute of all ability except that of providing Scotsmen with snug billets. It is inconceivable that at the end of the nineteenth century a similar state of affairs should exist; we may congratulate ourselves on having taken a long stride forward since those days. Traces of national jealousy may still be occasion-

ally encountered in a very modified form; but it is free from the rancour of the past, and, when operating as a stimulant to mutual emulation of mutual good qualities, is not an unmixed evil.

During this century the influx of Scotsmen to the Metropolis has kept continuously on the increase. At the present day the number of Scotsmen in London is said to equal the population of Edinburgh; they are largely found among what are vaguely termed 'the well-to-do classes;' and it can be safely asserted that the proportion occupying positions of trust and even of distinction is remarkable. The list of merchant-princes and bank and insurance managers in the City contains a striking number of obviously Scottish names. In the financial world Scotsmen share their high reputation with a nationality of even greater acquisitiveness: that nationality whose representatives are to be found under the domes of palatial offices and the 'three balls' of dingy shops. The Highlander in London, as elsewhere, must acknowledge his inferiority to his Lowland brother in the gentle art of money-making. He must fain rest content with his acknowledged superiority in the domain of whisky; at the present day he figures largely on the labels of 'mountain dew,' as in former years he represented, by means of a painted wooden effigy, the delights of snuff-taking. Were the Lowland Scot in the City similarly depicted, he would appear as a shrewd-looking gentleman, with his back to the north, his face to the south, and his eyes fixed on—the main chance.

But it is not only in the world of commerce and finance that the London Scot is prominent. In the government of the Metropolis, as in the government of the Empire, he takes his full share. The first chairman of the London County Council was a Scottish nobleman who has already been Prime-Minister, and who is only now, probably, on the threshold of a still more brilliant career. The present chairman of the London School Board is also a distinguished member of the Scottish peerage. To the Imperial Parliament at Westminster, Scotland has sent the most notable statesman and one of the greatest men of the century; and the same country has produced not only the present distinguished Leader of the House of Commons, but also the recently elected Leader of the Opposition. In metropolitan literature, journalism, science, and art Scotland is well represented. The novelists of the 'Kailyard' school have secured for themselves a safe place in the estimation of the English public, while the ranks of London journalism are being more and more recruited from the other side of the Border. The name of the Sage of Chelsea has stood during the century for all that is greatest in Scottish intellectuality. The names of eminent scientists readily occur to one as being of Scottish origin, and the same is true in the domain of mechanics. Not to speak of Allan Ramsay and Sir David Wilkie, of

Pettie and Orchardson, British art is to an appreciable extent under the influence of the Glasgow school, members of which have begun to invade the Metropolis. Two at least of the leading musical composers in London are Scotsmen, and the stage—*pace* Dr Johnson—has Scottish representatives who are at the top of their profession. Literary and dramatic criticism of the present day has been sensibly strengthened by the accession to its ranks of notable London Scots; and Scottish dramatists and Scottish plays are modern factors in the theatrical world of the capital. Even the Scottish pulpit in London has, in its time, attracted the cream of metropolitan intellect; and Presbyterian Scotland has during the past quarter of the century supplied Lambeth Palace with an occupant, and the Anglican Church with a Primate.

Two notable characteristics of Scotsmen in London are their gregariousness and their clannishness. These traits are by no means confined to the Metropolis, for wherever there are Scotsmen away from home, so surely will Scottish societies be formed; and that is tantamount to saying that, impelled by a community of interests and associations, Scotsmen club together in every quarter of the globe. Even the immensity of London life does not entirely hide from the public view the concrete forms of patriotic sentiment which bind together the Scottish units scattered throughout the metropolitan area. The coherence of Scotsmen perhaps finds no parallel in the collection of other nationalities represented in the huge maelstrom known as London. Whether it be that the Scottish temperament, influenced by early education and by home associations, is opposed to the spirit of cosmopolitanism, or that national customs, national prejudices, possibly a national accent, militate against perfect fusion with fellow-Britons, the fact remains that London Scots 'hing thegither' more closely than do Irishmen, Welshmen, or provincial Englishmen; hence the exclusiveness or clannishness which has aroused the ire of Englishmen from Dr Johnson downwards.

Londoners see at the Scottish concerts and dinners which periodically take place in the capital something of the ebullient patriotism which nearly invariably characterises these occasions; but few can be aware of the solid work which lies behind such festive events. There are at the present day thirty Scottish societies in London, all, or nearly all, of which have been founded on the bases of sentiment and practical usefulness. The county associations have of late years been springing up like mushrooms, and there is now hardly a Scottish county which is not represented by its London society or club. The oldest Scottish society in the Metropolis is the Royal Scottish Corporation, which originated as 'The Scottish Box' about the year 1613, becoming incorporated under its present title in the year 1665. This Corporation does a most excellent work in relieving distressed Scotsmen in London,

and its list of governors includes many notable metropolitan Scots. Its annual dinner on St Andrew's Day, where haggis and harmony are alike in evidence, marks a display of patriotism and liberality which form a happy combination. Another institution which exists for charitable purposes is the Royal Caledonian Asylum, where Scottish orphans, 'caught young,' are well cared for, eventually becoming useful members of the community. The boy pipers of the Asylum are quite a feature of metropolitan life. The present *habitat* of the Asylum in the Caledonian Road, where it was settled in 1828, is likely to be changed before many years for a healthier site in the country; one more landmark in London will then be swept away. Of a literary and antiquarian nature are the objects of the Gaelic Society of London, founded in 1777, and the Highland Society of London, which dates from 1778. As its name suggests, the *raison d'être* of the Gaelic Society is the promotion and perpetuation of the ancient language of the Gael; and subjects of general interest pertaining to the Highlands are frequently discussed at the meetings of the Society, politics, however, being properly avoided. The Highland Society took a prominent part in the Ossianic controversies which are associated with the name of James Macpherson, and has done good work in the encouragement of Celtic literature, the recovery of Highland traditions and folk-lore, and the revival of the Highland dress, music, and language. The county associations exist for the sake of good-fellowship and mutual help. They provide admirable opportunities for friendly intercourse between 'brither Scots,' and do solid work in assisting county men whose necessities call for their succour.

The athletic, no less than the social and intellectual, instincts of the London Scots demand and find an outlet. This accounts for the genesis of such institutions as the London Scottish and the London Caledonian Football Clubs, the London Highland Athletic and the London Camanachd Clubs, all of which are a credit to Scotland. So, too, in another sphere of usefulness, is the London Scottish Choir, which is the exponent of Scottish song in the Metropolis. There is no more popular Volunteer regiment in London than the London Scottish, whose dress and martial bearing inspire the Southron with cordial respect. No doubt this esteem is due, to some extent, to the exploits of Highland soldiers abroad, who, in the popular imagination, stimulated by the illustrated papers, are invested with a halo of glory which sheds reflected rays on peaceful stay-at-home Scots. The memory of Dargai is even now perpetuated in the streets of London by the cheerful strains of the barrel organ, supplemented by the musical efforts of errand-boys, who employ their whistling capabilities by struggling manfully with the twists and turns of the 'Cock o' the North,' reminiscent of Findlater, fortitude, and fame.

It is gratifying to think that some of the Londoners' misconception about certain Scottish traits of character are being gradually dispelled. Undue love of 'siller' on the part of nearly all Scotsmen has always been one of the popular fallacies. 'Bang went another saxe' has long been a classic of English wit, and the word 'bawbee' has long formed the symbol of Scottish close-fistedness. The idea is at length gaining ground that thrift has frequently been mistaken for parsimony, and carefulness for meanness. In former times, when Scotland was incomparably a poorer country than the sister kingdom, Scotsmen who came to London no doubt carried with them the habits of extreme frugality which were a necessity at home. But Scotland is now, in proportion to its population, perhaps the wealthiest country in the world, and thriftiness is gradually becoming in London, as elsewhere, a less pronounced Scottish characteristic than formerly. The truth is, that the love of money is equally the root of all English, as well as Scottish, evil, and that the attitude of many Englishmen and Scotsmen alike towards the 'siller' very frequently resembles that of the lovers in Burns's charming song, who were 'sae fain to meet, sae wae to part.'

A similar misconception has long prevailed in the Metropolis with regard to the Scottish capacity for humour. Sydney Smith's witticism that 'it requires a surgical operation to get a joke well into a Scotch understanding' fairly represents, even at the present day, but in a gradually decreasing degree, southern notions on this subject. Charles Lamb had a poor opinion of the humorous faculty of the Scots whom he met in London. But the gentle 'Elia' was clearly a prejudiced authority. 'I have been trying all my life to like Scotchmen,' he said, 'and I am obliged to desist from the experiment in despair. They cannot like me,' he frankly adds, 'and, in truth, I never knew one of that nation who attempted to do it.' Sir Walter Scott was admittedly not devoid of humour. In recent years the novels of the

'Kailyard,' as of the older Scottish, school have done much to modify the prevalent idea south of the Border that the Scotsman is devoid of a real sense of the humorous; the unqualified success of a well-known Scottish play which was lately running in the Metropolis is a sign of the times. Beyond doubt, it is being more generally recognised that the Scotsman's capacity for humour is greater, and his capacity for whisky less, than has long been popularly supposed. The day has come when Dean Ramsay can be read with pleasure and profit by the English public, and when the dry but genuine humour of the Scottish character is being better understood and appreciated in England.

If, by an effort of the imagination, we can conceive of emigration from Scotland to London coming to a sudden stop, it can readily be believed that less than a generation would suffice for the disappearance of many distinctively Scottish characteristics from the Metropolis. It is the constant infusion of fresh blood from across the Border that preserves the national spirit from decay. As long as London continues to be a field of operations—often a preparatory field for a larger career abroad—in which the activities of the young Scot find greater scope than in his own country, so long will the stream of emigration continue to pour southwards. Fortunately, the patriotic feeling of Scotsmen in London is in no way inconsistent with a fervent spirit of imperialism. On the contrary, the truly patriotic Scot is usually a truly patriotic Briton. He may, and frequently does, object to be called a patriotic Englishman, for his idea of the relations between the two countries is that of co-partnership, not of absorption; but he is ever ready to stand shoulder to shoulder with his English comrades in defence of national liberties; and he glories, equally with the sturdiest John Bull, in the fact that he is a dweller in the mightiest city and a citizen of the greatest Empire which the world has ever seen.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXI.



LEAVING the Club, the *rickshā* coolie proceeded in the opposite direction to that which Browne had followed when in search of the gentleman to whom he had presented the letter of introduction. At first, and while he remained in the Queen's Road, there was but little difference to be observed; the thoroughfare was a fine one, broad and commodious. After one or two turnings, however, matters changed somewhat, and he found himself in a labyrinth of narrow, tortuous streets, the shops on either side of which were small and

mean, the names over the doors being for the most part in the Celestial characters. The confusion that existed in the streets was indescribable. Here the Mongolian was to be seen in all his glory. But, in addition to the Chinamen, almost every nationality known to the Asiatic world was represented; while through it all, towering head and shoulders above the crowd, stalked the stately Sikhs on patrol duty. At last, after a drive that had occupied perhaps a quarter of an hour, the coolie drew up before what was probably the largest shop Browne had yet seen in the neighbourhood. It was built in the Chinese

fashion, and, in order that West and East may meet on an equal footing, had two names over the door, one in Chinese writing, the other plainly printed in English characters: 'Johann Schmidt.' Browne alighted, and, having told his coolie to wait, entered the shop. He was greeted on the threshold by a stout Chinaman, who was plainly in charge.

'What for you piecee look see?' inquired the latter.

Browne, not being adept at pidgin-English, replied to the effect that he desired to see and speak with Herr Schmidt. Whether the man comprehended or not he could not tell; at any rate he left him alone in the shop while he disappeared behind a curtain at the farther end. When he returned, a few seconds later, he was accompanied by a portly individual, whose nationality the veriest tyro could not mistake. As if to make it doubly sure, he carried in his hand an enormous pipe fashioned after the pattern of the Fatherland. His face was large and almost spherical; his hair was close-cropped, as was his beard; he was attired in white trousers, a flannel shirt which would have been none the worse for a wash, and a black alpaca coat. The Teutonic stolidity was certainly well developed in him. On seeing Browne he stopped and sucked contentedly at his pipe, but said nothing. The younger man was the first to speak.

'You are Herr Schmidt, I believe?' said Browne in English. The other nodded his head, but still did not venture upon speech. 'I bring a letter of introduction to you,' said Browne, dropping his voice a little, as though he were afraid of being overheard. 'It is from a certain Herr Otto Sauber, whom I met in Paris about two months ago. He told me that you would do all you could for me in a certain matter.'

'Herr Sauber?' inquired the German. 'I cannot diink that I am mit him acquainted.'

Browne's disappointment was plainly discernible on his face. He had fully expected that immediately he presented the letter Sauber had given him this mysterious Johann Schmidt would understand and arrange everything. This, however, did not appear to be the case. The man before him sucked stolidly at his pipe, and watched him with eyes that had no expression in them. The position was embarrassing, to say the least of it. Was it possible that his mission was going to prove futile after all, and that for the good he was to get out of it he might just as well not have wasted his time by calling at Hong-kong at all? For upwards of thirty most uncomfortable seconds the two men stood watching each other. Then Browne spoke.

'You are quite sure, I suppose,' he said, 'that you do not know the gentleman in question? I certainly understood from him that you had been acquainted with each other for many years.'

The German shook his head. Then he said

slowly, 'Perhaps, mein frien, if you would mit me come, I will talk mit you ubon the madder. So many men do say dot they know Johann Schmidt. But Johann do not know dem. If you to mine office would come, we will talk mit each other dere.'

Browne accordingly followed him behind the curtain to which I have alluded. There he found, to his surprise, a most comfortable and, I might almost add, luxurious apartment. The walls were hung with pictures of considerable merit, interspersed with innumerable curios collected from almost every country in the Farther East. In any other place the room might have ranked as a fairly noteworthy apartment; but here, surrounded by so much that was sordid—nay, almost barbaric—it was little short of unique. Pointing to a long bamboo chair which fitted a corner beneath an enormous Cantonese dragon, used for burning pastiles, the German bade Browne seat himself. Before the latter did so, however, he handed the German the letter with which Herr Sauber had furnished him. The other took it, cut the flap of the envelope with a jade paper-knife, and, drawing forth the contents, placed an enormous pair of spectacles upon his nose, and read them thoroughly. Upwards of five minutes had elapsed between the time Browne had given him the letter until he spoke again. These long delays were having a bad effect upon the young man's temper; they strained his nerves to breaking-pitch. He felt that this phlegmatic individual would not hurry himself even if another's existence depended upon it. To all intents and purposes he had united in his person the apathy of the Asiatic with the stolidity of the Teuton.

'Now dat I look ubon it, I do remember Herr Sauber,' the other replied. 'It was once dat we very good friends were, but it is many years dat I heard of him.' The old fellow wagged his head solemnly until his glasses shook upon his nose. The recollection of the incident, whatever it was, seemed to afford him considerable satisfaction, though why it should have done so was by no means apparent to Browne.

'But with regard to what he says in the letter?' the young man at last exclaimed in desperation. 'Will you be able to help me, do you think?'

'Ah! I know noddings about dat,' said Schmidt. 'I do not understand what dis business ia. If it is Chinese silk, or curios, or gondiments of any kind, den I know what you want. Dere is no one on dis island can subbly you so goot as Johann Schmidt.'

Browne did not know what to say. For his own sake he knew that it would not be safe to broach such a delicate subject to a man like the one seated before him, whose only idea in life seemed to be to cross one fat leg over the other and to fill and smoke his pipe until the room was one large tobacco-cloud, unless he was quite

certain of that person's identity with the individual to whom he had been directed to apply.

'To put the matter in a nutshell,' said Browne, lowering his voice a little in order that it should not carry farther than the man seated before him, 'I understood from Herr Sauber that if any one happened to have a friend who had the misfortune to be compelled to stay rather longer in a certain place than was quite conducive to his health or peace of mind, by applying to you an arrangement might possibly be made whereby his release might be effected.'

Herr Schmidt for the first time took the pipe out of his mouth and looked at him. 'Bardou, mein frien, but I do not understand what is meant by dat speech,' he said. 'If de place where dat frien of yours is living is not to his health suited, why does not he elsewhere go?'

Though Browne felt morally certain that the man understood what he meant, he did not feel justified in speaking more plainly at the moment. He had to feel his way before he definitely committed himself. However, a little reflection was sufficient to show him that it would be impossible to make any progress at all unless he spoke out, and that even in the event of his doing so he would not be placing himself in any way in the other's power. He accordingly resolved upon a line of action.

'The truth of the matter is, Herr Schmidt,' he said, leaning a little forward and speaking with all the emphasis of which he was master, 'I happen to have a friend who is at the present time confined on a certain island. He is in delicate health, and his friends are anxious to get him away. Now, I have been informed that, if suitable terms can be arranged, it would be possible for you to effect this escape. Is this so?'

'Mine goot frien,' said the German, 'let me tell you dat you speak too plain. The words dat you talk mit me would make trouble mit my friens de police. Besides, dere is no esgaping from der jail ubon dis island.'

'I did not say anything about the jail upon this island,' said Browne; 'the place I mean is a very long way from here.'

'Well then, Noumea, perhaps?'

'No, not Noumea,' said Browne. 'If I am to enter into more explanations, I might say that my friend is a Russian, and that he is also a political prisoner.' He stopped and watched Herr Schmidt's face anxiously. The latter was sitting bolt upright in his chair, with a fat hand resting on either knee; his spectacles were pushed on to the top of his head, and his long pipe was still in his mouth. Not a sign escaped him to show that he understood.

'I dink dat mein old comrade, Herr Sauber, must have been drunken mit too much schnapps

when he talk mit you. What should Johann Schmidt have to do mit Russian bolitical brisoners? His piziness is mit de curios of China, mit silk, rice, ginger, but not mit de tings you do speak to him about.'

'Then I am to understand that you can do nothing to help me?' said Browne, rising from his chair as if to take leave.

'For mineself it is not possible,' returned the other, with great deliberation. 'But since you are a frien of mein old comrade Sauber, den I tink over tings and gause inquiries to be made. Dis a very strange work is, and dere are many men in it. I do not tell you dat it gannot be done, but it will be difficult. Perhaps dere may be a man to be found who will gommunicate mit your friend.'

The meaning of this speech was perfectly clear to him. In plain English, it, of course, meant that, while Herr Schmidt was not going to commit himself, he would find some one else who would.

'I should be under a lifelong obligation if you would do so,' said Browne. 'And what is more, I may as well say now I am not afraid to pay handsomely for the service rendered.'

This time there was a twinkle to be seen in the German's eye. 'I know noddings at all about what you speak; you will remember dot,' said he. 'But I will do de best I can. If you write me now on a paper de name of your frien, and de place where he is—how shall we say?—now staying, I will let you know what de price would be, and when der work can be done. It will be—how you call it?—a ready-money transaction.'

'I desire it to be so,' said Browne a little shortly.

There was silence between them for a few moments. Then Schmidt inquired where Browne's yacht was anchored. Browne informed him; and as he did so it struck him that this was a rather curious remark upon his companion's part, if, as he had led him to believe at the beginning of the interview, he knew nothing whatever about his coming to Hong-kong. He did not comment upon it.

'Dat is goot, den,' said Schmidt. 'If I find a man who will run de risk, den I will gommunicate mit you before den o'clock to-night.'

Browne thanked him; and, feeling that they had reached the end of the interview, bade him good-bye and passed through the shop out into the street once more. His coolie was still seated on the shafts of his *rickshā*; and when Browne had mounted they returned at a smart trot, by the way they had come, to the Club. Here he found his friends awaiting him. They had done the sights of the city, and were now eager to get back to the yacht once more.

THE SILVER SEA-TROUT.



It is undeniable that the hardened salmon-fisher will, under all circumstances of time and place, maintain the absolute superiority of salmon-fishing to every other form of sport, whether by land or sea. The hunting-man may talk of his love for the woodland and the furrow, for the music of horn and hound, and the little red rover whose chase makes the welkin ring, and may say it is the 'sport of kings.' The yachting-man may steep his affections in the ocean, and declaim at length of the peerless beauty of his racing '40,' as, with her white wings spread, she ploughs her way through the flashing waters, cutting the blue waves like a knife, and dashing the white foam from her bows—a thing of life and joy. And so with the proud possessors of deer-forest and grouse-moor, the former perhaps at the princely price of fifty pounds a stag, or more. They may dwell on the special delights of the stalk and the grouse-drive, the dogs working on the lill, the whir of the covey as they rise, or the sweep of an old blackcock as he circles high in the air. But it is all to no purpose; the salmon-fisher remains of the same opinion still, and no 'bigot of the iron time,' of whom the great Sir Walter speaks, ever held to his opinion more firmly than he. And if the fisherman of anything less than the lordly *Salmo salar* suggests that his own choice form of sport is worthy the attention of all brethren of the angle, and may, in some aspects, even surpass the quest of the kingly fish, the salmon-fisher, it is true, may not, out of a studious politeness, say much in reply, but assuredly he will *think* a good deal. If he does not deem it worth while to dispute the statement, you may take it as equally certain that he does not admit it as true.

Yet there is another kind of fishing which has in it elements of fascination and variety, which costs less, and which, from some points of view at least, may almost claim an equality of pleasure and interest with the greater form of sport: we mean the pursuit of the sea-trout, the *Salmo trutta* or *Fario argenteus* of the naturalist. To begin with, it has, as I have said, an element of variety. I suppose it is pretty well established that the great *Salmo salar* will not, under any known circumstances—except perhaps once in a lifetime—rise to an artificial fly in the sea, or even in the brackish water of an estuary; and that if you wish to catch him there you must take your chance, and that a very second-rate one, of securing him by trolling with the minnow, prawn, sand-eel, or other comparatively ignoble lure. But the lively sea-trout, whether full-grown or in the youthful state distinguished throughout the north, south, and west of Scotland by the names of

the *finnock*, the *herling*, and the *whitting*, rises readily to the fly in the voes and sounds of Orkney and Shetland, in the sea-lochs of the Western Highlands, and in the tidal rivers both of the east and west coasts of Scotland; and very pretty and attractive fishing it is, and often full of pleasurable excitement.

To drift along the bays of a western sea-loch, such as we know well, and, with a favourable breeze from the seaward, to cast towards the shore, under the overhanging brow of tangle-covered gray rock, or by margin of yellow sand, with here and there a tree bending from the green bracken-covered sward towards the water's edge; to hook a three-pounder sea-trout, strong, bright as silver, and instinct with life, now spinning out the reel with a rapid 'birr' towards that dangerous floating mass of seaweed, now causing you quickly to lower the point of your rod as he springs a couple of feet in the air; and finally to land him from the limpid sea-green water, and see this fine fish struggling, but in safety, in the bottom of the boat, are each and all agreeable sensations to the eye and heart of the angler. All around you are the eternal hills—the two 'Shepherds of Etive' (*Buachail Etive*) guarding the distant pass, the peaks of Ben Starav and Ben Cruachan piercing the mist above you, and nothing but mountains, sea, and sky everywhere. Here a mallard drake or brown eider-duck skims along the surface of the loch; there a pied oyster-catcher hurries across your bows; while yonder under the trees by the shore is a stag from the great forest hard by, standing at gaze. What more wild or fitting accompaniments to sport could the votary of old Izaak's gentle art, or the lover of Nature and its sights and sounds, desire?

But the haunts of the sea-trout are as various as their idiosyncrasies and moods. Granted a possible run from the sea, and you shall find them in almost all waters. With a faculty for travel and exploration unrivalled by any other fresh-water fish in our islands, and a seemingly dauntless courage, they will pass through river and loch to the farthest and most inaccessible streams among the hills, and ascend these, over falls and through rapids, almost to their sources, provided only they have water to cover them and food sufficient to exist upon. And there are few prettier sights to the eye of the angler than to see the sea-trout leaping the white falls of one of these mountain streams, often failing in the attempt at first, but renewing it again and again.

The lochs and rivers of the west coast of Scotland and of the Outer and Inner Hebrides, taken as a whole, provide—with the exception perhaps of Orkney and Shetland, some of the Aberdeenshire rivers, and the northern and north-

eastern coasts of Sutherland—the best sea-trout fishing in the British Isles, although the lochs and rivers of the west coast of Ireland also yield, many of them, exceedingly fine sport. Naturally, however, the number, character, and size of the fish caught vary considerably in different lochs and streams. A really good sea-trout loch, with a free run from the sea, and the chance of an occasional salmon or grilse to add variety to the basket, is a very desirable possession; and on a rough day, to hook a good fish, fresh-run from the sea, on a small fly-rod and fine tackle, from a rocking boat, is always an exciting performance; as it is exhilarating on a bright and sunny one to see his silver side glinting through the blue water as, having taken your fly well on the surface, he goes off on his first strong rush towards the deep water. Yet, for our own part, we prefer to catch sea-trout, when we can, in a good Highland river. The rapid sweep of water, the rugged banks, the rocks and boulders in mid-stream, all give additional chances to the fish, and add appreciably to the zest of play and capture; while the work for them is distinctly harder, and there is an infinitely greater variety of incident than can ever be the case in fishing from a boat.

We know a typical river of this kind, famous for its salmon and sea-trout fishing, where the sport is no arm-chair pastime—turbulent in places with a wealth of white water and curling wave, but in others possessing those delightful reaches and pools beloved of the sea-trout, where the strong rush of the water shades off into the more gently flowing and silently rippling run of perhaps three to four or five feet in depth. Wherever you find such places, they are an almost never-failing home of the *Fario argenteus*. But still, fish over them never so deftly, and with the most cunningly devised flies, you will not always succeed in tempting those most capricious beauties of the stream to rise. In many things, indeed, they are uncommonly akin to their great relative the *Salmo salar*, and in nothing, we think, more so than their extreme sensitiveness to conditions of weather and water, particularly the former. For our own part, in fishing for sea-trout with fly—and we do not care for any other mode—there is nothing we dislike so much as a dark, heavy sky, or mist, or a close, warm, windless day, for under such conditions the attempt is almost always labour lost; while, on the other hand, there is nothing we want more than bright sunshine, with perhaps occasional passing clouds and a few drops of rain to freshen the water, a cool westerly breeze, and, towards evening, an absolutely clear atmosphere and sky. Then there are no fish, in our experience, which will rise more freely or more gamely, particularly just at and after sunset; and if the water be also in a favourable condition—neither too high nor too low—and the fish there and fresh up from the sea, any average fisherman should have no

difficulty in making a heavy basket in a comparatively short space of time. The habits of the sea-trout are singular in several respects, and differ considerably from those of the yellow trout; but we have observed that, given fairly favourable conditions of weather and water, there are generally at least three distinct 'takes' or rises in the course of the day—namely, one in the early morning; one in the afternoon, some time between three and five o'clock; and one, as we have said—and that the best of all—just at and after sunset until dark.

Of course the weight of sea-trout varies very considerably, from the heavy fish of four, five, and six pounds got on the Sutherland and Hebridean coasts, or in the voes of Shetland trolling with the sand-eel or minnow, to the lively and sportive herling or finnock of the Esk, the Annan, the Awe, the Earn, and other rivers, which average from half-a-pound to a pound. The gameness, strength, and agility, if we may use the word, of these yearling sea-trout, on their first return from the salt water to their natal element, are extraordinary, and, with the more delicate kinds of tackle, in a strong, free-running stream, they give altogether excellent sport. But there are two special necessities in fishing for them, and these are a reel which runs with perfect smoothness and freedom, and a rod with a reasonably pliant top. The mouth of the sea-trout, particularly when it comes up from the sea as a finnock, is much softer than that of the yellow trout, and it is always a more volatile fish, so that any check on the reel, or extra stiffness in the rod, when the fish takes the fly, especially in a heavy stream, almost certainly means the speedy freedom of the fish and the profound disgust of the angler.

In fishing a West Highland river for sea-trout during the month of September last, with one or two friends, we hooked and ran no less than fifteen salmon and grilse on small trout-flies and comparatively fine tackle, and that, curiously enough, when none of the salmon species proper would so much as look at an ordinary salmon-fly even of the smallest size. Needless to say that, with such tackle, a light rod, and a swift and heavy running water, we did not land a large proportion of these fish, while some of them made very short work of cast and flies; but that we even landed five of the grilse hooked under such conditions may be regarded as a fortunate circumstance, and no doubt it bespoke the exercise of considerable patience and anxiety in the effort! Naturally, however, those five grilse had an added value in our eyes; and yet we must confess we were, in catching them, not very unlike that apocryphal Indian sportsman who is said to have gone out to shoot in the jungle with ball-cartridge in the right barrel for tiger, and No. 8 shot in the left barrel for snipe, but who incontinently discharged the right barrel at the snipe and reserved the left, with its snipe-dust, for the tiger!

But even if there be no salmon or grilse possible or likely, there is always the chance of a good sea-trout fresh from the ocean; and no better sport could be wished for by the ordinary angler than to hear the music of the reel break out in double time, and to find a dancing bar of white and silver, well up to three or four pounds weight, making straight across the pool and causing the point of his rod to bend like a whip; and when at length the fish has made his last leap for freedom, and is now fairly played, netted, and grassed, there is, for the time at least, one pleased and happy man in the world.

Perhaps it may seem strange this apparently insatiate desire of the average Briton to be always

'killing something,' and still more so to have it recognised by the world at large that this particular form of the exercise falls to be counted as among the purest, simplest, and most harmless of life's pleasures. But so it is, and has ever been; and so apparently it will be until the end of the chapter.

So hie to the river wi' me, lad,
That runs to the sounding sea;
Together we'll tread its crystal depths,
Where the silver trout leap free:
The sun shines down from the azure sky,
And the fresh breeze curls the pool,
And we'll tempt these fickle beauties forth
If we stay till the moon rise full.

THE MAKING OF A MAN.

CHAPTER V.—A NIGHT OF STORM.



LEFT alone, Dick tried to be indifferent to what had happened. He flung himself on the bed—the only seats in the room were benches without backs—and tried to find interest in the last number of *Chambers's Journal*. He even refrained from questioning Pastor's wife, when she brought in his supper, as to what had become of her husband. She, poor drudge! probably knew nothing, but was ready enough to talk of the fury of the storm, which made it impossible to light a fire in the *patio*; but as she spoke the force of the wind died away. It was only the lull that precedes the hurricane. The atmosphere became suffocating. Dick could not eat the unpleasant-looking food the woman placed anyhow on the table. He tried to pass the time smoking at the open door, watching the lightning that showed up the black storm-cloud fast rolling across the plain, which lay flat and bare before him. Then he tried to write a letter to his sister, but found he could not concentrate his thoughts. It seemed impossible to write of a life she could not understand; she had written to him so seldom that it was difficult for him to write intelligently of her affairs. He flung his pen away and returned to the open door; Jerry joined him, whining, and with tongue and paws claiming sympathy. Jerry was no coward when he had to tackle the fiercest rat or meet a skunk on the warpath; but this lightning and the oppression of the atmosphere made him miserable and utterly afraid of he knew not what. Such fear man as well as beast finds the greatest difficulty in combating, for it cannot be met by tangible forces. The great cloud drifted nearer till it lay before them as a wall of darkness, trailing over the earth a formless mass, yet converging on a vague centre of thicker darkness. The horror of this darkness was revealed by the incessant flashes of

lightning—rose, violet, white; it fell a dazzling veil, glimmering over the horizon; it struck the fences, flaming along the wires; it shot bolts of fire and tangled chains of light from the dark hollow above to the earth beneath. A murmur rose in the distance, drawing nearer and nearer, and growing into a louder and louder roar, louder and more terrible than the voice of any beast of prey: all nature lay helpless before it. The noise, darkness, and lightning seemed to engulf the solid earth. An icy blast swept before the storm, which now, with an onslaught of hail-stones, struck the house with terrific fury. Dick was terrified; the force and the vastness of the powers of the air made him tremble as fearfully as Jerry. The wretched hut shook; the iron roofing cracked and strained. He remembered thankfully that a week ago he had bound it down more securely; if it lifted in the slightest degree the wind would get under it, and, with a puff, the whole place would be blown to fragments. He seemed so utterly alone with the elements. No! not alone; outside there was that madman who wished to kill him.

'Why had he not gone with Macdonald? Why had he left him alone? He had seen the danger. But no one cared what became of him; let him be murdered, or killed in the storm; it was all one to them.' So he raved on. He thought of his people at home, and believed they no longer cared for him. His sister wrote of her fashionable friends and of her amusements; he had no friends or amusements. She said she was glad to hear that he had a house of his own; she would embroider something for his drawing-room. 'A house!—such a house—a hole. His father's stables were finer than his room.' The hut rocked again in the wind, water dripped through the roof, and the lightning that flashed through every cranny made the candle-light pale. Demoralised by fear, excitement, and misery, the boy threw

himself on his bed and sobbed until worn out with exhaustion. Then he became aware of faint cries outside the door. He listened as if for some new horror. Jerry whimpered and scratched to get out. He got up and staggered across the floor, and opened the door, guessing rightly that it was the cry of a tiny kitten he had petted at times. There it was, drenched by the rain and screaming with fear. Taking the poor little beast in his arms, he lay down again; Jerry stretching himself at his side, forgetting to be jealous of his rival the kitten.

The storm had swept on to the north, the noise gradually dying away and giving place to the not unmusical roar of the rain upon the roof. Dick grew calmer, and now only felt disgusted with himself for having given way in so weak a manner. He thought, 'What a fool I have been, calling out like a baby for some one to take care of me, and feeling miserable because I am alone!' He remembered having heard Mrs Hardie ask her husband if he had been afraid on some occasion when he had been face to face with death.

'Afraid!' he had answered. 'Of course I was in mortal fear. But there was no time to feel it. There is nothing so useless as being in a fright; set to work to get out of danger, and you have no time to be afraid.'

Then there drifted into Dick's mind, with faint confused memories, the words of a sermon heard in the old school chapel: 'Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest.' His obscure thoughts and confused ideas gradually grew clear to his intelligence. Like a flash of light he understood the sermon, which at the time had meant nothing to him. Now he realised that to reach the ideal of manhood—to be strong and of a good courage—it was necessary to fight a fierce fight to overcome one's own weakness, and that to be master of one's life one must learn to stand alone and defy trouble.

CHAPTER VI.—AN ENEMY AT HIS GATE.



HE sun had been up barely an hour when Hardie rode into the *patio* of El Plato. Seeing no one about, he tied up his horse, and, opening the door of Dick's room, shouted, 'Where are you, Milner? Not drowned by the rain or murdered by that lunatic Pastor?'

Dick rolled out of bed; and as he caught sight of Hardie, all aglow after his morning ride, standing in the sunshine at the open door, the misery of the past night vanished.

'I am early,' he continued, seeing the sleepy lad was at last wide awake. 'I have a lot on hand. I want you to ride over to Macdonald's with me to help part some cattle. We can't get back to-night.'

'I am ready,' answered Dick.

'We will have some breakfast before starting. I am starving—only had a cup of tea this morning. See to breakfast while I look up Pastor. I shall have it out with him, and send him packing.'

'No! To-day! But who will take over his work? José is not yet back from Lincoln.'

'I have fixed all that,' Hardie explained. 'Old Anastasio and his sons come over this afternoon; they will commence ploughing. It will throw all the camp-work on you; but you can always go to the old Basquo when you are in a difficulty. No one understands cattle and sheep better than he.'

'That's all right,' cried Dick cheerily. He felt that all his difficulties would be sent packing with Pastor. 'But what of José? He is not much good.'

'He goes with Pastor. The idle hound; we won't miss him much. To make it square with you,' continued Hardie, 'I am going to give you Pastor's screw in addition to your own. You will have his work to do as best you can. Anastasio's youngest boy can help you.'

'Why, that's awfully good of you,' cried Dick.

'Not at all. I pay a man according to his worth. You have done here much better than I expected. Macdonald said you behaved with great pluck yesterday. I require a man with some backbone in this place.' As he strode out of the house he added, 'Fetch up my saddle-bags. Mrs Hardie filled them up for you some days ago, and that young ass, Frank Tod, chose to forget to bring them over.'

Dick brought in the saddle-bags and unpacked them. First one or two books—'And the right sort, too,' he muttered to himself; letters from England, and a packet of newspapers; and in the second bag a pot of butter—'Good; made by herself, too,' was Dick's comment; then a loaf of fresh bread and a ham.

'What luck!' said Dick, arranging the table. 'Had they come yesterday there wouldn't have been much left for Hardie's breakfast. Here he comes. He *can't* have settled Pastor so quickly.'

Hardie stepped in at the door, smiling grimly.

'Did he make a row?' asked Dick. 'You have settled him pretty quick.'

'Row! Not much of a row. He did not get the chance. He swore a bit till I told him to be quiet.'

'His language is awful when he once begins.'

'Yes; but I did not let him begin. I told him I now knew that he was utterly dishonest and all that was wicked; that he must leave this place to-day; and that it would be well for him to keep out of my sight in the future. He looked pretty sick; but all the swagger was out of him. He even began to make excuses. Then he told me he had only stayed on to oblige me;

and, as I wished, he would now go. He knew of work that would suit him in Santa Fé, where he has well-to-do relations. Then he began the usual rot about belonging to a good family, and, after some whining, asked if he might leave his horses here till he could send for them. I told him if I found a thing belonging to him here after to-night I would send the *vigilantes*—the police—on his track. That finished him.'

Dick laughed at the discomfiture of his enemy.

'The tea is brewed, sir. Sorry I have no milk; but, thanks to Mrs Hardie, there is something fit to eat.'

'So that's what I brought along with me. Carried my own breakfast, did I?'

'It's jolly,' cried Dick; and he laid the butter thick on a bit of bread and filled his mouth till he could speak no more.

Twenty minutes later they were in the saddle and off. When they returned to the *estancia* early next morning they found Anastasio and his boys in Pastor's old quarters. A few days later Dick heard that Don Pastor had established himself and family at the *rancho* outside the El Plato fences, already described as the haunt of a villainous gang of cattle-stealers. He had also been seen at the *pulperia*, and was heard to boast that he meant to be avenged on Don Ricardo before he left the *partido* for a distant part of the country where a man of his ability was more fully appreciated.

In many little ways Dick was made to feel that he had an enemy at his gate. Sheep met with strange accidents, ropes were stolen from the wells, and gates were left open, allowing the cattle to stray into the open camp. Worst of all, the fences were cut. This not only caused great inconvenience, but irritated Hardie extremely, for it showed contempt for his authority. Dick was sick of having to ride over and report at Las Tres Aromas that he had found the wire cut when on his morning round. It was plain that some one passing from the *pulperia*, rather than ride round the fences of El Plato, took the way through the gate and across the camp, and, in order to pass out on the other side, had cut the fence. Without doubt it was Pastor. The people at the *puesto* swore they never saw him pass through the gate; but at the *pulperia* they spoke of his constantly dropping in to make purchases, drink, and gossip.

'You must put a stop to this,' Hardie declared. 'I would have him before the authorities, but what is the use? Only bribery would secure justice, and that I am going to have nothing to do with. I am told that the new *juez de paz*'—justice of the peace—is a receiver of stolen sheep, and deals with this very gang. What a country for a white man to live in!'

Dick did not know what to answer. He had no idea of how best to checkmate his enemy.

'Why don't you watch through the night and shoot the man when you catch him?' continued Hardie, with great irritation.

'All right,' cried Dick. 'I'll do it.'

'Meet the man face to face, and show him you will stand no further nonsense. It is Pastor, of course. He is a coward, and if he sees we are following up his tracks he may clear out. I shall let it be known at the *pulperia* what I think of the whole gang—the precious *juez de paz* in particular. Tall talk goes a long way in this country of fools.'

That evening Dick dined and stayed late at Las Tres Aromas. As usual, he enjoyed his visit immensely. After dinner the household gathered in the veranda. Mrs Hardie sang and played on the guitar. Then she made the young fellows sing in turn or join in choruses. It was late when Dick rode away, in excellent spirits, humming over the songs they had been singing, and trying to recall the gay Spanish tunes Mrs Hardie had played on the guitar. After passing through the El Plato gate, and exchanging a few words with the sleepy *peon* who locked it behind him, he turned and rode round the fences instead of making directly for the house. As he came near the place where the wires had been so often cut and mended, with a thrill of excitement he saw a horseman gallop towards him at a little distance, but in the faint moonlight clearly distinguishable. Without hesitating, Milner urged his pony into a quick gallop, pulling up when he reached the spot where the rider was likely to strike the fences. Dick waited, holding out his revolver to show whoever it was that he was armed. But he was not to meet with an adventure that night. The advancing figure suddenly pulled up and twisted his horse round, vanishing in the darkness with great rapidity; perhaps he had caught sight of the gleam of metal as the motionless horseman came into view. At the moment Dick felt disgusted at losing this chance of showing his determination to face his enemy. It seemed almost an unreality, so quietly and swiftly had the horseman come and gone. Yet he had seen him distinctly, even in the uncertain light, and doubted, by his outline, that he was hardly big enough to be Pastor. For what purpose was he there if not for harm? It was not the hour to seek for stray sheep; there was no road there, as there was no gate for a league or so along the fence on either hand; no *gaucho* or *criollo* horse would think of leaping an obstacle.

He sent Angelo next morning on a round of inspection. He returned to report that no wires were cut or anything of a suspicious character to be discovered.

Night after night Dick was up and out at all hours. Sometimes Angelo went with him; and once, together, they crossed the open on foot, and prowled round the *rancho* where Pastor was

supposed to be. Nothing came of this visit to the robbers' den; but Dick's enthusiasm caused his companions to give him the name of Sherlock Holmes. Angelo on these midnight expeditions taught his master many things not to be found in books, but of lasting value all the same; he could not, however, train Dick's eyes and ears, spoilt by a life of civilisation, to see like a cat in the dark and to hear like a dog. Though they never caught any evil-doers, their vigilance had good results, for no further mischief was done. Pastor was, without doubt, a coward.

When Dick had told Hardie he could ride he made no idle boast. As a lad he had spent many holidays with an uncle who lived to hunt; and, finding his nephew a plucky, determined little fellow, he had spared no pains to teach him to ride in a style that pleased his critical taste. Being a good rider, Dick soon became a fairly good polo-player; this ensured him many a holiday, spent at one or other of the neighbouring *estancias*. As a wind-up of the season's play,

Macdonald entertained all the polo-players within an area of fifty miles. They came driving the ponies before them, and spent three days playing polo, racing, and dancing. The one good room in the house was shared by the three ladies—the only ones in the district—who had hard work dancing with the dozen and odd men. Shake-downs and the hay-stack served the others as beds. On returning from this holiday—which he could truly consider the happiest time since he had left home—he was met by Angelo, who, with a grin, told him: 'Some enemy, knowing the *patrón* was away, had not only cut the wires, but torn up two or three of the posts of the fence.'

Dick, tired as he was, declared to the delighted Angelo that he would take no rest till he had come face to face with Pastor; for, he learnt from Angelo, Pastor was seen hanging about when he and Hardie were at the polo-meet. Though he haunted the *pulperia* and rode about all day, he could come across no traces of the wily *gaucho*.

LES PORTEUSES OF MARTINIQUE.



HE Creole *porteuse*, or female carrier, of the West Indian island of Martinique is certainly one of the most remarkable physical types in the world. Her erect carriage and steady, swift walk impress the observer with an idea of strength and liteness; and the puissant shapeliness of her semi-nude torso, ruddily swart like statue metal, her rounded limbs falling unconsciously into perfect grace of attitudes, complete the pleasure one always feels in the contemplation of feminine force and comeliness.

In Martinique nearly all the transportation of light merchandise—including meats, fruits, vegetables, and other food-stuffs—to and from the interior is effected upon the human head. A large part of the female population are proficient carriers. Thus, at a very early age the girl who is fated to be a *porteuse* begins the practice of her life-work. Even as young as five or six she has learned to carry light weights upon her head; and it is a fact somewhat antagonistic to the accepted assertion of physiologists, that, far from checking the growth and curving the spine of the child, she actually improves under the treatment. At the age of nine or ten she can carry thus a heavy basket or tray containing a weight of from twenty-five to thirty pounds. She then begins to go on long peddling journeys with her mother, elder sister, or responsible female friend, walking barefoot as many as fifteen miles a day. At eighteen she is vigorous and tough as a mountain pony, and, like most mountain-bred women, she is comely. She carries now upon her head a

tray and burden of from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and fifty pounds, earning less than thirty shillings a month by travelling fifty miles a day as an itinerant seller. Forty or fifty miles a day, always bearing a burden of over one hundred pounds—for stones are added as the tray is emptied of merchandise, to maintain the customary weight—and this for an income of a franc a day! Out of this franc she has her food and sleeping quarters to procure, and her clothes to get. Twenty francs a year will keep her in clothes. A brief chemise and a light calico robe constitute her travelling apparel. On her head she wears a soft *tôche*, or pad, upon which the *tail* (tray) is placed. She wears no shoes; she needs none. The soles of her feet are toughened to something like india-rubber, feeling no asperities of surface, bidding defiance to the sharpest flints. Her food is simple—five sous a day for bread or biscuits, a few sous for a *ragoût*, a few sous for some cheap liquor to mix with her drinking-water; perhaps fifteen sous in all. Her sleeping quarters might be expected to bring her daily expenses up to a franc; nevertheless, such is her ability to economise that she not only manages to live on her income (which seems incredible), but actually saves enough to set herself up in some simple business when her youth and physical powers decline.

In every season, in almost every weather, the *porteuse* makes her trips, indifferent to rain, as her goods are protected by a waterproof covering. Though she is often wet through and chilled by the cold winds of the mountains, such is her vitality that she seldom suffers from fevers, either malarial

or rheumatic. Pneumonia is her dreaded enemy, as, once it fastens upon her, she frequently succumbs after a frightful illness of not more than forty-eight hours. This susceptibility to pneumonia may be, probably is, due to the tremendous strain put upon the neck and chest by the prolonged muscular tension required to balance a heavy head-load. Generally the weight is so great that, once loaded, no *porteuse* can unload herself without assistance. For her to attempt to do so would be to run the risk of bursting a blood-vessel, rupturing a muscle, or wrenching a nerve asunder. To sit down is to court the danger of a broken neck. Her only safety lies in maintaining perfection of balance. When she desires to unload she asks assistance; and she does not hesitate to appeal to a rich planter or a wealthy merchant for aid, which is invariably gladly rendered.

When assuming her burden there is usually a wince and muscular shudder as the weight is placed upon her head. The load is not properly balanced, and with both hands she settles it, getting the centre of gravity in direct line with her spine. A quarter of an inch any way out of absolute equilibrium and her neck would snap. With her load in perfect equipoise, however, she moves away with a long, springy step in a walk so even that her burden never sways. At a gait that few Europeans would care to follow for more than fifteen minutes, she travels up hill and down from sunrise till sunset (eleven hours and forty-two minutes being the briefest West Indian day) over the excellent national roads, more than thirty in all, with a total length in excess of

three hundred miles. Magnificent highways are these; solid, broad, perfectly graded; connecting town with town and hamlet with hamlet, winding over mountains by zigzags to heights of twenty-five hundred feet, traversing the primeval forests of the interior, now following the edge of a dizzy precipice, now dipping into the loveliest of tropical valleys. Through all these phases of scenery the *porteuse* travels with unslackened pace, carrying her employer's wares to families in the most distant parts of the island.

Veritable Caryatides are the 'girls' who carry the bread of the great bakeries of Fort-de-France and St Pierre. They are undoubtedly the heaviest laden of *les porteuses*, carrying baskets of prodigious size far up into the mountains before daylight, that the country families may have their bread fresh for breakfast. Veterans of extraordinary physical strength are these bakers' 'girls,' and they receive, in addition to their pay of about sixteen shillings a month, a loaf of bread per diem.

Despite the coarseness of their meagre fare and the strenuous work which they perform upon it, these *porteuses* of the 'island paradise' are singularly sweet-tempered. Their speech together is like the cooing of pigeons. '*Coument ou yé, ché? Coument ou kallé?*' ('How art thou, dear? How goes it with thee?') is the usual salutation; and this the answer: '*Toutt douce, ché. Et ou?*' ('All sweetly, dear. And thou?'). But there is something almost pathetic in the cry, '*Ah! décharge moin vite, ché! moin lasse, lasse!*' ('Unload me quickly, dear, for I am very weary'), with which they greet each other at the end of the day's journey.

'A VISIT TO SIR GEORGE MACKENZIE' AFTER TWO HUNDRED YEARS.



N the 2d of May 1692 Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, the eminent Scottish jurist and 'King's Advocate,' died in London. The body, after being embalmed, was brought north to Scotland. Robert Chambers relates that 'he lay several days in state in the Abbey of Holyrood House, whence the remains were conveyed to the Greyfriars' Churchyard, attended by a procession consisting of the Council, the nobility, the College of Justice, the College of Physicians, the University, the city clergy, and many others.'

Two hundred and seven years ago! Yet, a few months ago, the writer held in his hand of the great Lord Advocate of Charles the Second's 'Kingdom of Scotland.' As the circumstances are somewhat extraordinary, a short account of them may not be amiss. To the grand old churchyard of Greyfriars many an Edinburgh citizen feels an almost invincible attraction. Its distinctively

historic character, the intimate manner wherein it has been associated with both the weal and the woe of the Scots capital, the fact also that within its walls sleep many of those who contributed their quota towards making our land great in the noblest sense of the word—all these considerations invest the old graveyard, to every lover of our romantic town, with an interest that is at once intense and permanent. Among these individuals I must rank myself. Few indeed are the weeks during the course of which I do not find opportunity to spend an hour wandering amid the tombs, while around me the roar and bustle of the great city seem to die away into the mystery of infinite distance.

On one afternoon in particular, a few months ago, I was sauntering slowly along the upper walk on the southern side of the graveyard. At last I approached the circular dome-shaped mausoleum well known as the burying-place of Sir George Mackenzie. Hither the boys of last century, and

of the early years of this, were accustomed to troop in order to evince at one and the same time their 'courage' and sectarian mischievousness by marching up—usually in twos and threes—to the door of the vault and shouting:

'Bluidy Mackinyie, come oot if ye daur,
Lift the sneck and draw the bar'

—after which the 'heroes' would decamp instantaneously, fully persuaded in their own minds that, far down below, the corpse of the great enemy of the Covenanters would 'girn' for very impotent rage, and even, as an awe-stricken crone once assured Sir Walter Scott, 'tak' a carwallop in his coffin.' Here also in this dismal abode, during the year 1783, James Hay found refuge for several weeks. He was a youth of only eighteen years of age, the son of a stabler in the Grassmarket, yet he had been condemned to death for robbery. With the help of his father, he managed to break ward from the old Tolbooth—a prison famous rather for the number of criminals that escaped from it than for those it retained—and to reach the tomb of the great jurist. Here he concealed himself, being assisted in his extremity with food by the Heriot boys—to which institution he had at one time belonged—until he managed to get clear away.

Such memories of the past were flitting through my mind as I slowly wandered past the mausoleum, when, to my surprise, I observed the door of it to be open. I stopped in front of it, and endeavoured to peep in. But nothing could I behold. Just at this moment, however, the caretaker of the graveyard, with whom I was acquainted, approached and seemed as though he were about to enter the mausoleum. I inquired the reason of the door being left open, and was informed that, owing to some necessary repairs being effected upon the masonry, an entrance to the upper floor of the mausoleum had to be granted to the workmen. 'But,' added the official, 'all is completed now, and I had just gone for the key to lock up again.' Then it was that I preferred my request to be allowed to gaze upon the coffin of one of Scotland's most eminent sons. But the caretaker doubtfully shook his head, saying that if one individual got in others would desire entrance also, and that the request was beyond his power to grant. But I assured him that my motives were not those of mere morbid curiosity; that I had long been an admirer of the great 'King's Advocate;' and that, as the tomb was already open for necessary purposes, the mere fact of my taking a look at the remains of Sir George under these circumstances would not be so bad as if the vault had been purposely opened to gratify idle desire for sensation.

Eventually he consented. Having procured two candles, he led the way into the mausoleum, but carefully closed the door behind us. We were now on the upper 'floor' of the tomb, which was dimly lighted from *œllets* in the roof. On the

right-hand side of the door a flight of steps led down into a subterranean chamber dark as Erebus. But my guide, holding his candle over his head, called on me to follow him, and together we descended into a pitchy blackness that could almost be felt. A curious musty odour assailed the nostrils. The very atmosphere seemed impregnated with a fine, impalpable, yet pungent dust, amid which the faint lingering odours of aromatic herbs and spices could be traced. The caretaker, having seen me safely down the winding stairs, then held his candle over his head once more, directing me also to do the same. By means of the dim light thus diffused, I saw that the vault contained three coffins. That in the middle belonged to Sir George Mackenzie. Motioning me to stand at the head, my guide slowly raised the lid of the shell, and there lying before me was the dry, withered, crumbling body of the once dreaded 'Bluidy Mackenzie.'

The caretaker expressed bitter indignation at the manner in which the tomb had been desecrated last century. The body had originally been enveloped in a lead coffin; but that had long ago been stolen, and probably sold for what it would bring. The 'shell' wherein the remains now lie is the outer covering of all, and is, of course, far too large for the body. The remains, however, are still covered with what has been a shroud of remarkably fine linen, but which is now almost entirely mouldered away.

After a careful inspection of the remains as a whole, I endeavoured to obtain some cranial measurements; but in the semi-darkness this was very difficult. The head, I noted, was exceedingly small in size, in fact was unusually brachycephalic in character, while the occipital protuberance was strongly marked. The forehead was very low and retreating, while the ridges above the eyes were very prominently marked. The under-jaw seems to have been abnormally heavy, imparting in all probability a look of stern determination to the features. Sir George, therefore, cannot have been a man of what is called 'handsome exterior.' In height he appears to have been about five feet nine inches, and was also of a slim, spare habit of body. His bones are all rather under than over the average size, yet singularly enough those of both the hands and feet were larger than the average. I should fancy Sir George Mackenzie's hand to have been a very long one, with tapering fingers. His right hand I took in mine; and, as my fingers closed over those bony, mouldering digits, I felt how singular was the circumstance that here, in this prosaic nineteenth century, I should be clasping the hand that may have clasped Dryden's or Cowley's or Waller's—a hand that had signed the death-warrant of many a luckless Covenanter, a hand that had assuredly done not a little evil in its day, but had also done not a little good, were that good no more than to establish the Advocates' Library, which

remains as its memorial even until the present day.

In the case of Sir George Mackenzie's coffin I also observed how unfeeling had been the vandalism of bygone days. The ornaments of the outer shell had all been torn off—nay, little respect seems to have been shown even to the remains themselves, inasmuch as the teeth have all been wrenched out of the mouth by people who last century would delight in exciting a sort of shivering horror by boasting of the possession of one of the 'Bluidy Mackenzie's' teeth.

In the process of embalment some powerful unguents and spices had been used, which accounts for the fact that the progress of decay had not advanced further than the condition to which the remains have now been reduced—that of a dry, shrivelled, mummy-like frame. As one gazed upon the spectacle, and thought of the almost despotic power this man had exercised for many years of his life, it was a curious commentary on the instability of all things mortal that there was none so poor now as to do him reverence.

The other coffins in the vault were those of Lady Stewart, which, as the caretaker informed me, had been subjected to very unceremonious usage. He raised the coffin-lid, and I started back. Though the lady died so long ago as 1786, so skilfully had the remains been embalmed that the features were all intact, and the expression of the face absolutely perfect. She was the great-granddaughter of Sir George Mackenzie, and a relative of the family of the Marquis of Bute, who is now the nearest living descendant of the great jurist of the Caroline epoch. Into the other coffin, which was of immense size, I did not look. My guide informed me that it contained three skeletons of members of Sir George's family. But the object of my

visit had been completed. What need to violate needlessly the sanctity of the slumber of the dead? I had obtained the information I desired, and accordingly we retraced our steps to the bright sunshine above.

Sir George Mackenzie was born in 1636, and, as we have seen, died in 1692, aged fifty-six. He was a voluminous author, but will be remembered rather by his *Institutions of the Law of Scotland* (1684) than by his *Indication of Charles II.*, his *Antiquity of the Royal Line of Scotland*, his *Jus Regium*, or his *Aretina*. With respect to his sobriquet of 'The Bluidy Mackenzie,' his alleged harshness and cruelties to the Covenanters have been greatly exaggerated. He was simply carrying out his master's orders; though, on the other hand, the fact is beyond question that his lifelong rivalry with Sir George Lockhart of Carnwath made him more severe than he might otherwise have been, the sympathies of Lockhart with the Presbyterian section of the Scots Church being so well known. When Lockhart was finally raised to the Lord Presidentship of the Court of Session—an honour he enjoyed only a very short time before being assassinated by Chiesley of Dalry—Mackenzie was bitterly disappointed, and shortly after the Revolution retired to Oxford, where he lived a life of study and retirement until his death, about two years after his departure from Scotland.

As I returned to the brilliant summer sunshine from standing in that stifling vault beside the crumbling remains of him who in his day had been so eminent in his country's service, the saddening conviction was forced home on me how subordinate, after all, is the part played by our bodies in the drama of existence, and how paramount is the influence of that tiny spark of life which, withdrawn, leaves all behind it mouldering and loathsome.

THE MAPLE SUGAR AND SYRUP INDUSTRY OF CANADA.



N wheat, butter, eggs, cheese, pork, bacon, beef, and fruit Canada is fast ousting all competitors from the English market. Canada, that a few years ago was looked upon as a land of snow, ice, and barrenness!

But there is still another product distinctly Canadian, and grown in no other country in the world save in one state in the north-east of the United States, and that is maple-sugar. In the provinces of Quebec and Ontario large forests of the maple-tree, from the sap of which the sugar and syrup are extracted, cover the country; and in the state of Vermont, U.S., the maple-tree also flourishes, but not nearly so extensively.

There are two varieties of the maple indigenous

to the soil of Northern America, from which maple-sugar is produced—namely, the hard and soft wood varieties; neither of these grows to any extent, if at all, in the forests of Europe or any other part of the world. Canada thus has this important industry, still in its infancy, in her own hands; and it only remains for the product to be placed on the English market to create a demand for all the surplus she has to spare. At present both maple sugar and syrup are sold at all grocery stores throughout Canada and the United States, and the sale is very large and increasing. Unfortunately adulteration is practised to a great extent by unscrupulous manufacturers and dealers, especially in the United States; otherwise it is questionable whether the quantity now produced would supply

the present consumption. There are still on the Canadian side thousands of acres of trees which have never yet been tapped, and which would at once be utilised should prices for the product justify it. Still, the available supply is not by any means inexhaustible; and, as the trees require fifteen to twenty years' growth before they can be tapped, a glut in the market need never be feared. The trees so far tapped are the wild growth of the forest, though I believe a few acres of maple bush, as it is called, have been planted in the state of Vermont, and promise to turn out profitable. The trees are tapped in early spring, when the sap is rising; March and April being the chief months. A small hole is bored in the tree about two feet from the ground, a tap knocked securely into the hole, and a tin bucket hung on the tap. When the bucket is full it is taken to the boiling-house, and the water driven off. The syrup forms first, and still further boiling down produces the sugar. It is a pretty and novel sight to see the gathering in of the sap; the trees with their little buckets at the foot, the men and children carrying the full buckets to the boiling-house, the blue smoke curling up to the clear sky among the bushes. The tapping of the trees is looked forward to with the keenest delight by the children, who always lend willing hands at the gathering in of this delicious and wholesome food. The sugar is put up in half-pound or pound blocks, much resembling a brick in shape; the syrup is placed in barrels or tins holding half a gallon and a gallon. Until the last two or three years the gathering and manufacturing has been conducted in a very primitive fashion, and the product largely used for home consumption. Now a fair trade having grown up, more care is bestowed on the making, the tins being nicely labelled, and scrupulous cleanliness observed in the manufacture. When the first consignments of the fresh harvest reach the cities they are eagerly purchased, as the fresher the sugar and syrup the more delicious are they to the taste. In the early spring the city of Montreal receives large supplies from the surrounding districts, and all the shops exhibit it in their windows. The prices vary somewhat; but the usual price for syrup is four shillings to six shillings per gallon, and sixpence to a shilling per pound for the sugar. In the western provinces of Canada the prices are considerably higher.

The first time I tasted maple-syrup was in the hotel I stayed at on my arrival in Montreal. I was already familiar with it by name, as some American friends in London used constantly to speak of it to me, and to regret that they were unable to obtain it in England or Scotland. These friends so highly praised the syrup that I was somewhat disappointed on partaking of it at the breakfast-table of the Montreal hotel. The preserve was placed in a small glass jug with a silver lid, and had much the appearance of golden syrup, but without

its consistency. I noticed that nearly every one ate it at some course of their meal, spreading it on buckwheat cakes. When I was settled at my home in Montreal I commenced buying it, and found that the taste grew upon me, and it was seldom absent from the table. The best quality has a delicious, delicate flavour, and a much larger amount can be enjoyed than of either golden syrup or honey, the only two syrups that can be compared to it. While these two cloy and nauseate the appetite if partaken of too freely, maple-syrup has no such effect. I have seen it eaten as a soup from a soup-plate! As it is slightly laxative, it is largely partaken of as a spring medicine.

It is strange how fond one becomes of the sugar. The pound block is cut into small cubes with an ordinary table-knife, and forms a most agreeable *bonne bouche* at the end of the dinner. Of course children eat it and the syrup at all times of the day, and never tire of them. Like all new foods to which the palate is unaccustomed, it must be partaken of several times for its original flavour to be appreciated and a fondness and taste for it acquired. Maple-sugar is used extensively in the manufacture of sweets, and is superior to the common sugar for this purpose. With regard to adulteration, there is no doubt that the Government should pass measures to repress it; and there is strong agitation in favour of legislative means being adopted. Only last spring one of the largest dealers in maple-sugar in Montreal showed me a tub full of one-pound bricks of new maple-sugar. On breaking a brick in two it was found that the outside was coated with a thin layer of new sugar, the whole of the inside being—well, I don't like to say how many years old!

IN MAY.

THE house of May is walled with green,
And roofed with gold and blue;
Her courts are splendid in the sheen
Of every hopeful hue.
The oldest eye that comes to spy
Discovers something new.

But hark! and hush! a perfect gush—
Of music floods the air!
It is the angel called a thrush
Who has such joy to spare.
Oh, drink of it, and think of it,
And broken peace repair!

There blows a breath of new-born flowers,
And sets our souls on fire
With love for this dear land of ours
That dares our hearts to tire.
For all we chide its wintertide,
May knows our real desire.

Oh! 'tis the time when colours rhyme
And sounds are all at play,
That you and I forget we die
And win a holiday.
Oh, lady mine, this world's divine
With You and Love and May!

J. J. BELL.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE EMPIRE.



WE are all Imperialists now. But before there were Imperialists there was an Empire—a tangible possession, with its many birthdays and its festal days, when its children have come of age and claimed their inheritance. Every year some further additions are made to Britannia's quiverful; and of the British Empire it is true that there is always a child-land, rising three or four or more years—some tract of land in south or west, or some island in the Pacific. Some one tells us that no home is happy where there is no baby in the cradle needing fostering care, sympathy, protection, and instruction. We, as a nation, should be happy. There is always some part of the British Empire on which a new Union-jack is flying, some child in far-off seas whose eyes are fixed on the mother country. And there are always other children who are coming of age; who feel the blood coursing in their veins with all the full vigour of maturity, and who look towards the homeland for their birthright and for the loosening of the leading-strings of early years, so that in place of them may grow up the feelings that bind a mother to her grown-up children. Canada keeps as her national festival Dominion Day; the United States celebrates the wresting from the mother country of that independence which the mother country was not then wise enough to give. The birthdays of the Empire's sons and daughters deserve to be remembered, and maybe the day is not far off when we shall keep one great Empire Day; when from the far-off quarters of the globe, from east and south and west, sons and daughters and grandchildren will gather round the mother-throne as at our great Christian festival families gather round the old fireside and strengthen those bonds of love and affection that draw us instinctively to the old folk at home. In empire cementing, as in empire building, sentiment plays its part.

Children have their birthdays and often revisit their birthplaces; and shall the old mother

country, amid her empire worries and domestic troubles, forget all the tender ties of early days, when she was young and free from the cares of many children, and when the fresh joy of living had not given place to the full joy of having given life and watched and tended its growth to the full stature of a nation?

Where did the Empire have its birth? In Winchester, where great King Alfred's memory will be celebrated this year; in London, where were fought out many of those strifes that rent the nation when it was yet young; in Manchester or Liverpool, where commerce works today; in the Cinque Ports, where our modern navy had its birth; in Windsor, where our constitutional monarchy has its chiefest seat; or in Oxford, whence our scholarship flowed forth? None of these can claim the honour. The Empire had its birth in the Golden Age, when Elizabeth was Queen, and Drake and Hawkins, Frobisher and Raleigh, ploughed far-off seas, and Devon men chose Devon's chief port as the starting-point of their roving expeditions.

It was from Plymouth that Martin Frobisher set sail in 1576 to explore the coast of Labrador; and the wonderful tales of its gold which he told were among the earliest colonising impulses felt in England. It was from Plymouth a year later that Sir Francis Drake, the borough's most famous mayor, set sail on the first voyage of circumnavigation undertaken by any Englishman; and it was to this port he loved so well that he returned with the little vessel laden with the spoil of his adventure. Sir Humphrey Gilbert's expedition to found a settlement in Newfoundland sailed in 1584 from Plymouth; from this port sailed Raleigh when he discovered Pimlico Sound—an expedition which resulted in 1606 in two charters being granted by James I. to two of the earliest North American colonising companies, one started in Plymouth and the other in London; from Plymouth sailed the *Mayflower*, as every American knows even better than we Englishmen; from this western port—'the key to freedom in the

West'—sailed Captain Cook in 1768, to explore the coasts of New Zealand and New South Wales, and open the way to the first settlement in Botany Bay twenty years later; from Plymouth, from earliest days until to-day, have sailed those who have in the past and are now moulding the history of South Africa. Ever since those golden days which have shed their light on our island story, when Drake took possession of New Albion in the name of his Queen, and in the same great name became the pioneer of the East India Company and planted settlements in the West Indies, Plymouth has been the mother-port of the New England beyond the seas, the birthplace of the Empire.

An American traveller, Elihu Burritt by name, after a visit to England, wrote: 'Plymouth, mother of full forty Plymouths up and down the wide world, that wear her memory in their names, write it in the baptismal records of their children, and before the date of every outward letter.' What other town in England has so good a claim to be regarded as the birthplace of the Empire, from which the sons and daughters of our fathers have sailed toward the setting sun, under the wooded heights of Mount Edgcombe, to be lost to sight in the mists of the English Channel? How many thousands of emigrants, who have 'turned to the New World to redress the balance of the Old,' have carried engraven on

the tablets of their hearts, as their last recollections of their fatherland, the great castle-like cliffs that hem in Plymouth's Sound, and the fresh greenness of the Hoe! England has many pleasure-grounds and palaces, but only one Hoe; and even to-day its memory is oftentimes the link between the Old World and the New. In all their adventures in far-off seas, the sons of Devon, when they roved far and wide in the days of the Empire's birth, carried ever with them a mental picture of those grassy slopes. If the battles of England were fought in the playgrounds of Eton, her bloodless conquests were made on the green heights of Plymouth Hoe, where the great admirals played their games.

We are all Imperialists to-day. We celebrate Nelson's triumph at Trafalgar, when he put the corner-stone to the Empire that two hundred years had reared and won for us the sovereignty of the seas, Britannia's highways to her children's homes. Might we not also have an Empire Day to keep green the memory of those great sea-rovers who made their furrows round the world and sowed the seeds of Empire? And might not Mother Plymouth—Mother Plymouth, who still sits by the sea and casts a mother's farthest glances towards the far-off children of her early days—share in such tribute to Greater Britain's birth and growth and present greatness?

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXII.

DID you find your friend Schmidt?' inquired their host of Brown as he seated himself in a chair and lit a cigar.

'Yes,' the latter answered, 'I found him, and a curious character he is. He has some wonderful curios in his shop, and I could have spent a day there overhauling them.'

'I should be very careful, if I were you, what sort of dealings you have with him,' said the other, with what struck Browne as a peculiar meaning. 'He does not bear any too good a reputation in these parts. I have heard some funny stories about him at one time and another.'

'Oh, you need not be afraid on my account,' said Browne. 'As I told you in your office, my dealings with him are of a purely commercial character, and I don't think he has robbed me of very much so far. Now, what would you say if we were to make our way to the yacht?'

They accordingly adjourned to the yacht. Perhaps as the result of his interview that afternoon, Browne was in the highest of spirits. He did the honours of his table royally, and the newcomer ever since that day has been wont to declare that it was the jolliest dinner of which

he has ever partaken in his life. How little he guessed the tragedy that was overhanging it all! Of the quartette, Maas was the only one in any way silent. For some reason or another he seemed strangely preoccupied. It was not until some months later that Browne heard from Jimmy Foote that that afternoon, during their perambulations of the city, he had excused himself, and having discovered the direction of the telegraph station, had left them for upwards of three-quarters of an hour.

'I am not quite myself to-night,' he said, in reply to a remark from Browne. 'But I have no doubt I shall be all right again to-morrow.'

Dinner being at an end, they adjourned to the deck, where they settled down to coffee and cigars. The myriad of lights of the city ashore flashed out at them, and were reflected like countless diamonds in the still waters of the bay. Browne was irresistibly reminded of another harbour-scene. At another momentous epoch of his life he had sat on this selfsame deck and looked across the water at the lights ashore. And what a different man he was then to the man he was now! So much had happened that it seemed scarcely possible it could be the same.

Their friend of the afternoon proved a most

interesting companion. He had spent the greater portion of his life in the Farthest East, and was full of anecdotes of strange men he had met and still stranger things he had seen. They reclined in their deck-chairs and smoked until close upon ten o'clock. Then the new-comer thought it was time for him to see about getting ashore. He accordingly rose from his chair, and was commencing the usual preparatory speeches, when a hail from alongside reached their ears. A quartermaster went to the bulwark and inquired who was calling, and what he wanted. A voice answered him in educated English:

'Can you tell me if this is the *Lotus Blossom*?' it said.

'Yes,' answered the quartermaster. 'What do you want?'

'I want to see Mr Browne, if he is aboard,' the other answered.

'He is aboard,' returned the quartermaster. 'But I don't know whether he can see you. I will inquire.'

'Who is he?' asked Browne. 'Tell him to give you his name.'

The quartermaster hailed the sampan again. 'He says his name is MacAndrew, sir,' he said after a short pause, 'and if you will see him he says he will not detain you many minutes.'

'Let him come aboard, then,' said Browne. 'Just tell him to look sharp.' Then, turning to his guests, he continued: 'I wonder who the fellow is, and what he wants with me at this hour of the night.' In his own heart he thought he knew pretty well.

'By the way,' said his guest, 'I should advise you to keep your eyes open while you are in this port. You can have no idea what queer sort of people you will have to do with; but when I tell you that it is the favourite meeting-place for half the villains of the East, you will have some very good notion.'

'Thanks for the warning,' said Browne. 'I'll bear it in mind.'

He had scarcely finished speaking before the figure of a man appeared at the top of the gang-way and came towards them. He was tall and slimly built, was dressed entirely in white, and wore a helmet of the same colour upon his head. From an indescribable something about him—it may possibly have been his graceful carriage or drawl in his voice when he spoke—he might very well have passed for a gentleman.

'Mr Browne?' he began, lifting his hat, and as he did so looking from one to another of the group.

'My name is Browne,' said the young man, stepping forward. 'What can I do for you?'

'I should be glad if you would favour me with a few minutes' private conversation,' said the other. 'My business is important, but it will not detain you very long.'

'I can easily do that,' replied Browne, and as

he said it his guest of the evening came forward to bid him good-bye.

'Must you really go?' Browne inquired.

'I really think I must,' the other replied; 'the boat has been alongside for some considerable time, and to-morrow the homeward mail goes out, and I have my letters to finish. I must thank you for a very jolly evening. My only regret is that you are not staying longer in Hong-kong. However, I hope we shall see you on the return voyage, when you must let us entertain you in a somewhat better fashion than we have been able to do to-day.'

'I shall be delighted,' said Brown as he shook hands; but in his own heart he was reflecting that when he did return that way there would in all probability be some one with him who would exercise such control over his time and amusements that bachelor pleasures would be out of the question. The man having taken his departure, Browne begged his friends to excuse him for a few moments, and then passed down the deck towards the tall individual, whom he could see waiting for him at the saloon entrance. 'Now, sir,' he said, 'if you wish to see me, I am at your disposal.'

'In that case, let us walk a little farther aft,' said the tall man. 'Let us find a place where we shall run no risks of being disturbed.'

'This way, then,' said Browne, and led him along the deck towards the taffrail. He climbed up on to the rail, while his companion seated himself on the stern grating, and lit a cigarette. The light from the after-skylight fell upon his face, and Browne saw that it was a countenance cast in a singularly handsome mould. The features were sharp and clear-cut, the forehead broad, and the mouth and chin showing signs of considerable determination. Taken altogether, it was the face of a man who, having embarked upon a certain enterprise, would carry it through or perish in the attempt. Having lit a cigarette and thrown the match overboard, he began to speak.

'It has been brought to my knowledge,' he said, 'that you are anxious to carry out a certain delicate piece of business connected with an island a short distance to the north of Japan. Is that so?'

'Before you go any farther,' said Browne, 'perhaps it would be as well for you to say whether or not you come from Johann Schmidt.'

'Johann Schmidt!' replied the other, with some little astonishment. 'Who the devil is he? I don't know that I ever heard of him.'

It was Browne's turn this time to feel surprised. 'I asked because I understood that he was going to send some one to me this evening.'

'That is very possible,' MacAndrew answered, 'but let me make it clear to you that I know nothing whatsoever of him; in matters like this,

Mr Browne, you will find it best to know nothing of anybody.'

After this plain speech, Browne thought he had grasped the situation. 'We will presume, then, that you know nothing of our friend Johann,' he said. 'Perhaps you have a plan worked out, and can tell me exactly what I ought to do to effect the object I have in view.'

'It is for that reason that I am here,' said MacAndrew, with business-like celerity, as he flicked the ash from his cigarette. 'I've got the plan fixed up, and I think I can tell you exactly how the matter in question is going to be arranged. To begin with, I may as well inform you that it is going to be an expensive business.'

'Expense is no difficulty to me,' said Browne. 'I am, of course, quite prepared to pay a large sum, provided it is in reason, and I am assured in my own mind that the work will be carried out in a proper manner. How much do you think it will cost me?'

'Five thousand pounds in good, solid English gold,' said MacAndrew; 'and what is more, the money must be paid down before I put my hand to the job.'

'But, pardon my alluding to it, what sort of a check am I going to have upon you?' Browne next inquired. 'How am I to know that you won't take the money and clear out?'

'You've got to risk that,' said MacAndrew calmly. 'I see no other way out of it. You must trust me absolutely; if you don't think you can, say so, and I'll have nothing whatever to do with it. I won't make you any promises, because that's not my way; but I fancy when the business is finished you'll be satisfied.'

'I hope so,' said Browne, with a smile. 'But can you give me no sort of guarantee at all?'

'I don't see that I can,' said MacAndrew. 'In cases like this a guarantee is a thing which would be a very unmarketable commodity. In other words, we don't keep them in stock.'

'It's to be a case of my putting my money in the slot, then, and you do the rest?'

'As the Yankees say,' said the other, 'I reckon that is so. No, Mr Browne, I'm very much afraid you must rest content with my bare word. If you think I'm straight enough to pull you through, try me; if not, as I said just now, have nothing more to do with me. I cannot speak fairer than that, I think, and I shall now leave it to you to decide.'

'Well, I must see your plan,' said Browne. 'When I have done that it is just possible that I may see my way to undertaking the business.'

'The plan, then, by all means,' said the other,

and as he did so he thrust his hand into his pocket and drew out an envelope, which he handed to Browne. 'Here it is. I have roughly sketched it all out for you. You had better read it when you are alone in your cabin, and after you have got it by heart be sure to burn it carefully. I wrote it down in case I should not be able to see you, and also fearing, even if I did have speech with you, I might not be able to say what I wanted to say without being overheard. I will come off at daybreak to-morrow morning for your answer. In the meantime you can think it over. Will that suit you?'

'Admirably,' said Browne. 'I will let you know my decision then without fail.'

'In that case, good-night.'

'Good-night. I shall expect you in the morning.'

'In the morning.'

A quarter of an hour later Browne was alone in his own cabin. Having locked his door, he took the letter the other had given him from his pocket and opened it. A half-sheet of note-paper, upon which scarcely five hundred words were written, was all he found. But these words, he knew, meant all the world to him. He read and re-read them, and as soon as he had got them by heart lit a match and set fire to the paper, which was reduced to ashes. Then he returned to the deck, where Maas and Foote were still seated, and settled himself down for a chat. They had not been there very long before Maas found that he had smoked the last cigar of a particular brand he affected, and rose to go to his cabin in search of another. He had not been very long absent before Browne remembered that he had left the envelope of MacAndrew's letter on his dressing-table. Accordingly he set off in search of it, intending to destroy it as he had done its contents. Having reached the companion, he was descending to the saloon below, when a sound resembling the careful, though hurried, closing of a door attracted his attention. A moment later he stepped into the saloon, to find Maas there, who, for once in his life, appeared to be flurried and put out by something.

'I have lost my cigar-case, my dear Browne,' he said, as if in explanation. 'Is it not annoying?'

Browne felt sure that this was not the truth. However, he did not say so, but when he had consoled with him, entered his own cabin, where a surprise was in store for him. The envelope he had come down to burn, and which he distinctly remembered having placed upon the table less than half-an-hour before, was missing. Some one had taken it!

(To be continued.)



A NEW DISCOVERY ABOUT TRUFFLES.



FROM the earliest times the origin of that most delicate of tubers, the truffle—beloved alike of man and pig—has excited the wonder and puzzled the brains of even the most learned. Everything about the truffle is calculated to invite attention and to rouse curiosity: the mystery of its production and the delicacy of its taste and perfume, as well as its nourishing qualities and stimulating powers. What causes its growth? How does it develop in the earth? Is it the result of chance, or does it proceed from some germ? These are questions which puzzled the ancients, as they have done ourselves; and no reasonable and practical answer being available, both they and we have had to fall back on hypothetical explanations and unfounded surmise. These naturally have not been wanting, and many and varied have been the reasons advanced for the appearance of these curious black balls, if they may be so called, which have always been so much prized as a gastronomic dainty. Theophrastus, who was probably one of the earliest writers to mention the truffle, and, indeed, many more recent savants, as well as his immediate successors, considered this tuber as a freak of nature, and attributed it to the combination of warmth, damp, and claps of thunder. Thunder, indeed, plays a very important part in all their explanations, though how it worked they left their readers to imagine. Later it was suggested that the truffle was the result of an emission of sap from the roots of trees, due to the prick of a certain fly, which it has been noticed hovers about the ground where the truffle is to be found. It was also supposed to be a gall, similar to an oak-gall, and due to the before-mentioned fly. It has only been within comparatively few years that this tuber has been recognised to be really an underground mushroom, comparable with those well-known kinds to be found growing in our meadows and woods. Unfortunately, the discovery went no further; and the secret of the diverse phases of the reproduction of this most interesting growth continued still one of Nature's unrevealed mysteries. Science was balked, and the cultivation of the truffle in a methodical and practical manner remained an impossibility.

At last, however, a learned French botanist, Monsieur de Gramont de Lesparre, claims to have completely unveiled the secret of their cryptogamy, which discovery opens up a new field, both for the student and the cultivator. The explanation Monsieur de Lesparre gives is as follows: It has long been known that each truffle might be considered as a mass of microscopic cells, called 'asques,' each containing from one to four germs, or 'spores;' and it was just the evolution of

these spores which hitherto remained undiscovered. This comes about in a most curious and remarkable manner. It must first be noted that the spores never develop in the interior of the cell in which they begin existence. Eager for liberty, they only germinate when they are transported to the leaf-stalk of certain trees, such as nuts, oaks, or firs; though it does not seem to matter whether these be fresh and full of sap or old and dry. The male spores, once at home in their new quarters, send out long threads or filaments, which make their way either over the surface of the leaf or beneath its flesh, until the females are met with, when the marriage takes place. The female spores give birth to yet other threads, extremely tenuous, which spread themselves over and through the tissue of the leaf, coming here and there to the surface to bring forth a new element, the 'teleutospore,' which exteriorly very much resembles the original spore. As this sprouts in the soil, where it is presumably carried by the falling leaf, it produces in its turn a substance somewhat similar to the white of mushrooms; and it is from this substance the truffle springs.

As may be seen, then, this tuber differs in its evolution in no really essential way from the mushroom; what makes it so especially interesting are the precautions taken by Nature to assure its realisation. As it is necessary that the spores intended for reproduction, and which are formed in the cells hidden in the earth, should be transported to the leaves, Nature makes use of certain tuber-loving insects, who are charged with this task as well as the duty of breaking open the cells or 'asques' which hold the germs prisoners. In order to attract these servitors, Nature employs her favourite plan, and allures the flies to the spot where the truffle is to be found by its most delicate perfume, which never fails to summon them when the moment arrives for their kind services to be desired. The tuber, lacking the perfume, has no charm for the fly, and the truffle is therefore left in peace; thus the spores are not prematurely destroyed, and the pulpy mushroom-like mass does not become fermented before its time. It is this delicate odour which makes the truffle so beloved of gourmets and its presence at our tables so much appreciated. Hitherto, from the uncertainty of its cultivation, it has been the luxury of the rich; but, with its reproduction well understood, a new industry may spring up like mushroom culture, which will give to the poor as well as the wealthy a highly nourishing, sustaining, and delicious article of food. Posterity will in this case owe a debt of gratitude indeed to Monsieur de Gramont de Lesparre for his welcome and important discovery.

THE MAKING OF A MAN.

CHAPTER VII.—A FIGHT, IN WHICH DICK ROUTS THE ENEMY



LOITERING one evening by the fire, Dick, while waiting for his supper, chatted with Anastasio and his sons. Angelo had returned with supplies from the store, and much enjoyed giving out bit by bit the news he had picked up there.

'*Picaro!* [rogue] you have forgotten the cigarette-papers,' growled the old man, fumbling in his pockets in the hope of finding one. 'See, that is my last,' he said, as he carefully took one out of an old case, and began to roll it round a twist of tobacco.

'Ah! *Carámiba!* But how could I remember? There was no room to look round and see what I wanted. Such a crowd, and such talk.'

'Pedro Lopez must be doing a good business.'

'Truly he grows fatter every day.'

'What a life for a man!—on his own feet all day—under a roof from morning to night,' said the old Basquo, and he shook his head wonderingly.

'Don Miguel's *troperos* [cattle-men] were there,' continued Angelo. 'They are only waiting for the moon, to start with the troop.'

'They have fine cattle,' remarked Dick, 'but a wild lot to drive so far. It will be luck if they get them all delivered without accidents at the Pajonales.'

'They have got the best *capataz* on the road. Does Don Roderiquez let his men sleep on the road? No, *hombre!*'

'They will take three weeks to get there,' Gabriel remarked, as he added some salt to the pot of soup simmering on the hot embers.

'Three weeks!' cried his father contemptuously. 'No, *hombre!* Ten days to the river; two to get them across, and another day to round them up and rest a bit, and then four should see them to the Pajonales.'

'That is quick going.'

'*Pues, hombre!* Don Roderiquez counts his days as his dollars.'

'Angel saw Pastor at the *pulperia*,' said Gabriel, looking round to enjoy the sensation his remark would rouse.

'The black fox; what did he say for himself?' shouted the old Basquo.

'Don Miguel has asked him to go with the troop.'

'Is he going?' Dick eagerly questioned.

'He said, "Wait, wait. I am not ready. I have a good business on here." But Don Roderiquez said he must have him; he is short of men.'

'Well, what more, Angel?'

'Pastor had drunk so many *copitas* [wine-glasses] of wine that he talked big.' The lad

chuckled at the remembrance. 'Yes, *señor*, he talked, and I was behind a sack of *malé*, and I heard. "I must drink no more," said he; "a man must keep a clear head and a steady hand." Angelo mimicked the drunk man's incoherent swagger over and over again, to the delight of his brothers.

'What more did he say? Stop that fooling, Angel, and tell me exactly what happened,' ordered Dick, who was in grim earnest, and who could not understand the careless way they treated what seemed to him no play.

'He saw me, and shouted, "How is the *patrón* of El Plato?" And the big man who was with him said, "Tell him to keep his eyes open to-night!" Then Pastor swore at him, and put his hand on his knife. *Carámiba*, but they *were* drunk! They were ready to fight each other. And when they went away the *señores* who stood round said, "See, Pastor means mischief. Tell Don Ricardo what you heard. *Keep your eyes open to-night.*" That is what he said.'

Dick had jumped to his feet, and shouted, 'Here, Angel, fetch up the *picaso* [a black horse with white points]; he has not been ridden to-day. Hurry up with that soup, Gabriel, or give me anything else that is ready to eat.'

He hurried off to his room to prepare for a night in the open. Surely at length his chance had come.

The old man, left by the fire, chuckled to himself, 'Does the lad think he can catch the black fox? If he does, he will find the fox has teeth.'

An hour later Dick was riding slowly across the camp, watching the glimmer of a fire shining like a star in the distance. He knew that it burned before the *ranch* of evil repute; but he observed that to-night it shone an hour later than usual.

'They are late,' he said; 'they were too drunk to get home before sunset. After they have fed and smoked and talked a bit they will let the fire die down, and turn in for the night. Then Pastor may ride out. I wonder if he will bring that other fellow along with him.'

The fire died down to a spark of light, then went out; but no Pastor rode through the darkness.

'He is waiting till the moon sets,' thought Dick. The young moon dropped below the line of the horizon; yet there was no sign of living being in the great lonely desert that surrounded the solitary watcher. The hours passed slowly. Dick found a patch of long, thick grass, and lay in it, wrapped in his *poncho*, tethering his horse to his wrist. He knew that at a sound it would

start, and so wake him. Even at a distance, if the wires were touched, the vibration would travel all their length, and rouse him.

It was a still night, the only sounds heard from time to time being the cry of a bird or the lowing of cattle. The soft darkness brooded over the camp, arched by the star-spangled vault of the wide sky, its circle unbroken by forests or mountains. He watched the constellations circling overhead as the hours went by. Pavo, the peacock, stood proudly erect; Scorpio trailed his fiery tail half over the sky; Orion, the old friend of boyish days, was missing; while the Southern Cross, 'like a standard flying,' reminded him that he was an exile. He recalled the night on the voyage out, when the Cross was first seen; the rush forward of all the passengers, some rejoicing that they were nearing home, and were once more under familiar stars; others, like himself, feeling their hearts beat quick as they realised that they were now in the New World, with a new life before them. He had seen rough times since then. He laughed at himself when he remembered the castles in the air he had firmly believed to be built on solid foundations. Then he began to think of the voyage home. He would not go till he had won a position and laid aside enough money to be able to enjoy a holiday. Things were going well with him now, so it was no impossible dream. Look at Hardie; he began no better off, and now he was a rich man. He planned how he would invest his money in buying a flock of sheep and renting a quarter of a league of camp. Nothing brought in money like sheep. And his herds grew, and his land increased, and the castles reached their airy heights, till Dick fell sound asleep. He woke with a start; the horse had given a sudden twitch to the halter. He sat up. A sighing wind swept over the camp; it grew chilly; a soft white light invaded the darkness; the stars had paled and slowly faded. The horse snorted and tossed its head. Surely it felt some one near. He jumped to his feet and looked round.

Yes! there was a dark form moving across the camp from the direction of the *rancho*; already it was near the fence. Hiding behind his horse, Dick led it slowly along, hoping it would be taken for an animal feeding. Stealthily through the faint light the two figures moved to the same point. Dick allowed the other to reach it first. He saw the man leap from his horse, and, after fumbling a little, bend towards the fence. Then the stillness was broken as a wire rang out, rebounding from a stroke. Dick waited no longer. He rushed forward and struck with his fists, straight and hard. The man, taken very much by surprise, sprang back with a yell of fear and rage, revealing the coarse face and the cruel eyes of Don Pastor. Shouting and swearing, bewildered and terrified by the unexpected attack, he leapt on his horse with the instinct of his race, and


then drew his revolver. Dick was ready with his.

'Drop that and off with you, or I fire,' he shouted.

Pastor steadied his horse, and, bending forward, deliberately aimed and fired. Like an echo to his shot came one from Dick. There was a yell from Pastor, whose horse plunged wildly, then, wheeling round, tore aimlessly across the grass, and soon was lost to sight in the obscure light of dawn.

Dick stood stupefied. What had happened? He was unhurt by Pastor's wild shot from the back of the rearing horse. Had he shot Pastor? He thought so, from the wild yell and from the way the horse had galloped off. Pastor had dropped the reins, but he sat straight; he could not have been seriously wounded. He was gone—fled before him—so easily routed. Why, the wire was not even cut, and there lay his silver-mounted knife on the grass. Dick picked it up, and kept it as a remembrance of the fight. He leapt on to the *picaso* and rode off towards the *estancia* in jubilant spirits. On the way he met Angelo, returning from his post at the *puerto*, where he had been set to watch. He was disgusted at having missed the fight, and eagerly questioned his young master as to every incident. As for Dick, he was all-impatient to see Hardie and tell him that he had met and routed Don Pastor.

CHAPTER VIII.—DICK IS RECEIVED ONCE MORE AT THE DINNER-TABLE OF LAS TRES AROMAS.

HE usual party had gathered round the dinner-table at Las Tres Aromas, including Macdonald, who happened to have dropped in on business that made it convenient to spend the evening and sleep at his friend's house—not an unusual occurrence. All were eagerly discussing the news, brought by Frank Tod, of Dick's encounter with Pastor.

The talking stopped as Hardie stepped in and took his seat, saying, 'I have some news for you, wife. Milner has routed the enemy.'

A chorus of voices answered that they had already heard of it.

'Of course, I might have guessed that! *Evening News!* Second edition already out.' He looked at young Tod, with a laugh that made the lad hang his head and giggle. He had earned the name of *Evening News* from his gift of picking up and imparting scraps of news. 'As unimportant and as inaccurate as is usually to be found in the papers,' Hardie said sarcastically.

'Has Milner *really* fought Pastor?' asked Macdonald.

'Is he wounded?' young Charlie inquired, in a tone of great respect for his companion, who might have received such a distinction.

'There are so many lies about, it is difficult to

know what actually took place; but he certainly had it out with Don Pastor, who is off to-night with the troop.'

'He has an awful wound in his arm,' put in the irrepressible Tod.

'Be accurate, Todie.'

'Is it true he carried a revolver, and used it, too?' inquired Macdonald.

'Yes; he bought it on purpose, they say, at the *pulperia*. If he had been as handy with it as with his knife he would have made short work of Milner.'

'Milner knocked him down, and gave him a black eye,' burst forth Frank.

'Go slowly, Todie,' said Hardie.

'Well, Pedro told me.'

'Never believe what you are told, my man.'

'Especially if you are told it is quite true.'

'Don Pedro, special correspondent of the *Evening News*.'

'Do let me hear what really took place,' asked Mrs Hardie. 'Is Dick hurt?'

'No; he is all right,' answered her husband. 'This is what happened: Milner heard that Pastor threatened to cut the fences or something of that sort last night, as a last little attention to his friend Dick before leaving for the south. Dick watched all night, and towards morning had the pleasure of meeting him—caught him in the very act. He flew at him with a blow of his fists, in English fashion—came more natural than his revolver. Pastor drew his, and shot at him in native fashion. Dick returned the compliment, but, by good luck and his inability to shoot straight, did not kill his man, only skinned his arm. That was enough for Pastor, who turned and fled. This is what I learnt from a note Milner sent over this morning. I wrote to tell him I should expect him to dine and sleep here. He will be here shortly; but, as he had to ride to the Fortin on business, he cannot be punctual.'

'And Pastor has really cleared out?'

'So they tell me.'

'Well, the lad has pluck, to stand up against a savage brute of that sort. You were right about him, Mrs Hardie. I am glad he has done you credit,' said Macdonald.

'Yes, he has pluck, and more than that—determination. I had no idea, till I questioned Pedro to-day, that Milner has night after night hunted round hoping to catch Pastor in the act of cutting the fences. No wonder he blinked like an owl at the polo-match the other day. He must have had precious little sleep for a week or so.'

'So Pastor found the little boy, as he called him, more than his match.'

'Oh, we have made a man of Master Dick,' answered Hardie.

'He has won his spurs,' said Mrs Hardie; 'and here he is!' she added, as, with a smile of welcome, she rose to give him a special greeting and to place him at her right hand at table.

'Here he is!' they all echoed, with a shout of applause. And Dick, very confused, but very happy, took the place of honour. And this evening might be said to mark the turning-point of his career. He had shown what he could do, and won the respect and confidence of men like Hardie and Macdonald, and proved himself worthy of the friendship of a lady whose sympathy and kindly words were to encourage him again and again, even when he had to face greater difficulties than the hate and revenge of a spiteful *gaucho*.

He slowly, with labour and patience, realised some of those castles in the air built in earlier days, and returned on a visit to England with plenty money in his pockets. He is now the owner of an *estancia* as flourishing as Las Tres Aromas, with a lady at the head of it as good and as charming as the one who helped him when he was in trouble and in want.

HALF-AN-HOUR'S CHAT WITH A HOSPITAL NURSE.

By the Rev. ALGERNON C. E. THOROLD, M.A.



THE gentle art of nursing there is no royal road; those who to-day are fitted for the charge of sick-rooms and hospital wards acquired their skill alone through the long vigil of night-service and the hours of daily routine.

Among all the handmaidens of human kindness none are called upon to qualify themselves more strictly than the brave women who from time to time enrol themselves in the noble army of nurses, and who, at the instant and often sad summons of the telegraphic message, set out, not thinking of

themselves, in response to the distant voice of weeping: 'Come over and help us.'

Perhaps few more genuine surprises meet any novice than those which await the entry of the hospital probationer upon her duties; and the real nature of the work, as a rule, comes so forcibly that even if the 'new pro.' does not seek a very early interview with the Sister to ask that her name may be withdrawn, the first three months is in general a time of many tears out of hours.

'Imagination and reality are then so different?' I suggested to my friend, a hospital nurse.

'Yes. Many of those who come in think that they are only wanted to sit by bedsides and attend to the small needs of the patient; but when they find that all the hard work and running about is their duty also, and that they have to learn and to obey, they think they had better not stay.'

'Is not the first real hospital-morning very trying?'

'Yes, the ordeal is severe, especially if the round is in the surgical ward. The dressing of wounds, the bandaging, and so forth bring hitherto unknown and unexpected feelings. The doctor and the staff-nurse know well, of course, the reality of the probationers' suffering, and often make excuses for their temporary absence from a bedside; but as a rule when the rounds have been made a few times confidence and self-control are soon gained.'

'There are grades amongst the probationers, no doubt?'

'Yes. After six months a probationer becomes qualified for night-duty, when the responsibility of her position is of course increased—the Sister and staff-nurse not being at hand; but by this time she will have acquired some of the most important qualifications for her post—self-reliance and promptitude of action.'

'And how long is the entire course?'

'Two years, during which many divisions are passed through—medical and surgical in both men's and women's wards, the Eye Hospital, the Children's, the Infectious, and the Convalescent.'

'The discipline is very strict, no doubt, in hospital life?'

'Yes—almost martial! Method, order, and neatness are primary virtues. Nor are delinquencies when discovered left to be spoken about till next day; the penalty follows immediately upon the fault. Our lodgings in connection with the hospital were seven minutes' walk distant, yet at times the telephoned message would come, "Send back probationers So-and-so," who, on arrival, would be requested, with becoming gravity or displeasure, "to put that bottle in its proper place in the cupboard," and told that then they could go home again!'

'Hospital life is never dull at all events?' I said.

'No indeed. We have experiences of all sorts—some humorous, some tragic. Convalescence often leads to complications, and turns a quiet patient into an intractable one. When the turn comes a good appetite soon follows, and the "niggardly" allowance ordered by the doctor is badly received. Of course the nurse comes in for all this, and she has to promise to persuade the doctor to allow more. "Can No. 12 have something solid?" the nurse asks one morning. "He says he is starving." "Well, yes," says the doctor. "Let him have some bread and butter." The patient is radiant at the thought, and the next meal is awaited in anxiety. "Ah, nurse!" he

says amiably as he sees a plate arriving, "is that the bread and butter?" "Yes," says the nurse; "here it is." "Hullo!" exclaims the patient as he sees a very thin slice put before him, "is that the bread and butter? Well, look here, nurse; if I can't have more than that I'll have none;" and, in a moment, whiz goes the plate across the ward, bread and butter and all! The nurse only picks it up quietly, and says, "Very well; perhaps you will have it presently;" and after a little back she comes as smiling as ever, and persuades her charge to make a beginning with it. Or perhaps the doctor orders fish instead of the everlasting "milk diet." "Fish? Ah, that will be a change!" sighs the patient. This is before dinner. Then comes dinner-time, and with it the punctual nurse. "What is this?" querulously asks the patient as he sees a suspicious-looking basin in the nurse's hands. "Soup." "Soup? But the doctor said I was to have fish." "Ah! so he did; but that's for to-morrow. It's soup to-day; will you have some?" "Now, look here, nurse," says No. 1, "I don't mind a bit of a lark sometimes; but when the doctor says I'm to have fish I'm not one to be put off with soup. Shan't have the soup—there." "Oh, come," nurse says, "the fish is for to-morrow, not to-day; doctor's orders are always like that." "No. I was to have fish; shan't have soup. If I can't have fish I won't have anything." "Very well," nurse says quite quietly, "you know best; I'll bring it again at tea-time." Tea-time comes. "Well, here's some soup. Will you try it? You must be hungry." "No. Take it away; if I can't have fish I won't have soup." "Very well. Perhaps it won't matter, as your case is not a very bad one;" and the soup disappears again. The same occurs at breakfast-time; and at last comes the doctor. "Doctor," says the patient, "didn't you say I was to have fish for dinner yesterday?" The doctor exchanges glances with the nurse, who says, "No. 1 has not had anything since yesterday. He would not take his soup." "Oh-h!" says the doctor. Then No. 1 breaks in again: "Didn't you say, doctor, I was to have fish?" "Yes; I ordered you fish for to-day; but as you have not had any nourishment since yesterday, fish will not do for you to-day. You must go back to milk-diet again." "What! Soup? Never!" "Very well; if you don't like what we are doing you need not stay. There are several waiting for your bed;" and with the parting "Soup" to nurse, he walks off. Then there is a general laugh round at the victim; everybody has kept the little secret well, anticipating the joke of middle-diet punishment.'

'Visitors' days must be somewhat trying?' I said.

'Yes. Two days a week are generally set apart for visitors, and we nurses resign ourselves to the case as placidly as we can; and we need patience. A rigid rule says that no one under treatment

shall receive things to eat without the consent of the nurse in the ward; this leads to endless inquiries. After a few minutes of arrivals a friend comes to the nurse. "Well?" "Oh, please, nurse, may I give my girl a few grapes?" "Yes." A minute or two after the same friend comes again: "Oh nurse, I have given her two grapes; may she have any more?" Then another visitor arrives: "Please, nurse, may my John have an orange?" "Yes." "Thank you, nurse." After a few minutes: "Oh nurse, I have given my John half an orange; may he have the other half?" Then a third comes: "I say, nurse, Mrs Jones is sitting on No. 4's bed, and a-crying ever so bad. She's a-worrying him awful;" and nurse has promptly to remove Mrs Jones, who retires, to recover and return.

'Visiting days are anxious times very often as well; terrible mischief results sometimes from the mistaken kindness of "friends." From behind the screens the nurses at times hear such sentiments as: "Now, never mind her. They want to keep you in; but if you have a real hankering after a thing, it won't hurt you—my father always said so." Of course strict orders are given to the visitors: "Now, Mrs Jones, you are not to give your husband anything to eat; you understand, don't you?" "Oh yes, nurse; of course I do. I shouldn't be so soft when it's against the rules." But next morning, when the doctor comes, perhaps the patient's temperature is much higher than it should be. "What's this, nurse? He has had something to eat?" "No; nothing that I know of." "Well, he has. What have you had, No. 5? What did your wife bring you yesterday?" "Nothing, sir." "Ah, well." After a little the nurse is tidying, and finds in No. 5's locker the remains of a coil of black-pudding!

'Typhoid patients need great watching. Food, other than ordered, is sometimes sudden death. I remember the case of a little boy under treatment for typhoid who was visited by his mother. "Now, Mrs Smith," said nurse, "remember, please, you must not give your little boy anything at all to eat. Will you promise me?" "Yes. Oh, of course not." Towards evening the nurse in charge noticed a great change in the child's appearance, and at once telephoned to the doctor. The same old question came: "What has he had to eat?" "No; nothing but orders." "Well, he has. You can see that for yourself." But no one knew. "Well, he is dying. I can't do anything. Perhaps the mother may get in time if she comes at once." When the mother came nurse said, "You promised me not to give your child anything to eat, didn't you?" "Yes; but I only gave him a little bread and butter." "Ah, well; you have killed your little boy, Mrs Smith. Look, he is dying now." One woman persuaded her husband—a typhoid subject—to eat the forbidden, and she was sent for, as his condition was alarming. "Now, Mrs Hope, what did you give him

when you came this afternoon?" "Nothing; oh dear, no!" "Well, look here. We think your husband has had something to eat. If you did not give him anything we can't do much for him, and he will die—do you understand? But if you can remember what you gave him perhaps we can help him. Now, what did you give him?" "Oh dear—oh dear! Well, some pork pie!" Another day a little girl was to be operated on. "We are going to operate on your little girl to-day, Mrs Green. She mustn't have anything to eat." "No, nurse." During the operation a strange change came over the child, and breathing stopped. "Hullo! she's choking. She has had something to eat." "Oh no," the nurse said. "Well, stop the operation. We must open her throat." The result was a large piece of apple.

'Other visitors come and go, *ex officio*, without notice. They come into the wards as they like—clergymen and ministers of all denominations. They are, of course, well known for their sympathy; but at times they get taken in very much. "Oh yes; he believed it all," said one patient to another. "Oh, did he?" said nurse on the other side of the screen! "Well, I don't think you'll get that suit of clothes anyway." Then there's a laugh, and "I didn't think you heard, nurse." "Ah! but I did." Begging characters are soon known in the hospitals, and hints are given to benevolent callers.

'I suppose it is important to keep the patients cheerful?'

'Yes, though in the surgical ward, where the patients are not bodily ill, it is sometimes almost necessary to restrain them. The patients do not lose interest in outside matters either, and sometimes things get serious. We were called once by loud cries of "Nurse" to two angry convalescents talking politics in the balcony, and the excitement between them was so great that in a few minutes more one or both would probably have been lying some distance below on the ground. Next day they both promptly received their discharge. The winning candidate came through the wards soon after, talking to the men here and there. One old man wouldn't listen. "Don't stop talking to me. I don't want to hear you. Go on now." A little later he woke up to find his bed covered with blue bows and ribbons. Presently he called nurse. "Well?" "Look here. I'm not going to sleep with these things tied on my bed. I'm a Radical." "Oh, it's all right; it's only their joke." "I don't care. I'm a Radical. I'll have 'em off if I get out." "Oh, go to sleep, and forget them." After a few minutes the nurse's attention was called to him again by strange sounds; and there he was, splints and all, getting out of bed. The bows were soon off all through the ward; the nurse had seen enough of politics.'

'Real difficulties take place sometimes no doubt?'

'Oh yes. Those who have laid violent hands upon themselves often give trouble; at times they are quite dangerous in an after-frenzy. One powerful man called the nurse, and then, suddenly springing out of bed, dashed her to the floor. Fortunately one of the other patients was able to help for the moment till he was secured. In some hospitals the surgeon will not sign the admission form in these cases when application is made by the friends unless a policeman is sent in as a special attendant. This is absolutely necessary when there are no men attendants attached to the hospital. The constable's ideas of his duties are sometimes almost comic. Of course, from long practice, a nurse can watch any patient without distressing him; but a policeman's ways are quite different. "Won't you sit here, constable?" the nurse says; gently hinting, "He'll go to sleep, I expect, and you'll be more comfortable." "No, thank you, miss. I'll keep handy." All the time the policeman is sitting close by the bedside and staring at his charge. Perhaps the nurse makes another attempt: "Do you know, I am sure it will be better *not* to touch him?" Probably the constable has actually his hand on the man's arm! "Well, miss, there's no knowing what he'll do. I think I'll be near him." It is found advisable at times to get the constable to take a little walk for a change. "Nurse," says the miserable patient, "I promise not to move if you will only get that man away. I can't bear it any longer." One patient, suddenly frantic, made a rush for the window, leaving half his garment in the brave nurse's hand as she tried to stop his flight through the air.'

'Are the patients, as a rule, grateful for all you do for them?'

'Well, sometimes they are too grateful, and

their feelings run away with them, with inconvenient hints and interesting offers.'

'What do you do?'

'Oh, we stony-hearted nurses have only one rule. The grateful patient is removed into an inner chamber where another hand does duty, but the patient and his old nurse meet no more. But, then, sometimes they are hardly grateful enough. When they leave, the secretary asks them, among other questions, "Have you any complaint to make?" This gives an opportunity sometimes for grumbling. One old woman answered, "Well, I don't think the doctors did all they ought to have done for me." "Oh," said the secretary, "that's your complaint, is it? Well, come with me; there's a Board meeting on now. Oh yes, you must come, please;" and almost before she knew it she was standing in the board-room, before all the doctors. "No. 10 has a complaint to make." "Oh yes. Well, what is it?" But her courage had vanished. "Oh dear, no; thank you. I don't wish to make any complaint at all. I think this is a very wonderful *institooshun*. Let me go, please." "Good-morning."

Sunday comes week by week in the hospital ward as everywhere else, and with it the chaplain's ministrations. Everybody knows the soporific influences about on any Sunday afternoon; but in the hospital I found that the spirit of slumber at times is very assertive indeed. I was not surprised, therefore, to hear that even patients suffering all things draw the line at the sermon, and that over-tired nurses accept those minutes as an offering to their weariness, and are not always ready when the signal for the close comes. 'Well,' nurse said, not wishing, I could see, to hurt my feelings, 'I think we all used to go to sleep on Sunday afternoons, but then Mr Blank was very Low Church.'

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

AUTOMATIC RAILWAY COUPLINGS.



UCH opposition on the part of our railway companies and other owners of railway trucks is offered to the provision in the new Regulation of Railways Bill concerning the compulsory addition of automatic couplers—that is, couplings which shall lock by impact. It is said that this one provision would entail an expenditure of ten millions sterling, and no one could cavil at it if it were the means of reducing the number of accidents to railway servants; but experts say that this idea—which is the *raison d'être* of the measure—is quite erroneous. They quote statistics to prove their case, and show figures for several years in succession, which show that in the United States,

where automatic couplings are compulsory, the accidents occurring in coupling and uncoupling are far more numerous than they are in Britain, where coupling-sticks have for a long time been in use. Taking the year 1897 as an example, we find that on the railways of Great Britain the accidents from all causes were 501, and the percentage of these due to coupling and uncoupling was 3.8. On the American railways during the same year the accidents numbered 1693, and the percentage of them due to coupling and uncoupling was 12.6. We see, therefore, that, with automatic couplers, the accidents in the United States were nearly four times as many as in Great Britain, where coupling-sticks are in use. The opposers of the Government Regulation of Railways Bill have, therefore, some right to assert that the method at present in use in Great

Britain for coupling and uncoupling railway trucks is safer than the automatic system.

THE HYDRO-INCANDESCENT GASLIGHT.

This method of burning gas seems to be a revival of a system which was brought forward some years back, but which, possibly from imperfection of details, hardly emerged from the experimental stage. The new system, which is being exploited by a company whose address is 88 Victoria Street, London, employs an enlarged Welsbach mantle of refractory material, which is placed above a Bunsen-burner, the gas to feed which is supplied under pressure. The light given by one burner has a value of from six hundred to fifteen hundred candle-power, according to its size, and the illumination is pleasant in tone. The novel part of the invention is the way in which pressure is applied to the gas by water-power. This is secured by the use of a cylindrical vessel of copper or tin, which is about six feet in height, and which is a fixture near the gas-meter. Into this vessel enters a constant stream of water, at the rate of about sixty gallons per hour; and, by an ingenious arrangement, the gas, which also enters the vessel, is kept under constant high pressure. It will be seen, therefore, that a water-supply by meter is necessitated by this new system of gas-lighting; but the company hope to very much modify the method for domestic use, where powerful lights are not required. Under present conditions, and taking the price of water and gas at a fair average, the cost of maintaining a burner of six hundred candle-power is computed at one penny an hour, or about one-sixth of the expense of an electric arc-lamp of the same efficiency.

WATER-GAS.

From the producer's point of view there is a fascination about water-gas, for it can be very cheaply made by the action of steam upon red-hot coke; but unfortunately it contains a large proportion of poisonous carbonic oxide, and has no tell-tale smell. It therefore becomes a highly dangerous vapour to employ for common use, although in other respects it is valuable for heating, and, with certain additions, for lighting purposes. The matter was considered of sufficient importance by the Home Secretary for consideration by a departmental committee; and this committee has recently issued its report in the form of a Blue-book—a report which contains a large number of recommendations founded upon the evidence of experts. The committee came to the conclusion that the accidents attributable to the use of water-gas have not been very numerous in Great Britain, because the proportion in which the gas has been used has not hitherto been high; but they note that a large increase in the use of the gas is to be expected in the future, and that the time is opportune for legislation. Their

principal suggestion is the first—namely, 'That it should be illegal for any person to make and distribute for heating and lighting purposes any poisonous gas which does not possess a distinct and pungent smell.' The other recommendations refer to details of manufacture, which are calculated to hedge the manufacture of a dangerous compound with proper restrictions.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION.

The death of Baron de Reuter calls to mind the circumstance that the electric telegraph, which flashes news to us from nearly every country of the globe, is a very modern invention. The first telegraph line in Britain was laid on the Great Western Railway from Paddington to Slough in the year 1838; so that in the compass of a single human life the marvellous system of intercommunication by wire has reached its present perfection. Baron de Reuter was one of the first to see the possibilities of this method of sending news, and started the first telegraphic news agency at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1849, extending his offices to London two years later. Those who enjoy the advantages of the present news agencies can hardly realise the difficulties with regard to information from foreign parts under which their forefathers laboured. Let us take as examples two epoch-making victories, one on the sea and one on land. The battle of the Nile was not reported in London until two months after its occurrence; and the victory at Waterloo, less than three hundred miles away, was not known in the Metropolis until four days had elapsed!

AMERICAN COMPETITION.

Forewarned is forearmed. Although it is manifestly impossible, from economical and other reasons, to save ourselves from the strong and increasing tide of foreign competition in agricultural and manufactured products, it is well as a principle of business life to know our own business thoroughly, and also a good deal of what other people are doing. Ten or twelve years ago the American trade in oatmeal was infinitesimal; now it has increased tenfold! The *North-West Miller*, a trade journal published in Minneapolis, is not content, but scolds its constituents for their faults of 'stiffness and stupidity, or lack of agility,' common to all English-speaking nations. The alert gentleman from the Continent, French or German, does not bore his customers with homilies or sermons, or flood them with badly translated circulars; does not seek to change their tastes, but seeks to sell to customers what these customers want. And this is what the *North-West Miller* wants, however. 'There are districts of England,' we are told, 'into which American flour has never penetrated, because we have been too stiff-necked to go there, learn the people's tastes, and give them the flour which they have loved for hundreds of years.' This homily, meant

for our American competitors, may be as useful here. The American Consul at Frankfort, looking at Europe generally as a market for manufactured products, says that the contest narrows itself down to that of comparative resources, economy in manufacture, and skilful enterprise in selling. In all except the last they have nothing to fear. 'With the most modern and effective machinery, the most effective labour, ample capital, and an unequalled factory system, the Republic in the closing years of the century fixes new standards in cheapness of production, and passes definitely from the rôle of customer to that of competitor.' This is what our traders and manufacturers have to face, as they know only too well; and they can best hold their own by showing equal energy and enterprise.

PHOTOGRAPHS IN COLOUR.

Mr Saville-Kent, who, besides being a well-known naturalist, is also an accomplished photographer, recently showed at the Camera Club (London) a number of fine examples of three-colour photographs of various natural objects, principally orchids. The method adopted for taking these pictures is that of Mr F. E. Ives, and involves the production of three separate negatives taken each under a differently coloured screen. Positives from these negatives are then associated with properly coloured glasses, and the three images are by special apparatus projected upon a screen—one red image, another blue-violet, and the third green. By the touch of a lever these three images approach one another, and finally overlap, the result being a very fair representation of the original object in all its natural colours. It is, of course, of the nature of an optical illusion, but certainly the most perfect thing of the kind which has been yet attempted. Mr Saville-Kent is most sanguine as to the use of the system for naturalists' requirements, and hopes by its aid to obtain correct colour-registration of such objects as corals, coral-reefs, and marine organisms of various kinds, many of which in tropical climes exhibit the most gorgeous tints.

A NEW MOTOR-CAR.

A motor-car has recently been shown in London which seems to be a distinct advance upon many of the vehicles of this sort which have previously been seen, heard, and—we are afraid we must say—smelt also in the streets. It is constructed on the Serpollet superheated-steam system, the boiler of which is supplied with a very small quantity of water at a time, which is immediately vaporised. Moreover, the steam is only made as required, so that there is no noisy blowing off while the motor is not actually at work; indeed, its steam arrangements at all times are perfectly silent. The fuel is petroleum, employed with a

special form of burner which ensures perfect combustion, and therefore absence of odour. In many respects, too, the engine itself shows great improvements, and can be run, it is said, at a cost of three miles a penny. The Serpollet system has for some time been in successful use in Paris on the tram-lines, and it seems curious that there has been nothing of the kind attempted in this country, although we hear much of the substitution of electricity for horse-traction. The subject is one which might usefully engage the attention of our municipal authorities.

MURAL PAINTINGS AT HAMPTON COURT.

A very interesting discovery has been made in one of the rooms of Hampton Court Palace—the beautiful edifice which Cardinal Wolsey presented to his sovereign. It seems that a number of pictures are in course of removal from Hampton Court to Kensington Palace—shortly to be opened to the public; and in the room referred to it was found that beneath the canvas and paper with which the walls were covered were mural paintings of ancient date and in a fair state of preservation. But the nails which had been driven in to support the framed pictures now being taken to Kensington had played havoc with the painted walls; and these holes must be filled in and blemishes made good. This work will be entrusted to a skilful artist; and it is hoped that the paintings can be satisfactorily restored. The ceiling of the room is painted by Verrio, the subject being Queen Anne in the character of Justice; and it is probable that the wall paintings now uncovered may be due to the same hand.

A GIGANTIC UMBRELLA.

Many visitors to various exhibitions will doubtless have experienced the discomfort of being caught in a downpour of rain when in the grounds, without a chance of shelter, either from want of a haven or from the number of people who, in the same plight, are crowding such few refuges as are provided. To guard against this disagreeable weather at the forthcoming Parisian World's Fair, a Frenchwoman, Madame Percha-Giverne, well known in the gay capital for her inventions with regard to parasols and walking-sticks, intends to erect a gigantic umbrella under which thirty-thousand persons can take shelter at the same time without inconvenience. This umbrella, which will be over three hundred feet in height, will be supported by a metal column whose base will be more than one hundred and twenty feet in diameter. The covering will be four hundred and fifty feet across, and will be decorated with various designs in coloured glass, which will serve at night to illumine the exterior and interior with electric light. The inside of what may be termed the handle will be divided into four stories; of which

three will be under the cover, the other above. In each of these three first stories there will be cafés; concerts and theatrical representations will be given. On the fourth floor, and placed outside, under a movable cupola, there will be a café restaurant, already engaged by one of the principal firms of Paris. Comfortable lifts will convey visitors to the summit. The actual surface covered by this unique umbrella will be about sixteen thousand square feet; but the time has hardly come for expatiating upon the advantages it offers or for prophesying its success.

ACETYLENE GAS.

This new illuminant has become familiarised through its wide use by cyclists, and most persons therefore know that it is produced by the action of water upon calcium carbide. Many living in out-of-the-way districts, where gasworks are as yet unknown, would be glad to use acetylene for household illumination were they assured of its safety and general adaptability to their requirements. A committee appointed by the Society of Arts (London) to inquire into the matter has issued a report, which is eminently satisfactory; for, after innumerable experiments conducted by experts under their direction, they assert that acetylene gas apparatus can be so constructed as with ordinary precautions to be absolutely safe in use, and that under such conditions it is as free from danger as any other illuminant in common use. But they stipulate that the gas-generator—that is, the container for the carbide and the water which puts it in action—shall be kept outside, and not inside, the houses where the gas is used. We are glad that the report is of so favourable a nature, for acetylene gives a beautiful light, and will prove a boon to many.

THE TAXAMETER.

Ever since vehicles began to ply for hire there have been disputes as to payment between the drivers thereof and their customers; and an old caricature by Rowlandson depicts one of the heavily-coated jehus of the period, holding a coin in his hand, and addressing the lady and gentleman who have just stepped from his lumbering 'coach' with an air of injured innocence. At last a contrivance has been introduced which registers on a dial fixed near one of the windows of a cab the exact distance run and the fare payable. A few cabs fitted with this desirable ready-reckoner have recently been started in London, as well as in certain of our own provincial towns. In Berlin 5500 cabs are provided with the indicator, which was first introduced in 1894, and has become very popular. The question naturally arises, Why has this not been done before, seeing that there is nothing new in the principle of making a moving wheel register the number of its revolutions? Cyclists have long had such a means of measuring

the distance travelled; and thousands of stationary machines are fitted with counters to record the amount of work done. It is stated that the only opponents to the introduction of the taximeter are the cabmen themselves; others see in it a happy prospect of putting an end to disputes as to fares which at present cause many persons to walk rather than ride.

BICYCLES FOR SOLDIERS.

An interesting paper on 'The Bicycle for War Purposes' was recently read at the Royal United Service Institution by Captain Baden-Powell, who considers that the bicycle will prove of most service to troops at home in the case of invasion. He enumerated the many ways in which the bicycle can be employed, and exhibited what he called the tripartite fitting, by which a machine becomes readily detachable, and can be slung over the shoulder without necessitating any adjustment of straps. The lecturer also dealt with the arming, dress, and general equipment of the military cyclist. He remarked that he had often heard it stated that young men preferred to devote their half-holidays to cycling rather than to volunteering; but he hoped that the two pastimes could be combined. Properly organised military tours would be most enjoyable, and he looked to this source in the future for a great incentive to volunteering.

BOOK-WORMS.

The mischievous operations of the small boring beetle which, under the name of book-worm, devours books and their bindings with a zest unknown even to the most omnivorous reader may be stopped, says a correspondent in *Nature*, by giving the bindings of books a dressing of shellac in spirit. This is easily applied by means of a small brush, dries quickly, and is scarcely noticeable even on fine bindings. We rather question the latter part of the statement, and should certainly hesitate before varnishing a handsome binding. In Sydney, from which city the correspondent referred to dates this letter, librarians are also much troubled with the attentions of cockroaches, which lurk in the spaces between the woodwork of bookcases and in crevices above the shelves; and the best exterminator is said to be Paris green, a preparation of arsenic, which is well dusted about the joints of the shelves. The secretary of the New South Wales Linnean Society has adopted this remedy, and has thus stopped the nibblings at the bindings of the books under his care.

THE STUDY OF TROPICAL DISEASES.

The opening at Liverpool of a school for the study and treatment of diseases peculiar to the tropics is an event of great interest, especially to medical men. The great western port has been wisely chosen as one of the best places for such

an establishment, for here come ships from every quarter of the globe, and it is only natural that occasionally they bring with them invalids suffering from maladies strange to medical practice here. At this school qualified men can join any of the four courses which will be given each year, so that they will be more competent to take appointments on ships and in tropical countries. It is also intended to allow missionaries to partake of the instruction, as these fearless workers often go to countries where medical science is quite unknown; and nurses will also be admitted to the institution. Dr Koch, the well-known bacteriologist, in writing to express his regret at not being able to attend the opening ceremony of the Liverpool school, mentions that the most important disease in West Africa is blackwater fever; but he feels convinced that it can be prevented when its course and character become more familiar. 'It will,' he says, 'be one of the most important duties of the new school to give medical men going out to the tropics a clear idea of this disease, and to impress on them how to make and collect useful and scientific observations.'

POISON-BOTTLES.

Many lives are lost annually by accidental poisoning; a mixture intended for outward application only is taken in mistake for the proper medicine, and death ensues. Now and then a well-known person is the victim, and then there come many suggestions as to the best way of preventing such accidents in future. This was the case when Professor Tyndall was accidentally poisoned a few years ago; and, now that Dr A. K. H. Boyd has lost his life in the same lamentable way, many are asking how such fatalities can best be prevented. It is now the almost universal custom of the druggists to serve poisonous pre-

parations in a fluted bottle of blue glass, so that a ministering hand can be warned, even in a dark room, where the red label cannot be seen, that caution is necessary. As most persons know, certain virulent poisons are not supplied at all to casual purchasers at chemists' shops; but, unfortunately, some of the most dangerous compounds known are extensively used in the arts, and it is next to impossible to place any restriction on their sale. A valuable suggestion has been recently made that all poisons should be put in bottles labelled not only with the name of the preparation, but also with its antidote—thus, '*Silver nitrate—antidote, Common salt.*' This would, we think, be a most commendable practice; although it must be remembered that some poisons, common to certain trades, are so quick in their action that antidotes are useless unless they are actually at hand.

BATHING IN ELECTRIC LIGHT.

The sun-bath is a very old remedy, and was supposed in ancient times to be beneficial in various ailments; and in these more modern days it has been proved experimentally that various germs grouped under the name bacteria perish under the action of sunlight. The electric light is now being used in Germany for curative purposes; and quite recently at the Peebles Hydro-pathic establishment baths made on the German model have been introduced. The bath contains the necessary electric light apparatus, and is lined with mirrors, by which the rays are reflected upon every part of the body. A lid covers the bath, and the patient's head only is not exposed to the action of the light. The heat also from the lamp or lamps does its part, for the patient perspires as copiously as if he were in a Turkish bath. The effect of the treatment is said to be most invigorating.

SOME QUEER TASTES.



THE British schoolboy is renowned everywhere for his omnivorous powers; but it is doubtful if even he could assimilate some of the dainties here described. The Transvaal Boer will eat almost anything in the flesh, fish, or fowl line, for all is grist that comes to his gastronomic mill; and the following mixture is voted most delectable by the majority of the rougher classes: A great square slice is cut off a loaf made of coarse unsifted meal, and covered with a thick layer of jam—preferably strawberry; a row of sardines is then placed on top, and the oil from the sardine-box is liberally poured over the whole. A loud smacking of lips and other manifestations of thorough appreciation accompany the disposal of

this delicate *bonne-bouche*; but the unsophisticated Boer only indulges in this luxury when he means to enjoy a special treat, quite regardless of expense.

The Zulus look upon fish as a species of snake, and consequently impure and quite unfitted for human food. But although they would infinitely prefer to go hungry rather than eat the daintiest piece of salmon or turbot, yet many of them have been known to consume pieces of flesh cut from a bullock that died of rinderpest, when that terrible cattle-plague raged in South Africa. This gastronomic anomaly will be better appreciated when it is understood that the flesh of cattle which have died from this devastating disease becomes putrid almost immediately after death has supervened, and so absolutely dangerous to

eat. Indeed, cases are known where Kaffirs suffered from all the symptoms of rinderpest after partaking of this loathsome carrion, and died victims of their insatiable craving for animal food. If a Kaffir is given a tin of jam, he will, after opening it with his cheap Birmingham pocket-knife, squat down on his haunches and eat the whole of the contents 'neat' with great gusto; but instead of cruelly attaching the empty can to the tail of some unfortunate cur—as the British schoolboy would probably do—the native will turn the tin to good account by utilising it as a drinking-vessel or as a receptacle for some of his various treasures, such as safety-pins, brass buttons, needles, or as a snuff-box.

It is a very serious offence, and rightly too, to sell or in any way supply intoxicating liquors to the natives of Natal or Zululand; but many Kaffirs will, when the opportunity occurs, satisfy their craving for alcohol by drinking quantities of undiluted methylated spirits. In this light and refreshing 'wine' they attempt to drown their cares and sorrows, quite regardless of the nauseating and disgusting taste of the liquor!

The Bangmungwato, or Bechuanaland native, regards the visitation of a swarm of locusts as by no means an unmixed evil; for although the insects play havoc with his standing crops of *mealies* and *mabele*, or Kaffir corn, they furnish him with many an appetising meal. In the early morning, before sunrise, all the women and children of a kraal go out to the feeding-grounds of the locusts, carrying empty paraffin tins, baskets, or sacks, and armed with switches. With these light weapons they kill millions of the insects; and, having filled their various receptacles with the slain, return home congratulating themselves on having destroyed and driven off the ravagers of their crops, and at the same time secured a luscious feed. The legs and gauze-like wings of the locusts are pulled off, and the bodies, having been dried in the powerful rays of the African sun, are ground up into a powder. Into a three-legged pot, partially filled with water, a few handfuls of this locust-meal is put, and the whole cooked over a slow fire until the contents are of the consistency of oatmeal porridge. This mess is devoured by men, women, children, and Kaffir mongrels, with every indication of enjoyment; and, indeed, it may be added that this locust porridge is reported to be most nutritious and sustaining.

Many South African colonists consider the iguana—a large kind of amphibious lizard—a very welcome addition to the bill of fare, and say that the flesh of this reptile is anything but unpalatable. The great ant-bear and porcupine are also eaten by some; but these creatures have no great following of gastronomers of European descent, although Bushmen, Hottentots, and others devour them with avidity.

Of these few South African delicacies, probably

the Boer and his dreadful blend of preserve and sardines will appeal most to the British school-boy, with his notorious proclivity for digesting all sorts of impossible concoctions and mixtures.

A SEASIDE MEMORY.

It seems so strange. Once more beside
The sheltered cove within the bay
I sit. Out on the ebbing tide
The fishing-boats sail far away.
Three cloudy bars, like ships aflame,
Float slowly down the saffron west;
The kine come home, each called by name,
And o'er the land steals twilight's rest.

Behind me lies the dewy dale;
I hear the rippling streamlet flow,
Singing again the witching tale
I heard one eve—long, long ago.
I catch the murmur of her name
Amidst the measures of its tune;
But, ah! the rapture's not the same
As 'twas beneath that quiet moon.

Throughout that soft, calm twilight's fall
We sat in bliss, hand clasped in hand;
We heard the last lone curlew call,
Then silence crept o'er all the land.
We watched the beacon's quivering gleams
Shoot swift across the darkening sea;
And midst their glory wove our dreams
In love's enthralling ecstasy.

We sat till the first stars shed down
On sea and shore their kindly light,
And silently the spectral town
Lay in the dreamy lap of night.
And, oh! we saw such visions fair,
Through loyal Love's far-seeing eyes;
Whilst Fancy filled the kindly air
With music born in Paradise.

'Tis past! 'tis past for evermore!
I hear the bells upon the hill;
But I'm alone upon the shore,
Whilst she is sleeping calm and still,
Her dear hands folded on her breast,
Beneath the roses, far away;
And there my longing heart would rest,
To wait, with her, the brighter day.

ALEXANDER LAMONT.

*. TO CONTRIBUTORS

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
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Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

A DEAN OF ST PAUL'S.

By EUSTACE DE SALIS.

CHAPTER I.

IT was a lovely autumn evening in the middle of the month of September 1558 as the Very Reverend Dr Henry Cole, Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, drew rein before the doors of the far-famed 'Blue Posts' inn, on the east side of Bridge Street, in the famous city of Chester. The slanting rays of a westering sun lit up church spire and quaintly-gabled house, imparting to all around an air of peace and security.

'Now then,' cried Dr Cole, on whom the surroundings produced no effect, so much engaged was he with his own thoughts—'Now then, dame,' he exclaimed imperiously as he strode over the well-worn flags and into the hallway of the tavern, 'how comes it that I am not waited upon? In truth ye require teaching manners hereabouts. See that my baggage is brought in and carried above to a private room; and, hark ye, mind my cloak-bag is handled with care, or else—— But time enough. I would have you learn that a dignitary of the Church—the bearer of royal commands—is not to be kept thus dallying out in the street.'

At the sound of the Doctor's high-pitched, rasping voice Mrs Mottershead, the landlady, made her way into the hall with alacrity, and, dropping a humble curtsy, exclaimed, 'At your service, sir. What may your commands be?'

'Let your future behaviour be more respectful—d'ye hear?' cried the other. 'I break the journey here for the night, setting out early in the morning for Ireland.'

In a very short time the Dean's belongings were transported to a room on the first floor, projecting—in the manner common with the houses in Eastgate and Bridge Streets—over the ancient Rows, and the divine, following, expressed himself as fairly content with the accommodation provided him.

Those were not times in which the clergy could with impunity be neglected. Since Queen Mary's accession, five years previously, no efforts had been spared in restoring, to its pristine eminence, the Roman Catholic Church, and in placing the kingdom once again under papal supremacy. All the previous sovereign's endeavours at Church reformation had been speedily destroyed, and the country groaned under the power of a bench of bishops eager to undo the work of the last reign. The lower ranks of the priesthood, imitating the example set them by their superiors, lost no opportunity of demanding precedence of the laity, and, where any opposition was offered, resorted immediately to practices not at all in keeping with the sacred character of their calling.

The Dean of St Paul's—a fat, pursy man, whose exterior afforded greater indication of good living than did his countenance of spirituality—was a cleric of this class. Arrogant, imperious, and self-willed to a degree, he ever by his conduct created the impression that in his opinion the people were meant to minister to the wants of the Church and of the clergy, and not the Church and clergy to the people's; and, forgetting his ordination vows, his renunciation of worldly things, merely regarded the priesthood as an avenue whereby a man of education and ability should be enabled to rise to a station of power and eminence.

Dr Cole cut neither a distinguished nor a dignified figure as he ambled across the room assigned to his use, and, looking now up and then down Bridge Street, communed with himself as a substantial meal was laid.

'Faith,' he muttered, gnawing the forefinger of his right hand, 'tis lucky indeed I contrived to secure this mission from Her Highness. I have done good work in the past; and the successful execution'—the worthy Doctor laughed as a joke

flitted through his mind—'of my present—er—task—er—er—um—embassy—for 'tis naught else—should ensure me the first vacant see. At any rate,' he added grimly, 'twill be neither for want of asking nor for being dilatory in the carrying out of my instructions.'

The learned divine's meditations were here interrupted by the arrival of the remainder of his baggage. Pointing to his cloak-bag, on which he apparently set considerable store, 'Bring it here—not that one, dolt!—the other,' he cried. 'Place it within my reach, and begone. But stay. Seek the worshipful Mayor, and acquaint him that the Dean of St Paul's, the bearer of royal commands to the Lord-Deputy and the Lords of the Council in Ireland, breaks his journey for the night at Chester. Command that worthy magistrate to wait on me without loss of time.'

Sir Lawrence Smith, the then Mayor of Chester, hastened to obey this peremptory summons. Although a man of standing and influence in the city and the neighbourhood around, and one, moreover, who had been concerned with the public life of his native place for many years, no more than Mrs Mottershead did he dare keep such an important personage as the Dean of St Paul's waiting long for him.

No man's life or possessions were secure in those troublous days. When Mary had first ascended the throne it had been thought she would sternly discountenance religious persecution. But this hope had died an early death. On the pretence of discouraging controversy, the Queen had silenced, by an act of prerogative, all the popular preachers throughout the country, except such as, complying with certain restrictions, should qualify for obtaining a particular license. Stimulated by this example, Parliament revived the old sanguinary laws against heretics, enacting at the same time the most vindictive statutes against seditious words and rumours. By the revival of these laws, and the putting into execution of newer and more coercive ones against heresy, England was speedily filled with scenes of horror. Rogers, prebendary of the very cathedral whereof Dr Cole was Dean; Hooper, Bishop of Gloucester; Ridley of London; Latimer of Worcester; and Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury—to instance a few—had all suffered at the stake for their adherence to the principles of the Reformed faith; and on the representations of Bishops Bonner and Gardiner, Queen Mary had now nominated commissioners to be despatched to the provinces with instructions to the local authorities that the utmost severity was to be exhibited towards such as had embraced and still clung to the Protestant faith. Thus matters stood when the Mayor of Chester was commanded to attend the Dean of St Paul's in the 'Blue Posts' inn.

It wanted but a whisper to the effect that he favoured the new religion to get abroad and Sir

Lawrence Smith knew well what fate would be his. Nothing could save him. He would be degraded from his high office, deprived of his worldly goods, and committed to the flames. But the chief magistrate, as he rapidly made his way up Watergate Street, and, turning into Bridge Street opposite the Pentice Courthouse, speedily gained the tavern, was more concerned with the particular matter which had necessitated the Dean of St Paul's presence in Chester than with any thoughts as to the terrible fate the future might have in store for himself. Had Dr Cole, whom he knew to be a personal friend of Gardiner's, and a devoted follower of Bonner, come into these parts to seek out local Protestants? And if such were the case, who could—for some one must—have furnished the necessary information? His own name would of a certainty head the list of proscribed citizens; and yet, was it not enough that—

'Dreaming, Mr Mayor—wasting precious time in vain dreaming?' cried the divine sharply. 'Is that the way you have been taught to enter the presence of your superiors? Methinks your sovereign's envoy should be treated with greater deference.'

'Your pardon, reverend sir,' replied the newcomer humbly. 'Twas inadvertence on my part.'

'Inadvertence indeed!' snorted the Dean. 'I see how it is. I fear me his lordship of Chester makes little effort to keep you up to your duties in these wild parts. Man, such disrespectful treatment of a powerful Churchman, did it occur in London, would speedily ensure the ill-mannered knave a short and a sudden journey to—Smith-field.'

Sir Lawrence Smith started as if he had been struck. The blood mounted with a rush to his face, and then, retreating again, left his features deadly pale. He had to exert all the self-control of which he was possessed to repress the stinging rejoinder which rose to his lips. It would, and the Mayor knew it, be absolute folly on his part to show any resentment—at least until he had satisfied himself as to the causes which had procured Chester the honour of a visit from the reverend stranger.

'Since you bid me wait on you, sir,' he remarked, totally ignoring the other's insult, 'twould seem you have business with me.'

'That, Mr Mayor,' observed the Dean frigidly, 'is as it may be. 'Tis never a safe proceeding to jump to conclusions. I sent for you—true. But 'twas with the intention of discussing past events, in order that I might be in a position to report to Her Highness on my return, and advise her as to future steps.'

'I am at your service,' the Mayor replied simply, his worst fears confirmed. There could be no shadow of a doubt about the matter now. The stranger had been sent down on a special

mission, and the Protestants of Chester were about to be called on to suffer for their faith.

'At my service!' echoed the Dean. 'Undoubtedly, and very much so, too,' he added, with a sneer. 'Mark me; 'twill be well for you to give me your attention, and—the truth.'

Again Sir Lawrence Smith had to strain every nerve to keep his rapidly rising passion under control. What could the world be coming to? To think that he, the Mayor of Chester, and for the second time, too—one who had received the honour of knighthood at the hands of the late sovereign—should have to stand and be thus wantonly insulted to his face and in the midst of his own people! And the cause? None. And the aggressor? An arrogant, insignificant little cleric! Oh that he dared take the law into his own hands!

'Dr George Cotes, when bishop, worked earnestly for the holy faith. In what manner has his successor, Cuthbert Scott, essayed to promote the interests of our blessed religion in this diocese?' asked the Dean after a slight pause.

'Bishop Cotes—good work! Bishop Scott?' ejaculated the Mayor.

'Ay, no less,' interrupted the Dean roughly. 'Tut, tut! no beating about the bush, man. How many heretics have suffered in Chester for their lapse from the rightful path?'

'None, since poor George Marsh suffered at Spittal Boughton four years ago. If you term burning a man to death on account of his religious belief a holy action, then Bishop Cotes did work earnestly,' rejoined Sir Lawrence Smith bitterly.

'Ah! This must be seen to,' exclaimed Dr Cole. 'No heretical detections the four years past? What? When at Oxford and in the Metropolis the flames never die down! His present lordship of Chester lacks zeal, it is very evident. How comes it, then,' he demanded sternly, 'that the city officers fail to keep Dr Scott up to his duties?'

'There is nothing in our charters making it incumbent on us to seek out a man's faith for the sole purpose of eventually compassing his destruction,' Sir Lawrence remarked dryly.

'Then, by Our Lady! as soon as I return an alteration shall be made in that particular.'

'As to that,' continued the Mayor, 'I can say nothing. But when martyr Marsh,' the speaker went on, taking a malicious pleasure in observing the enraged looks which traversed his listener's countenance, 'was done to death at the stake a terrible riot ensued. The unhappy man refused the conditional pardon exhibited by Vice-Chancellor Vawdrey. He firmly declined to recant, preferring, as he said, to brave even the most cruel of deaths to becoming an apostate.'

'Dost thou say so?' roared the Dean, roused by his companion's very plain speaking. 'Her Highness has yet other means—ay, and will employ them—to bring the heretics to reason.'

'If there is to be any more burning at the stake'—

'Not a single Protestant shall be left alive in the neighbourhood of Chester, I vow,' cried the Dean wildly.

'I was saying,' the Mayor went on calmly, not heeding the Dean's passionate interruption, 'if there is to be any more death by fire 'twill have to take place away from the city. Sheriff Cowper was so overwrought by the martyr's sufferings that he attempted a rescue, and was but narrowly beaten off.'

'Rubbish,' said the Dean contemptuously. Then, rising, he carefully opened the cloak-bag, concerning which he had given such particular instructions, and took therefrom a strong leather box, secured by a single strap across its centre. Placing this on the table between his visitor and himself, 'Here,' he cried in a tone of exultation, gently tapping the case with one hand, 'is what will lash those heretical rascals in Ireland. Protestants, indeed! Reformed Church—ugh!'

'Ireland!' exclaimed the Mayor in a dazed fashion, a light beginning to break in on him.

'I said Ireland, so I presume I mean that country.'

'From the manner in which you sent for me I concluded'—

'That my mission was connected with Chester—eh?' asked the Dean. 'Never mind,' he continued jocularly; 'you must bear up under the disappointment. 'Twill be the turn of this city next, if I have aught to say in the matter.'

'But Chester, sir,' protested the Mayor, 'is not'—

'I know what Chester is full well, and perchance I can hazard a guess as to her worthy chief magistrate's religious beliefs,' said the Dean, watching carefully for the effect of his words. 'This instrument,' taking up the box and replacing it in the cloak-bag, 'will work wonders across the Channel. It shall be my first care on my return to obtain a similar present for Chester.'

'I think, sir, 'twas Latimer of blessed memory who, when at the stake, called on Bishop Ridley to be of good cheer; adding, "We shall this day, by God's grace, light in England such a candle as I trust shall never be put out." That candle has been lit. Have a care that your persecutions do not increase the flame into one of disaffection and open rebellion.'

'Gracious heavens!' cried the Dean of St Paul's in a voice of horror, 'can you be in your senses? "Latimer of blessed memory;" "persecution;" "open rebellion." I see how it is. You are nothing but a heretic yourself.'

'If doing my duty by all, and striving to live at peace with all, is a fundamental principle of the Protestant religion, then, sir, I am one of your heretics, and proud to avow myself as such,' cried the Mayor warmly.

'By—by—heavens!' spluttered the Dean, 'your unseemly threat against Her Highness's person shall be repeated to Her Highness herself without fail, Sir Lawrence Smith. When I get back to London'—

'Ay, when you do, sir. I have but to lift my little finger,' the Mayor added, drawing himself up to his full height, 'and you would never quit this town without my permission.'

'Threatening a royal envoy,' the Dean rejoined, suddenly becoming more docile as he perceived his danger. 'But I stand in no fear of'—

'An acquaintance with our charters, which, sir, I have your promise you purpose improving, would speedily assure you of the perilous position in which you stand at this present moment. A county palatine, the Mayor of Chester for the time being has power of life and death over those within her walls. Were I now to act, before a reply could be received from London you would have ceased to exist. 'Twould be very easy then to satisfy'—

'I see,' the Dean replied, trembling at the Mayor's cold-blooded threat, and then proceeding to enumerate the other's crimes by ticking them off on his fingers. 'A heretic of the most virulent type, an intimidator of Her Highness's envoy,

and rogue, rascal, and knave. Yes; all three combined.'

Sir Lawrence Smith moved towards the door. He had no more than stated the powers vested in him, and he would not have hesitated to put his threat into execution, save for the mistaken notion that it would have savoured of an act of treachery to suddenly seize an unarmed stranger, and a cleric to boot. But that last insult was more than flesh and blood could stand. It was a despicable way of repaying his generosity; and, come what might, he would not remain to be insulted any further even by such a notable as the Dean of St Paul's.

'I shall be returning from Ireland shortly,' cried the latter in a triumphant tone of voice, congratulating himself on his easy victory over the other—'very shortly indeed. See,' he added, waddling downstairs after the departing civic dignitary—'See that your manners have improved by then, friend, and that you have a complete and correct list of the names, ages, occupations, and places of residence of the heretics, and those suspected of being in sympathy with the Protestant religion, who reside within your walls. Disappoint me not in this particular, for the statement is designed for, and will be laid direct before, Her Highness on my rearrival in London.'

SOME ERRORS IN ACCLIMATISATION.



HERE is, I believe, an old maxim that says, 'Half the harm in the world is done by well-meaning people;' and the truth of this may certainly be seen in the history of acclimatisation in Victoria. To begin with: a tale is told that the Scotch thistle, which has spread far and wide over Australia, was introduced by a Scotchman who wanted something to remind him of Bonnie Scotland. Whether this is the case or not I cannot say; but, in the animal world, one bird and two beasts have been introduced which have to be classed as pests, pure and simple.

First on the list comes the sparrow, which arrived amid a small flourish of trumpets some thirty-five years ago. They were heralded with a paean of praise, and were vaunted forth by the press and otherwise as birds which devoted all their energies to the devouring of harmful insects, and religiously abstained from corn and fruit. They were carefully protected for some time, a fine of two pounds per bird being imposed on the slayer, and their numbers rapidly increased; but after a while it was pointed out that the wrong species of sparrow had been imported, and that the hedge-sparrow was the insect-eater.

The mischief, however, was done; and now sparrows swarm in countless myriads, both in the

chief towns and the country districts of Victoria. There are Sparrow Clubs in many places, which wage relentless war on him. Bonuses are paid for heads and eggs; poisoned wheat is lavished on him; and he is shot, snared, trapped, and shanghaied by young and old; yet, spite of all, he is a power in the land, and one that throws his weight in the wrong scale. As a student of him, I can say that he does little good and much harm. He certainly eats insects when he can get nothing else; but in our genial climate seeds or fruits can nearly always be found. Instead of improving, he, like some other importations, seems to be growing worse. When he was first imported he confined his attention mainly to the cherries at the beginning of the summer and the grapes at the end. This we thought bad enough, but we bore it in silence, because he, like ourselves, was of British blood. Soon, however, his *menu* became more varied; and now there is not a single fruit, not even the woolly quince, on which he does not levy heavy toll. In the corn-fields he swarms in thousands. At times the farmer, justly irate, sneaks up behind a fence, and fires right and left into the flock, one barrel while they are on the ground, and the other as they rise. The heavens seem to rain sparrows for a few seconds, and a score at least is often the result of the shots; but that is nothing out

of hundreds, and the flock flies into the centre of the paddock, where they are safe from attack.

One of the Sparrow Clubs, which have been formed to wage war on this little feathered marauder, winds up the season with a sparrow dinner, in which every dish or course is composed of sparrow; but this is the only case I know in which a legitimate revenge is taken and the eater eaten. I have been often told that sparrow-pie is very good; but I have met with few who have tasted it, though there is certainly no reason why it should not be excellent, as the little scamps feed on the best. One strange trait that has been noticed is, that though pugnacious, plucky little birds, they fret when in captivity. The supplies of sparrows for the Sparrow Clubs are generally got by a few men, who make a sort of business of it; and these men find that, if the birds are caught earlier in the week than Thursday, they fret so much that they are good for nothing on the Saturday, the day on which the shooting usually takes place. The birds are caught by means of a drag-net, which is spread along the hedges, round a thick evergreen tree, or in the ivy which grows luxuriantly on the walls of old houses. In some districts where trees are scarce they will come from far to roost in a single thick-leaved tree; but, in the absence of trees, they creep under the eaves, round the haystacks, or into any other shelter they can find. In the country they make their nests in hollow trees and stacks, while in the towns their nests are nearly as great a nuisance as themselves. They creep under the spouting and eaves, and build an untidy, ragged structure of paper, feathers, straw, cotton, and leaves, which blocks up the piping and causes the rain-water to run into the houses and spoil the ceilings. Some years ago a leading Presbyterian divine in Melbourne was a strong supporter of the sparrow, whose cause he advocated with tongue and pen. Circumstances, however, alter cases; and his conversion to the ranks of the anti-sparrovians was immediate when it was discovered that a mysterious fire, which nearly burnt down his church, was caused by the juxtaposition of two very inflammable matters, gas and sparrows' nests.

The rabbit is our second *mauvais sujet*, and certainly in this case the unexpected happened. Who could ever have dreamed that poor little innocent Bunny would be denounced as one of the greatest scourges of the country? I can well recollect that for years after their introduction they were zealously protected, and even when permission was given by landowners to shoot them, a caution, 'Do not shoot the young ones,' was invariably added. The causes of their rapid increase are not far to seek. In the first place, Victoria was so sparsely populated that there was no obstacle to their spreading; and in the second place, the climate was so genial that they seemed able to breed all the year round. Although

almost omnipresent in Victoria, yet there are certain districts in which they flourish more than in others. Of course, they favour sandy and crumbly soil, in which they can burrow to their hearts' content; but in the bush-country hollow logs make a capital substitute. In the very hot weather they lie out in the grass and scrub, and when hunted make for the nearest refuge, whether it be burrow, log, or even up a hollow tree.

I can imagine some of my readers saying, 'Up a hollow tree! What absurdity! Does this Victorian think we are fools?' Well, I am stating an absolute fact when I say that on several occasions I have put ferrets up hollow trees which were not quite perpendicular, and they have driven rabbits out of knot-holes ten feet or more from the ground. They will also, at a pinch, take to the water and swim across a creek. It is very strange in what unlikely places they are sometimes found. A few weeks ago I ferreted a rabbit out of my wood-heap, situated not more than three miles from the Melbourne General Post-Office; and last Christmas two of us had a good afternoon's shooting at rabbits which we ferreted out from under the wood-heap and the fowl-house of a farm a few miles from Melbourne.

While, however, the rabbit has many and grave demerits, yet there is something to be said in his favour. First and foremost, he supplies a cheap and dainty dish for the poorer classes. A pair of rabbits can always be bought for sixpence or a shilling, according to size and quality, and they furnish a family with a dinner. Whether curried or roasted, boiled or baked, they are a toothsome morsel; while the kittens—that is, the young ones—fried with bread-crumbs, are as sweet as a chicken. In the second place, he is the stock sport of the young Victorian. On the principal holidays of the year—Christmas, Easter, Queen's Birthday, Cup Day, and Prince of Wales's Birthday—the railway stations are thronged with lads and men going out shooting for a day or more. Every one carries a weapon—pistol, pea-rifle, old muzzle-loaders, many of them in the last stages of decay, and more dangerous to the gunner than the game; and, finally, breech-loaders in all varieties. The trains are packed; there is standing room only, and this continues for about ten miles; then, at the first station where there is any prospect of game, a contingent gets out. There is a station called Sydenham, about fifteen miles from Melbourne, near the Deep Creek, a stream which flows through a deep gorge, with mountainous banks on either side, which a few years ago fairly swarmed with rabbits. I have seen on a public holiday more than one hundred shooters get out here, some equipped with tents, &c., to camp out for a day or two, others intending to return in the evening. It can easily be imagined that, with so many shooting, the danger of accident is great, and, as a matter of fact, Christmas or Easter rarely passes without one or more serious mishaps.

Some few years ago drastic legislation was introduced which made all those who owned land liable to fine if they failed to keep down the rabbits. This produced considerable effect, and certainly checked the increase of the pest. Up to this time the destruction of the rabbit had been left to the unaided efforts of the amateur sportsman or the professional rabbit-trapper—a class of men who, seeing the chance of a free but not easy life, with a fair wage attached to it, abandoned their original trades and devoted themselves to trapping. The equipment of the men, who generally work in pairs, consists of a number of gin-traps, a pony and cart, a tent, and the other requisites for 'camping out.' They go to some district in which rabbits are thick—if possible near a railway station—get permission to trap from the landowners, and start work. Some of them are paid a small direct wage, and also receive a bonus; others again work wholly for the market. After choosing their ground, they set their traps during the day in the most likely places, and cover them carefully with earth. One man will sometimes have some dozens of traps set over a mile or more of country, and these he visits twice or thrice in a night. His first round is about eight or nine o'clock, the second about twelve or one, and the third just after sunrise. In each round he kills and eviscerates the rabbits that have been caught, resets the traps, and carries the dead ones back to the camp. In the morning, if enough have been caught, he or his mate takes them to the railway station, or delivers them to rabbit-buyers who come round with large carts. The price varies from twopence to sixpence per pair; and where rabbits are numerous the men make good wages. Their income is supplemented in various ways; they sometimes catch native cats or tame cats—turned out originally to prey on the rabbits—and make a fair profit by selling the skins singly or after making rugs of them. The fox also gives them a dividend, when they are lucky enough to get him. It will easily be seen that the trappers would not be likely to exterminate the rabbit, as they would be putting an end to their own living; and so the landowners, under the pressure of the law, began to look for other methods. The most successful, perhaps, is that of using poison. This is done in various ways, one of the most common being to run a plough furrow through the paddocks, and spread at the bottom poisoned wheat, oats, bran, carrots, or apples. There was, however, from the outset a strong feeling against poison, on account of its danger to poultry, live-stock, and wild birds. Within the last year or so the problem seems to have been partly solved by the freezing and export of the rabbits to England. The export last year amounted in value to about £80,000; this year it is expected to reach £130,000. This is done under Government supervision, and the prices obtained have in most cases been satisfactory. It will indeed be a complete turning of the tables if

the rabbit, so long cursed by the graziers, should prove to be a blessing; and the time may come when rabbit-farms will be taken up, and as much attention paid to the proper breeding of rabbits as is now given to sheep.

The last and worst error is the acclimatisation of the fox, imported for two reasons, both of which have been proved faulty. The first was that he might keep down the rabbit, and the second that he might furnish the sportsmen of Victoria with legitimate game for hunting. With regard to the first, he certainly does kill rabbits; but he also preys on other animals which are useful to man, and thus does more harm than good. Accustomed as he is to take refuge in earths, he found in Victoria a home thoroughly to his liking. Even within a few miles of Melbourne there are places from which it is impossible to unearth a fox; and from vantage-grounds such as these he emerges at night and loots the poultry-yards. This in itself is bad enough, but the tale of his crimes is not half-told. Very soon after his arrival he found that young lambs were very good to eat and very easy to catch. The squatters, as landowners are commonly called, who, after long years of trouble with the dingo or native dog, were just beginning to rest from their labours, had to face a worse enemy—worse, because he found shelter more easily and bred much more quickly. At present a bonus is paid for fox-scalps in many of the country districts of Victoria; and the pest has spread over more than half the colony. With regard to the second reason the failure is absolute. There are many foxes, but they cannot be hunted with success. Often enough, before the hounds have gone a mile, the fox takes refuge among inaccessible rocks or in a rabbit-burrow from which it is impossible to unearth him. If a second is viewed, much the same thing occurs; and so the day passes without result. Popular opinion accuses a lately deceased rich squatter of having introduced Reynard; and it has been suggested that legislation should be made retrospective in his case, and a charge for fox-scalps be levied on his estate. This, of course, will never be done; but the harm caused by his ill-advised action can never be remedied.

When the fox reaches the more distant localities he finds that the indigenous animals have been kind enough to provide him with burrows of the most commodious and roomy kind. It is no longer necessary for him to squeeze into a rabbit-burrow which he certainly must find several sizes too small; he now enters without scruple the cavernous hole dug by the wombat. This animal, which is about as tall as a fox, but so heavily built that it weighs more than a hundredweight, has very powerful legs and claws, with which it can dig faster than a man with a spade. It spends most of its time in digging deep burrows, which it seems to desert very soon, and these form a noble home for the fox.

There seems to be a kind of Nemesis in introducing the animals of one country into another. I have instanced three of the worst cases; but even where there seemed to be no chance of anything but benefit trouble has come. The hare, introduced for the double purpose of sport and food, is a sad nuisance to *vignerons* and orchardists, because it is addicted to gnawing the bark of young vines and fruit-trees. The song-birds, such as the blackbird, the thrush, and the starling, seem to lose some of their power of song and develop enormous appetites for fruit. The starling, in particular, is just beginning to become really numerous in the rural districts round Melbourne, and already the cry is being raised that it will be as troublesome as the sparrow.

Even in the acclimatisation of such fish as trout, it is complained that they are ravenous devourers of the native fish, which are sometimes as good as themselves. In all the streams south of

the Dividing Range in Victoria there formerly abounded a fish called the black-fish, which varied in weight from a few ounces to five or six pounds. They are delicious eating, and the only fault found with them is that they show no fight when hooked. Since the arrival of the trout, however, the black-fish have become much less numerous, and the blame is laid on the trout. The matter, therefore, stands thus: we have lost or shall lose a delicious fish, which used to be very plentiful even in small streams, and have gained a fish of inferior quality, but furnishing more sport to the angler.

One conclusion can, I think, fairly be deduced—that the acclimatisation of animals requires such care that it should certainly not be entrusted to the thoughtless action of private persons, but should be under the control of men employed by the Government, and responsible for their actions.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

By GUY BOOTHBY.

CHAPTER XXIII.



MAKING one thing with another, Browne's night after the incident described at the end of the previous chapter was far from being a good one. He could not, try how he would, solve the mystery as to what had become of that envelope. He had hunted the cabin through and through, and searched his pockets times without number, but always with the same lack of success. As he lay turning the matter over and over in his mind, he remembered that he had heard the soft shutting of a door as he descended the companion-ladder, and also that Maas had betrayed considerable embarrassment when he entered the saloon. It was absurd, however, to suppose that he could have had any hand in its disappearance. But the fact remained that the envelope was gone. He rang for his valet, and questioned him; but the man declared that not only did he know nothing at all about it, but that he had not entered the cabin between dinner-time and when he had prepared his master for the night. It was a singular thing altogether. At last, being unable to remain where he was any longer, he rose and dressed himself and went up to the deck. Day was just breaking. A cloudless sky was overhead, and in the gray light the Peak looked unusually picturesque; the water alongside was as smooth as a sheet of glass; the only signs of life were a few gulls wheeling with discordant cries around a patch of seaweed floating astern.

Browne had been pacing the deck for upwards of a quarter of an hour, when he noticed a

sampan pull off from the shore towards the yacht. From where he stood he could plainly distinguish the tall figure of MacAndrew. He accordingly went to the gangway to receive him. Presently one of the women pulling brought her up at the foot of the accommodation-ladder, when the passenger ran up the steps, and gracefully saluted Browne.

'Good-morning,' he said. 'In spite of the earliness of the hour, I think I am up to time.'

'Yes, you are very punctual,' said Browne. 'Now, shall we get to business?'

They accordingly walked together in the direction of the smoking-room.

'You mastered the contents of my note, I suppose?' said MacAndrew, by way of breaking the ice.

'Perfectly,' said Browne; 'and I was careful to burn it afterwards.'

'Well, now that you have perused it, what do you think of it?' inquired the other. 'Do you consider the scheme feasible?'

'Very feasible indeed,' Browne replied. 'With a decent amount of luck, I think it should stand a very good chance of succeeding.'

'I'm very glad to hear that,' said MacAndrew. 'I thought you would like it. Now, when the preliminaries are settled, I can get to work head down.'

'By the other preliminaries I suppose you mean the money?' said Browne.

MacAndrew looked and laughed.

'Yes; the money,' he said. 'I'm sorry to have to be so mercenary; but I'm afraid it can't be helped. We must grease the machinery with

gold, otherwise we shan't be able to set it in motion.'

'Very well,' said Browne; 'that difficulty is easily overcome. I have it all ready for you. If you accompany me to my cabin we may procure it.'

They accordingly made their way to the cabin. Once there, Browne opened his safe, and dragged out a plain wooden box, which he placed upon the floor. MacAndrew observed that there was another of similar size behind it. Browne noticed the expression upon his face, and smiled.

'You're wondering what made me bring so much,' he said. How well he remembered going to his bank to procure it! He seemed to see the dignified, portly manager seated on his leather chair, and could recall that worthy gentleman's surprise at the curious request Browne made to him.

'But how do you propose to get it ashore?' said the latter to MacAndrew. 'It's a heavy box; and what about the Customs authorities?'

'Oh, they won't trouble me,' said MacAndrew coolly. 'I shall find a way of getting it in without putting them to the inconvenience of opening it.'

'Do you want to count it? There may not be five thousand pounds there.'

'I shall have to risk that,' MacAndrew replied. 'I haven't the time to waste in counting it. I expect it's all right.' So saying, he took up the box, and followed Browne to the deck above.

'You quite understand what you've got to do, I suppose?' he said when they once more stood at the gangway.

'Perfectly,' said Browne. 'You need not be afraid lest I shall forget. When do you think you will leave?'

'This morning, if possible,' MacAndrew replied. 'There is no time to be lost. I've got a boat in my eye, and as soon as they can have her ready I shall embark. By the way, if I were in your place I should be extremely careful as to what I said or did in Japan. Excite only one little bit of suspicion, and you will never be able to rectify the error.'

'You need have no fear on that score,' said Browne. 'I will take every possible precaution to prevent any one suspecting.'

'I'm glad to hear it,' MacAndrew returned. 'Now, good-bye until we meet on the 13th.'

'Good-bye,' said Browne; 'and good luck go with you!'

They shook hands, and then MacAndrew, picking up his precious box, went down the ladder, and when he had taken his place in the well the *sampan* pushed off for the shore.

'A nice sort of position I shall be in if he should prove to be a swindler,' said the young man to himself as he watched the retreating boat. 'But it's too late to think of that now. I have gone into the business, and must carry it through whatever happens.'

When Jimmy Foote put in an appearance on deck that morning he found that the city of Victoria had disappeared, and that the yacht was making her way through the Ly-ee-Moon Pass out into the open sea once more.

It was daybreak on the morning of the Thursday following when they obtained their first glimpse of Japan. Like a pin's head upon the horizon was a tiny gray dot, which gradually grew larger and larger until the sacred mountain of Fujiyama, clear-cut against the sky-line, rose from the waves as if to welcome them to the Land of the Chrysanthemum. Making their way up Yeddo Bay, they at length cast anchor in the harbour of Yokohama. Beautiful as it must appear to any one, to Browne it seemed like the loveliest and happiest corner of Fairyland. He could scarcely believe, after the long time they had been separated, that in less than half-an-hour he would really be holding Katherine in his arms once more. During breakfast he could with difficulty contain his impatience, and he felt as if the excellent appetites which Foote and Maas brought to their meal was personal to himself. At length they rose, and he was at liberty to go. At the same moment the captain announced that the steam-launch was alongside.

'Good luck to you, old fellow,' said Jimmy as Browne put on his hat and prepared to be off. 'Though love-making is not much in my line, I must say I envy you your happiness. I only wish I were going to see a sweetheart too.'

'Madame Bernstein is a widow,' said Browne, and, ducking his head to avoid the stump of a cigar which Jimmy threw at him, he ran down the accommodation-ladder, jumped into the launch, and was soon steaming ashore.

Reaching the Bund, he inquired in which direction the Club Hotel was situated, and, having been informed, made his way in that direction. He had reached the steps, and was about to ascend them to enter the veranda, when he saw, coming down the passage before him, no less a person than Katherine herself. For weeks past he had been looking forward to this interview, wondering where, how, and under what circumstances it would take place. Again and again he had framed his first speech to her, and had wondered what she would say to him in return. Now that he was confronted with her, however, he found his presence of mind deserting him, and he stood before her not knowing what to say. On her side she was not so shy. Directly she realised who it was, she ran forward with outstretched hands to greet him.

'Jack, Jack,' she cried, her voice trembling with delight, 'I had no idea that you had arrived. How long have you been in Japan?'

'We dropped our anchor scarcely an hour ago,' he answered. 'I came ashore the instant the launch was ready for me.'

'How glad I am to see you!' she said. 'It seems years since we said good-bye to each other that miserable day at Marseilles.'

'Years!' he cried. 'It seems like an eternity to me.' Then, looking up at her as she stood on the steps above him, he continued: 'Katherine, you are more beautiful than ever.'

A rosy blush spread over her face. 'It is because of my delight at seeing you,' she said. This pretty speech was followed by a little pause, during which he came up the steps and led her along the veranda towards two empty chairs at the farther end. They seated themselves, and, after their more immediate affairs had received attention, he inquired after Madame Bernstein.

'And now tell me what you have arranged to do?' she said when she had satisfied him that the lady in question was enjoying the best of health. 'I received your cablegram from Hong-kong, saying that everything was progressing satisfactorily. You do not know how anxiously I have been waiting to see you.'

'And only to hear that?' he asked, with a smile.

'Of course not,' she answered. 'Still, I think you can easily understand my impatience.'

'Of course I understand it, dear,' he said; 'and it is only right you should know all I have arranged.'

He thereupon narrated to her his interview with MacAndrew, speaking in a low voice, and taking care that no one should overhear him. When he had finished he sat silent for a few moments; then, leaning a little nearer her, he said, 'I want to remind you, dear, to be particularly careful to say nothing at all on the subject to any one, not even to Madame Bernstein. I was warned myself not to say anything; but in your case, of course, it is different.'

'You can trust me,' she said; 'I shall say nothing. And so you really think it is likely we shall be able to save him?'

'I feel sure it is,' said Browne; 'though, of course, I, like you, am somewhat in the dark. Every one who is in the business is so chary of being discovered that they take particular care not to divulge anything, however small, that may give a hint or clue as to their complicity.'

For some time they continued to discuss the

question; then Katherine, thinking that it behoved her to acquaint Madame Bernstein with the fact of her lover's arrival, departed into the house. A few moments later she returned, accompanied by the lady in question, who greeted Browne with her usual enthusiasm.

'Ah, monsieur,' she cried, 'you do not know how *triste* this poor child has been without you. She has counted every day, almost every minute, until she should see you.'

On hearing this Browne found an opportunity of stroking his sweetheart's hand. Madame Bernstein's remark was just the one of all others that would be calculated to cause him the greatest pleasure.

'And now, monsieur, that you are here, what is it you desire we should do?' inquired madame when they had exhausted the topics to which I have just referred.

'We must be content to remain here for at least another fortnight,' said Browne. 'The arrangements I have made cannot possibly be completed until the end of that time.'

'Another fortnight?' said madame, in some astonishment, and with considerable dismay. 'Do you mean that we are to remain idle all that time?'

'I mean that we must enjoy ourselves here for a fortnight,' Browne replied. Then, looking out into the street at the queer characters he saw there—the picturesque dresses, the *jinrickshas*, and the thousand and one signs of Japanese life—he added: 'Surely that should not be such a very difficult matter?'

'It would not be difficult,' said madame, as if she were debating the matter with herself, 'if one had all one's time at one's disposal, and were only travelling for pleasure; but under the present circumstances how different it is!' She was about to say something further, but she checked herself; and, making the excuse that she had left something in her room, retired to the house.

'Do not be impatient with her, dear,' said Katherine softly when they were alone together. 'Remember that her anxiety is all upon my account.'

Browne admitted this, and when he had done so the matter was allowed to drop.

LIQUID AIR.

By T. C. HEPPWORTH.



UMAN curiosity and interest are always excited by the marvellous, and never more so than when something which is generally presented to us in a certain form assumes an entirely new character.

We are too apt to regard such startling changes to be due to what, for want of a better term, we

call supernatural means. The conventional ghost, or spook, has, for example, the form of man, whose solid flesh is changed to a vaporous condition; and we may feel quite sure that if such ghost retained the substantiality of life there would be nothing uncanny about him, and his occupation as a spook would be gone. It is the unexpected assumption by a solid being of the

vaporous condition that confers upon the ghost his importance. In like manner, the ignorant dweller in tropical climes would be almost equally startled if he were shown a block of ice, for water has hitherto been presented to him only in the liquid form. Ice would be something absolutely new to him, and therefore something of a supernatural character; while steam, another form of water to which he would be quite unaccustomed, would astound him with its manifold wonders as a source of energy.

We can therefore understand how it is that persons far more civilised are struck with astonishment when they first hear of liquid air; for, although we are all familiar enough with water in its solid, liquid, and gaseous states, air has always exhibited itself as a gas only, and it seems little short of miraculous that it can now be viewed as a bubbling liquid. So necromantic would some of our forefathers have regarded it, that it would have gone hard with the philosopher who first exhibited it had he lived a couple of centuries ago. But we no longer credit advances in knowledge to the power of witchcraft, and the means by which the air we breathe can be condensed to the liquid state are not very difficult to understand.

It will help us to appreciate the nature of the problem which scientific men since the time of Faraday have set themselves to solve if we bear in mind that a space containing air is not really empty, although in common parlance we call it so. This is proved by an old but simple experiment. We take a so-called empty glass globe, and, having weighed it, attach it to an air-pump, and remove the air which it contains. On reweighing it we find that it scales considerably less than it did before, but that it recovers what it has lost on the air being readmitted to it. The difference between the two measurements will give the weight of air enclosed in the glass globe at the particular temperature at which the experiment is performed. Again, if we have a strong vessel we can pump into it many times its ordinary capacity of air, for air can be compressed or expanded, so elastic is it in its nature. And the more air we can pump in the heavier will the containing vessel become.

Air being quite invisible while in the gaseous condition, we cannot see what changes it undergoes under such operations as we have described; but we can see it mentally as an association of tiny particles, infinite in number, which become more and more crowded as the air is compressed by the pump. The same result is brought about by a reduction of temperature; and when both cold and pressure are employed conjointly, the little particles are brought so close that they coalesce, and the air assumes the form of a liquid.

The liquefaction of air and of other gases cannot be credited to the labours of any one man, for several have contributed links to the wonderful chain which has been in quite recent times completed. Close upon one hundred years ago, Dalton, to whom chemical science owes so much, wrote an essay *On the Force of Steam or Vapour from Water and various other Liquids*, in which he anticipated modern research in a very wonderful manner. He writes: 'There can scarcely be a doubt entertained respecting the reducibility of all elastic fluids of whatever kind into liquids; and we ought not to despair of effecting it in low temperatures, and by strong pressure exerted upon the unmixed gases.' At the time that these prophetic words were written there was no method known by which either great pressure or extreme cold could be produced, and thus Dalton's anticipation could not be put to the test. In 1823 Faraday commenced an investigation which has since employed many minds, by the liquefaction of the gas chlorine. Then there is a long pause until the year 1844, when we find the same great English physicist taking up the inquiry once more. And undoubtedly one reason for this was that in the meantime Thilorier had produced solid carbonic acid in the form of snow—a compound which put at the command of the experimenter a lower temperature than had ever before been possible. Faraday succeeded not only in liquefying several of the gases, but he actually reduced some to a solid form. Three gaseous elements, however, altogether defied his efforts, and these three—oxygen, hydrogen, and nitrogen—came, therefore, to be regarded as 'the permanent gases;' and so they are described in the text-books up to about twenty years ago. At this time two experimenters, Cailletet, of Paris, and Pictet, of Geneva, simultaneously succeeded in liquefying the three refractory vapours, and Dalton's prophetic utterance was fulfilled. As air is merely a mechanical mixture of the gases oxygen and nitrogen, its liquefaction was merely a matter of detail. Produced in the first experiments in the form of a few drops, each one as costly as a gem, it can now, with improved apparatus, be made at quite a cheap rate. Professor Dewar has done more than any other experimenter to make us acquainted with the nature and properties of this remarkable liquid, which before his time offered every obstacle to investigation, so eager was it to once more assume the gaseous state. But by the employment of a double glass vessel, with a vacuum between its inner and outer walls, Professor Dewar is enabled to handle the fugitive liquid as easily as he could a cup of water.

Now let us see what properties are exhibited by this concentrated essence of the world's atmosphere. It may be described as a clear, sparkling liquid, nearly as heavy as water, which, by its constant evaporation, gives rise to a white mist

that flows over the edge of the vessel in which it is contained. It sears the flesh like a red-hot iron, and has already been successfully used by surgeons for cauterising purposes. It is three hundred and forty-four degrees colder than ice, and it can be caused to boil while its containing vessel stands on a block of that substance. It freezes pure alcohol into a solid mass, and all the metals when treated with it assume new properties. Iron and steel become brittle as glass, while copper, gold, and silver become softer and more pliable. Experiments prove that an explosive of enormous disruptive power can be made with liquid air; indeed, it would seem that its production opens up all sorts of possibilities which put the wonders of Eastern fairy lore entirely in the shade.

One of the most recent workers with the new agent is Mr C. E. Tripler, of New York, who has made an apparatus for its production on quite a wholesale scale. It is estimated that the first ounce of liquid air produced by Professor Dewar at the Royal Institution cost about six hundred guineas. Improvements in manipulation reduced the price to one hundred guineas a pint; and as experiments proceeded the new product of the laboratory naturally became cheaper and cheaper. Professor Dewar employed nitrous oxide and ethylene gases, which he compressed in the first instance, and then by their sudden expansion produced a degree of cold which was sufficient to condense the air to the liquid form. The principle employed depends upon the fact that a gas when compressed gives out its heat. Every bicycle-rider knows that when he pumps his tires full of air the tube of the pump gets too hot to be comfortably touched. When the air, or other gas so compressed, is again allowed to expand, it robs its surroundings of the heat it has parted with, and thus produces intense cold. It is on this principle that the compressing engines and pumps work on shipboard, to keep the refrigerating chambers for the conveyance of meat, &c., at or about the freezing-point.

Now, Mr Tripler has succeeded in producing the necessary degree of cold by the use of air only. In the first place, he uses an engine to compress the air—the pressure amounting to something more than a ton on the square inch. The air thus warmed—as in the case of the bicycle-pump, is carried by pipes through running water, and is thus cooled to about fifty degrees Fahrenheit. Part of this air is allowed to escape through a small orifice, and its sudden expansion produces such a low temperature that air circulating in the pipes with which it comes in contact is at once liquefied.

Perhaps the most curious thing with regard to the apparatus employed by Mr Tripler is that the engine, while of the usual steam model, is not worked by steam, but by liquid air itself. To understand how this can be we must

remember that liquid air has a temperature of three hundred and twelve degrees below zero; and above that temperature it boils, just as water will boil when it is heated two hundred and twelve degrees *above* zero. In the case of water we require fuel to heat it up to the vaporising point; but with liquid air the normal heat of the atmosphere surrounding it is far more than sufficient to bring it to the boil; in fact, as we have already seen, unless it be kept in specially designed vessels it flies off into vapour at once. This vapour has an expansive force one hundred times that of steam, and its use as a source of energy—as Mr Tripler is using it—opens up the most startling possibilities.

Mr Tripler has recently asserted that with an expenditure in his engine of about three gallons of liquid air he has produced ten gallons. This looks very like the solution of the old problem of perpetual motion; but it is in reality not so, for fuel in the shape of ordinary air, which has originally been heated by the sun, is employed in the process. The cost of liquid air by Mr Tripler's method is about tenpence per gallon; and with his present plant he can make fifty gallons per day.

Mr Tripler has magnificent anticipations as to the future use of liquid air. He argues that if a small engine can be operated by its aid, larger ones can be worked in the same manner. Plant for the production of air in the liquid form will supersede the use of boilers in engines, and coal, wood, and water will be required no longer. Atlantic liners will at once be relieved of the enormous weight represented by these items, and the space devoted to coal-bunkers will be very profitably utilised in other ways. These greyhounds of the ocean will breathe the air through which they pass like living beings, and will, after compressing and utilising it, give it once more back to the atmosphere unsullied as they received it. In the same manner, the locomotive engine of the future will receive at the railway terminus a store of liquid air, which can easily be renewed at any station on the route; and coal-stores and water-tanks will become things of the past. Factories all the world over will be run by air instead of by steam, and this source of energy can be drawn from a store which is inexhaustible. Another idea is that flying-machines, to enable man to conquer the air as he has already conquered the waters, will, by the employment of the new agent, be brought rapidly within the bounds of things practical.

We thus see that, even allowing for over-sanguine anticipations, liquid air seems destined to be of enormous service to mankind. It is told of Faraday that when engaged in making the pioneer experiments with regard to the liquefaction of gases, he was asked by some thoughtless inquirer, 'Of what use is all this work?'

Faraday answered the question with another one: 'Can you tell me what is the use of a baby?' It would seem, in the light of the researches which we have described, that Fara-

day's baby is destined to grow into a giant whose energies, devoted to the service of man, will effect marvellous and beneficial changes in the world.

LAURA SECORD.

By J. L. HORNIBROOK.



IN the history of warfare, in the deadly strife that ensues when nation rises against nation, more than one woman's name has figured prominently. From Joan of Arc downwards there have been many examples of the kind. Sometimes it is on the actual field of battle, sometimes in bringing succour to the wounded and dying, that these heroines have played their part. But there have been instances—rare, it is true—in which a woman, by a single act of devotion, and at imminent peril of her life, has averted a serious disaster. Such was the case of Laura Secord.

Mrs Secord was the daughter of Thomas Ingersoll, a loyal British subject, who, previous to the war of 1812 between England and America, resided in the United States. Subsequently he removed to Canada, at the invitation of Governor Simcoe. To-day, on the strip of land that divides Lake Erie from Lake Huron, you will find the towns of Simcoe and Ingersoll, founded by these two men. After the family had settled in Canada, Laura married Mr James Secord, who was sprung from an old Huguenot stock. He traced his lineage back to the Marquis De Secor, famous in the time of Louis X.

At the outbreak of the war the Secords were living near Queenstown, Canada. They were an exceedingly happy couple, and had four children. One of the daughters, Mary, is said to have been beloved by the great Tecumseh, the renowned Indian chief, who subsequently fell in the forefront of battle, scorning, unlike some of his white allies, to yield a foot of ground to the enemy. On the invasion of Canada, James Secord, who was a captain of militia, proceeded to the front. The Canadian forces occupied Queenstown Heights, a strong position, around which many fierce and deadly contests were waged. The Americans, under Colonel Van Rensselaer, forced their way across the Niagara River, and effected a landing at the foot of the Heights. Not without a stubborn fight, however, in which they suffered considerable loss. General Brock, who commanded the Canadians, had sent Captain Dennis with a small force to check the progress of the invaders. That gallant little band rendered a good account of itself; and as the colonists were excellent shots, they more than once repulsed the enemy with severe loss. For some time the issue of the conflict between the two main forces hung in the

balance. The Americans held on to the long spit of land where they had landed, but were unable to advance. On the other hand, though several attempts were made to dislodge them, the Canadians failed to drive them back. At length a daring American captain, named Wool, succeeded in scaling the cliffs by a path which the colonists had neglected to guard, deeming it impracticable for any force to climb—a feat which, for gallantry, may well be compared to the scaling of the Heights of Abraham. Wool, having gained a footing, announced his presence by a volley, and the Canadians were taken between two fires. Men fell fast; it soon became evident that a desperate attempt must be made to dislodge the bold American, or defeat would inevitably follow. Brock himself, conspicuous by his gigantic stature as well as by his extraordinary daring, headed a charge against Wool's force. But the Canadians were repulsed, and their gallant leader fell mortally wounded. This was the signal for another fierce charge, for his men burned to avenge him. Wool, however, held stubbornly to his post, and again the assailants were driven back.

At this critical moment the colonists were reinforced by a detachment under General Sheaffe, who, hearing of Brock's death, immediately assumed the command. Leaving Captain Dennis and his men to hold Rensselaer in check, he formed the remainder in a semicircle round Wool. Gradually the ring of fire contracted round the doomed force, until the Americans could only reply with a few scattered shots. Then, with a mighty shout of vengeance, the Canadians and Indians closed in. No quarter was given, for the soldiers worshipped the gallant Brock, and the Indians adored him as a god. In spite of the efforts of their officers, the slaughter was not stayed until the last invader had been hurled over the blood-stained cliffs into the boiling Niagara beneath.

Into this appalling scene of carnage came Laura Secord in search of her husband. She found him lying where the fight had been fiercest, apparently dead, with severe wounds in the leg and shoulder. She is described by those who knew her as being a woman of slight and delicate frame; nevertheless, she contrived to convey her husband to their home unaided. Through the long winter months that followed she nursed him with unceasing devotion. The spring found him

convalescent, but utterly broken in health, and a cripple. The outlook, as far as the Secords were concerned, was serious. Not only was Mr Secord unable to attend to his duties, being a hopeless and helpless invalid, but his condition required the constant attendance of his devoted wife. To make matters worse, the Americans had gained a firm footing in Canada at last, and the Secord farm was in the hands of their troops.

The main obstacle to the American advance was a certain Captain Fitzgibbon, a sturdy Irishman, who, with a small force, occupied an important position at De Cou's House. As this place commanded many of the principal roads, it was found necessary to dislodge him. Accordingly, General Dearborn, who was now in command of the American troops, despatched a force of some six hundred men against the bold Fitzgibbon. On the 22d of June 1813 two of the officers made their appearance at the Secords' house, and somewhat incautiously discussed their plans. Possibly they thought there was little harm in doing so, for the husband was a cripple, and the wife a frail, delicate woman. Moreover, the house was closely watched. As it so happened, however, Mrs Secord overheard their conversation, and immediately determined to warn Captain Fitzgibbon. But how to do so was the question. It was useless thinking of entrusting a message to one of the farm-hands, for sentries were posted about the place, and any one attempting to leave would assuredly be stopped. No; if this difficult task was to be accomplished, it must be accomplished by herself, and with the aid of strategy, too.

The following morning, the 23d of June, Laura Secord was stirring betimes. After attending to her household duties, she took a pail in her hand, and, as was her custom, went out to milk the cow. She was clad in a short jacket and flannel skirt, but had neither stockings nor shoes. It was scarcely possible to imagine that a woman with bare feet would contemplate a long and difficult journey through a dangerous country; nevertheless, she was closely watched by two sentries. The cow, however, appeared to be in an extremely restless mood that morning. No sooner had Laura settled down to milk than the creature kicked out viciously, knocked over the pail, and bolted away. Again and again this was repeated, until one of the sentries, who had followed the pair closely, volunteered to capture the refractory animal. Mrs Secord, however, declined his services; the cow would be sure to stand still presently. The secret of this little by-play was simple enough. No sooner was the cow's head turned in the right direction and Laura had started milking than she gave the animal a sly but vigorous pinch. Thus, without exciting suspicion, she at length gained the shelter of the forest. When she was concealed from view by the trees she drove the cow rapidly

before her, until they were well into the wood. Then, flinging away her pail and stool, the heroic woman started on her long and perilous journey. Imagine it: there were deep and thorny woods to traverse, rugged hills to climb, torrents to cross, and this for a fragile woman with bare feet! Nor did the danger end there; for ten miles from the farm the enemy's sentinels were posted, the country abounded with hostile Indians, and rattlesnakes were not uncommon. To scare away these venomous reptiles Mrs Secord had armed herself with an ox-goad. With this weapon she beat the grass and undergrowth in front as she toiled along.

Who can depict the sufferings of that delicate, barefooted creature as she penetrated farther and farther into the solitudes of the forest? Who can recount the dangers she met with, the difficulties she overcame, the exhaustion she suffered? All through the long hours of that day she struggled on, never wavering from her purpose, never thinking of turning back. Night, the black impenetrable night of the forest, closed in upon her, with all its attendant horrors. But, save for a brief rest now and again, she held steadily on her way. It seems almost incredible, but all through that night she pushed steadily on towards her goal. She had set her face like a flint towards Fitzgibbon's station, and she meant to reach it.

In the morning, more dead than alive, she was seized by a band of Indians. She displayed no fear; death had no terrors for her in her present condition. Her one—her only—regret would be that her mission remained unaccomplished. But, as the sequel proved, she had no cause for fear. The Indians belonged to a friendly tribe, and at her urgent request they conveyed her to De Cou's House. When she appeared before Captain Fitzgibbon she was in a truly terrible condition. Her garments were torn to shreds, her eyes wild and bloodshot, her delicate feet cruelly gashed and swollen. She faltered out her message, and repeated the conversation she had overheard at the farm. Then, and not till then, did exhausted nature give way, and the noble woman sank to the ground.

The warm-hearted Irishman had her tenderly cared for, bathing her torn and bleeding feet himself. Then his soldierly instincts were aroused, and he made all necessary preparations. He laid his plans so effectively that when the enemy arrived the tables were turned upon them. Instead of surprising the Canadians, they were surprised themselves. Every officer and man of the American force was captured.

It is satisfactory to know that the services rendered by the Secords were not allowed to remain unrewarded. James Secord was subsequently appointed to the post of Collector of Customs at Port Chippewa. Laura Secord lived to a great age. When the Prince of Wales visited Canada in 1860 she was still alive, and claimed

that her services entitled her to sign the address to His Royal Highness. The Prince, hearing of this, visited the old lady, and had a long interview with her. As she was then in reduced circumstances, His Royal Highness subsequently presented her with a handsome gift.

No monument was raised over the heroine; her noble deed is not even set forth upon the small stone which marks the spot where she lies. It simply bears the inscription: 'Here rests Laura, beloved wife of James Secord. Died Oct. 17, 1868, aged ninety-three years.'

OUR CITY IN THE ANDES.



IF you wish to put back the clock of time a hundred years, to realise the life that existed 'when Louis Quinze was king,' and before the Old World had given place to the New, come and be introduced to our city, where the arrival and departure of trains trouble us not, where our letters are brought to us on pack-mules for more than a hundred miles, and occasionally fail to arrive, when we are informed that some swollen river has swept away mules and post-bags, and that there will be no distribution of mail for this week. We boast of twenty thousand inhabitants; but we have no anxiety to confirm our statement by an actual count, as our detractors say we should fall several thousands short. We can point to our army of at least forty men, with as many officers, who occupy one side of our *plaza*, and whose daily drill and exercise is to us an event full of interest bordering upon the awful. Our *plaza* is, we flatter ourselves, completely up-to-date, containing nearly three acres of ground and entirely surrounded by really good buildings, including two churches and a colonnade. The *palacio* occupies one side, and here you may find the governor of the province, surrounded by his satellites, courteous to you as a stranger, full of curious compliments, placing himself, his house, his fortune, at your disposition with a grace not the product of this century, but a survival of another age. There also is our army and our prison, where our lesser law-breakers are placed, among these being our band. We are very proud of our band, which numbers twenty performers, and delights us with choice airs from the last century from eight to nine of an evening; and we are proud of the ingenuity and patriotism of our bandmaster. In past days, some years ago, our band was a shame and disgrace to us; and at a solemn meeting of our city rulers it was resolved that the band must be mended or ended. Our bandmaster was equal to the occasion, and proclaimed that a musical competition, with prizes alluring enough to attract musicians from far and near, would be given in our city. Many came, and were welcomed with much native drink. They performed, and were complimented by the assembled multitude. Our bandmaster selected twenty of the aspiring musicians as qualified for prizes, and, that they might enjoy at their ease the various drinks provided for their satisfaction,

conducted them into the prison, as a temporary refreshment-room. In that prison they still remain, except when they are let out to play, and then they are escorted by a file of soldiers to prevent them running away. That there might be no ill-feeling, their wives and children were sent to prison to live with them; and that is how we got our band.

Facing the *palacio* is our Cathedral, and in the centre of our *plaza* grow hedges of roses and great beds of flowers. We have also a fountain, and a column upon which is placed a wondrous creature, which looks like a cross between a goose and a bald-headed vulture, but which we know is meant to be a condor, the great eagle of the Andes. In the evenings, while our captive band plays to us, our youths and maidens and their elders saunter round the garden of the *plaza*. Everybody knows every one else; and perhaps the fact that we are all shut in by great mountains, a hundred and thirty miles from the nearest town, makes us more neighbourly. The arrival of a stranger is an event, and is fully discussed, while a new foreigner is in the nature of a phenomenon.

We are only seventeen degrees from the equator; but we are nearly nine thousand feet high, so we are not inconvenienced by the heat. Indeed, we have hard frosts on many a winter night, but during the day we are glad to walk on the shady side of the street or lounge in our balconies and watch the long strings of mules passing below. These mules are our only means of communication with the outside world for nearly the whole year; and as they pass we see the bales of merino, baize, or cotton brought from the far-away port, or loads of sugar, chocolate, hides, tobacco, or Peruvian bark brought from the interior. For we stand on the very edge of the world; a day's journey beyond us lie the great forest regions of the interior, with every hundred miles or so a speck of a settlement, all looking to us as to their metropolis, and sometimes making a journey lasting two or three months to enjoy the society and the luxuries of our city. Our streets are rather narrow, and are all paved with stone, to which twenty or thirty years makes little difference, as only once in many days a carriage passes driving out to our health-resort, which is only a mile or so away, but a good many feet higher up than we are. All round us are great mountains

always with patches of snow here and there ; and as our carriages are brought here in pieces, and would be taken to pieces again were they sent away, we do not boast a great number. But we have a season for town and a season for the country, besides a season for our health-resort ; this last is in October and November, when all our fashionable world goes to bathe, drink the waters, and to gossip and lounge among the green lanes and paths of our miniature Cheltenham. Perhaps we are a little behind the age in our manners ; we dine at four—five o'clock is considered late, and six is wild dissipation. We have balls, and send out our invitations on the day the ceremony takes place, or, for a very special occasion, on the day before. As all the town knows who gives a dance and when, there is no danger of dates clashing. We do not believe in small and early dances ; we pack our salons as full as they can hold at 9 P.M., and then lock the house door, which will not be opened until six or seven o'clock the next morning. Between every dance we are accustomed to take a little refreshment, and we are not expected to sit out of the dances, so before we are let out we feel somewhat as though we had lost our hold of matters outside, and had been dancing for a week.

We have no difficulty about religion or creeds, for we have only one, and no other is allowed ; so we are saved all discussion or argument, and the logic of our rulers is simplicity itself. 'We believe,' say they, 'our religion to be the only true one ; therefore we cannot as good Catholics encourage false and dangerous opinions. So take notice.' Nothing could be more simple. Some of our churches and convents are venerable and in rather bad repair ; but we have very little reverence for mere age, and turned one of our churches into a theatre some years ago with the greatest indifference. In our drama we still preserve the traditions of the Elizabethan stage, for we do not tolerate ladies on the boards, and a modern ballet would empty the theatre in five minutes. Of late years, during some temporary aberration of our Government, a telegraph line was constructed to our city ; but we all saw that it was many years ahead of its time, and the result has amply justified us. We still have a telegraph office and a clerk who is understood to be the person in charge ; but he has for some months been sitting daily on a bench that runs round the colonnades of the *plaza* watching the army drill and the market-girls pass, apparently without any telegraphic cares. If we look up as we pass the office we find a torn, rain-stained notice announcing that the telegraph is not working. The fact is that the wire is too great a temptation for the honesty of the people, and is being made use of in many ways, but not to conduct the electric fluid. And it is better so, for with the telegraph came a feeling of surprised unrest ; the idea that anybody could in a few hours send us news from all

parts of the outside world was felt to be unsatisfactory ; it was believed that something startling might be sprung upon us, and we should be caught without proper time for preparation. For in our city we are, above all things, sedate, not to be hurried ; to-morrow with us means, not the day following nor any fixed space of time, but such a period as may be necessary for each individual to compose his mind, to arrange his affairs, to duly consider all matters relevant to the point in question, and then, without undue haste, to answer your letter or question with careful deliberation. It is evident that a telegraph was, to such a community, an incongruity, almost an insult. We do not take much interest in the affairs of the outside world. Our city is surrounded by great estates, many of them hundreds of square miles in extent, and containing hundreds of small tenants ; and our society is largely formed of the owners, so our conversation is largely of properties and agriculture, and these have changed very little for the past hundred years or so. Our farming implements remain the same that our great-grandfathers used, nor do we propose to improve them. Our ploughs are made of wood, our harrows are a few branches, and for threshing-machines we have no desire to better the Biblical fashion, which is advanced enough for us. Our flour-mills are a couple of stones turned by some mountain stream, and our bread is baked in a brick oven and has a dark complexion.

Our expenses are not great. The governor of the province, who is also commander-in-chief of our army, receives a salary equal to £150 a year ; and £200 is riches. The servant question has not yet reached us ; though our elders tell us of some wonderful period when one pound per annum was high pay, now we are content to pay four times as much without grumbling. Beef costs us threepence a pound, and for a farthing we can buy enough cabbage, brocoli, or onions for a family dinner. Peaches are eight and ten a penny, and bananas a penny for five. Our doctor charges us eighteenpence a visit, and our lawyer from fourpence to a pound, according to the importance of our case. Our houses have not changed in fashion for the past two or three hundred years ; we build them one or two stories high round a *patio* or courtyard, which we fill with orange-trees or a garden of carnations and heliotropes. The life within these houses is exactly the life that has been led century after century, save that now we have pianos and mirrors and other luxuries, which are brought to us on mules' backs over mountain passes fifteen thousand feet high. Whether news may take six months to reach us, as it did a hundred years ago, or a month or so, as at present, is to us of the smallest importance. But to some of us there are signs of change and unrest. Some years ago a steam-engine was actually introduced among us, brought in many pieces, and built up again with

much labour, and for the first time our quiet valley heard the shrill whistle of steam. This we felt was too much; the hurried revolutions of the machinery were discomposing, unrestful; but we relied upon immemorial custom and associations to defeat that mass of buzzing wheels and pulleys, and we were not mistaken. The thing was brought, we were told, to bore artesian wells, which was in itself an insult to our predecessors, who had lived, strived, and been gathered to their fathers without any such innovations; and for some months a great hammer pounded up and down, driving holes in our valley, and defying the inert but steady opposition which we felt but did not express. Some of us took the trouble to point out to the innovators that, as they could reach water anywhere in our valley at a depth of three feet, it would seem a great waste of labour to bore a hole a hundred or more feet deep, put a pipe in it, and then only get what we got at a yard. But we need not have concerned ourselves, for it was soon evident that the engine, like the telegraph, was for us a premature invention. As long as their pipes lasted they went on boring holes; but a day came when pipes failed them and they tried to pull up some already in place. This was contrary to all custom; the pipe pleaded *costumbre del país*, or immemorial usage, and refused to budge; and even the innovators, now somewhat influenced by the general atmosphere of *laissez faire*, gave up at this, and ceased troubling us with their whistle and smoke. The engine stood several years accumulating rust, until some one bought it for a song, resolved it into its component parts, and sent it off on long-suffering mules to some other place far in the interior. It was what we had foreseen.

We do not make haste to get rich in our city, and our year is well sprinkled with holidays; but Carnival is our great excitement, and we get deeply interested over the questions of the Prince and the *entrada*. For three days we are almost lively, and every one who ventures into the streets runs the risk of receiving an egg filled with perfumed water in his face. A pitched battle between two or three of our pretty girls in a balcony and twenty or thirty swains beneath is to us quite a sight. The girls wear curiously few garments, as they will be wet through in five minutes, and are supplied with the egg-shells filled with water by assistants from within. As fast as their arms can move, down come the eggs among the crowd, and they have at first a great advantage. But thirty to three is heavy odds, and besides, some one is bringing a ladder to scale the balcony. This cannot be allowed, and a dozen basins of water are hastily emptied over the ladder-bearers. This damps their ardour, and perhaps ends the battle; but if they have courage enough to rear the ladder and scale the balcony, then the victory is with the swains, and the girls are pelted from room to room, until they cry for mercy.

Shocking to say, we have an annual bull-fight; but year by year it is less and less of a success, and is evidently dying a natural death. The bulls get tamer and tamer; and last year our best bull refused to leave the door of his yard, and could not be prodded into action. It seems probable that the general restfulness of the city is contaminating even the bulls. So in our city the years glide quietly away: those of us who have occupations that take them to the outer world, with its daily newspapers, telegrams, and bustle, or those who enter for long months or years into that interior forest, to navigate those tropical rivers, with their plantations of sugar, of coffee and rice, gladly welcome the first glimpse of the red roofs of our city, lying at the head of its beautiful valley, girdled by great mountains, with the old Cathedral tower overlooking the trees; and, as we turn the corner of the hills, through the clear evening air comes floating up the sound of the bells calling to vespers, and in the short twilight we enter those long narrow streets, not regretting our want of railways, telegraphs, or progress, but wearied of noise and travel, and glad to get home.

MY FRIENDS.

I HAVE some friends that I most fondly cherish—
Constant companions of my earthly way,
Whose forms from out my vision never perish,
Real to me as those of mortal clay.

Throughout my years have I had dear-loved brothers,
Sisters still dearer, that my eyes have seen;
And yet I know to me these airy others
Even as close a fellowship have been.

I've sat with Hamlet, wrestling sore in thought
With life's hard problems; have with him been sad
Under its burdens; felt the world was nought,
And in his heart sick frenzy have been mad.

I've met with Rosalind within the forest;
Have laid my flowers upon Fidele's tomb;
Have wept with Juliet when her grief was sorest,
And watched beside her in the vaulted gloom.

I've heard the Chimes with Falstaff, and been merry;
Laughed with the Prince and Poin, too, at Gadshill.
How sombre were this earth—I sometimes query—
If these gay echoes rang not on it still!

And there are others: those with whom I rode
In budding April to A Becket's shrine;
And the brisk Trumpeter,* who cheered my road
With joyous blasts along the banks of Rhine.

These are my friends, the poets' quick creations,
Peopling more finely this gross earth of ours;
Distant and dimly move the men and nations,
But these bright shapes are with me at all hours.

T. P. JOHNSTON.

* The Trumpeter of Sakkingen, by J. V. von Scheffel.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

REMINISCENCES.

By the late Lieutenant-Colonel Sir R. LAMBERT PLAYFAIR, K.C.M.G.

VL.—BRUCE IN NORTH AFRICA.

NO traveller is more dear to the Scottish geographer than James Bruce of Kinnaird. It was owing to a perusal of his travels in 1848 that I was induced to go to Egypt; there I met Outram, as I have already narrated; so that it is hardly too much to say that Bruce laid the foundation of whatever fortune has followed me during my political career. When, therefore, I found myself his successor in office at Algiers, my interest in him was redoubled. He had occupied the post of Consul-General there from 1762 to 1765, and there he made the studies and preparations necessary to fit him for his great journey in Abyssinia. Before proceeding to Algiers, however, he had spent a year in Italy; from Naples he visited the ruins of Pæstum, then but little known, and at the suggestion of Sir James Gray, the British Minister, made accurate drawings of those ruins, and conceived the idea of illustrating the history of that city, which, however, he never carried out.

After resigning his consulate he travelled all over Algeria, Tunisia, and the Cyrenaica, where he made a magnificent series of archaeological drawings. In a letter dated 2d April 1766 to his friend Mr Wood, author of the great work on Baalbec and Palmyra (the ruins of which Bruce also visited and delineated), he thus sums up the result of his labours previous to his visit to the Cyrenaica:

It is now time to mention how I have been employed, and whether my expectations have been answered by the antiquities I have found on my journey. The principal are these: eight triumphal arches of the Corinthian order, mostly of different plans and designs, and little ruined; seven Corinthian temples in great preservation, all highly ornamented and of the very best ages, whose plans, parts, and decorations I have, by very laborious searches and excavations, made myself entirely master of. Add to these one large temple of the Composite order in its best

age, one part of which is so perfectly preserved that it must be looked upon as an exceptional example of the manner in which the ancients disposed and proportioned the constituent parts of that order; two large aqueducts, the smallest of which exceeds by forty-two feet in perpendicular height the remains of the highest aqueduct in Rome. In my designs are also included the ruins of the three principal cities of Africa—Iol or Cæsarea (the capital of Juba), Cirta, and Carthage—the last of which I hope will be found to make a better figure than it does in the accounts of some travellers. . . . The drawings are sixteen inches by twelve; which, taking the length and breadth, are the largest ever published. I have not left in the parts I have visited one stone undesigned whence any benefit could result to the arts.

In the *Proceedings of the Society of Architects* for 1862, I found that Her Majesty the Queen had exhibited two volumes of his drawings, which he had presented to George III.; but these seem now to have disappeared. I searched all the royal and national collections in vain; no one seemed to know anything about them. In the library at Windsor Castle I found his drawings of Pæstum, Baalbec, and Palmyra. There was no inscription to indicate the names of the monuments or that of the artist. The librarian, Mr Holmes, had no idea what they were till I identified them. At last I applied to Lady Thurlow, the descendant of the traveller and heiress of Kinnaird. I was delighted to find that she had great stores of his drawings and manuscripts, which she was so good as to place at my disposal for publication, if I thought the subject sufficiently interesting. These comprised, in addition to a great mass of drawings irrelevant to my present subject, more than a hundred sheets, completely illustrating all the principal subjects of archaeological interest in North Africa from Algiers to the Pentapolis. Bruce had often exhibited these during his lifetime, and had alluded to his intention of publishing a work on the antiquities of Africa; but he appears never to have commenced the letter-

press necessary to illustrate the drawings. Probably the manner in which his book of travels had been received induced him to abandon the subject in disgust. He was of a peculiarly sensitive nature, and the incredulity with which some of his stories were received, especially the popularity of the famous skit on them, *Earon Munchausen*, 'Dedicated, with great respect, to James Bruce of Kinncaid, Esquire,' caused him the greatest annoyance. His accuracy now requires no vindication. I knew intimately in my youth two of the celebrated brothers D'Abbadie, who had travelled during many years in Abyssinia; they assured me that *Bruce's Travels* were marvels of intelligence and exactitude.

I was perfectly familiar with some of the monuments in Algeria delineated by Bruce; other drawings were invaluable records of structures which no longer existed; but those situated in the Regency of Tunis I could not identify at all, and I doubt if any European then living had ever seen them. I determined, therefore, to follow him in his wanderings and ascertain the actual condition of those remarkable ruins, which neither time nor barbarians had been able to destroy. I was accompanied by the late Earl of Kingston, an experienced photographer, who succeeded admirably in depicting the ruins which Bruce had figured more than a century before. The result of my observations was contained in a large quarto volume, published in 1877, *Travels in the Footsteps of Bruce in Algeria and Tunis, illustrated by Fac-similes of his Original Drawings*. It is almost useless to refer the reader to this volume; it met an untimely fate, worse than the famous Rawlinson manuscripts, which were eventually redeemed from a grocer's shop, *tutus et odores vendentibus*. This bantling of mine was, after a certain number of copies had been sold, destroyed by the fire at Kegan Paul's premises in London.

Travelling in Tunis was a very different thing then to what it has become since the French occupation. During the whole of our journey, which lasted six weeks, we never met a single Christian till we arrived at Beja on our way back. A telegraphic station, with a Frenchman in charge, had been established there by the Bey, and on entering the office to despatch a telegram, the clerk rushed out and almost embraced us for joy at seeing a European face once more. I can only afford space for a very slight sketch of our journey, or rather that part of it which lay to the south of Tunis. It was made on horseback, with a tent of our own, and an escort furnished by the Bey. The first important place we stopped at was El-Djem, the ancient Thysdrus, where the pro-consul Gordian was proclaimed emperor in A.D. 238. Here are the ruins of a splendid amphitheatre, of such size and solidity that the Berbers and Arabs, at various periods of their history, had converted it into a fortress. It has frequently been besieged, to the great

destruction of the fabric. This edifice offers the same divisions as the principal edifices of a similar kind elsewhere: three outside open galleries, rising one above another, crowned by a fourth story with windows. But at El-Djem the architect seems to have tried to surpass the magnificence of existing structures. I have not space, however, to enter into architectural details. Fully one-third of the perimeter has been destroyed. Bruce made a very exact ground-plan of the building, and nine rough sketches. Thence we proceeded to the Holy City of Kerouan. Now the traveller can go to it by railway from Susa; and it is the only place in Tunisia where he can enter freely into the most sacred buildings. We could not reach Kerouan in one day, so we determined to encamp at a small village fifteen miles from it. No sooner was our intention announced to the Arabs than yells and shrieks of remonstrance resounded from every direction. They swore by the life of the Prophet that there was not a grain of barley remaining in the country; fowls and eggs had become quite a tradition; and they were really not sure whether they could offer us a handful of dry couscousson. We were about to protest that nothing was farther from our intention than to inconvenience them, and that we were quite ready to pay for anything they might supply to us; but our escort calmly told us to stand aside and not to interfere. The Bey's letter of recommendation was produced, a good many expletives were exchanged, and as soon as our hosts were assured that further remonstrance was useless, barley and grass were brought for the horses and an abundant dinner provided for the men. We very soon got on excellent terms; and when I subsequently asked them why they had created such a disturbance, they replied that such was the way of the Arabs; they would rather have our room than our company; but as we chose to stay, we were very welcome. We determined, however, to provide our own dinner. A judicious combination of preserved meat and vegetables, to make a solid soup, was put on the fire to boil; but when the supreme moment arrived, to our horror we discovered that it had apparently been cooked in a strong solution of Epsom salts! In fact, the water of this place was so bitter as to be unpotable for a stranger.

Eventually we reached Kerouan, about forty-two miles distant from El-Djem. Next to Mecca and Medina, no city is so sacred in the eyes of western Mohammedans. It was founded by Okba ibn Nafa, in the fiftieth year of the Hedjra (A.D. 670). Until recently it was entirely sealed against all who did not profess the faith of El-Islam; but even in my time it was only by a special order of the Bey that a Christian could be admitted within its walls. A Jew did not dare even to approach it. We were most kindly received in the house of the Governor; he was

absent in the Djerid, but his brothers did the honours of the house with the utmost courtesy and hospitality. They sent an escort to accompany us through the town; but even their presence did not protect us from scowls and even abuse from children wherever we went. We could not look into the door of the mosques, which are now objects of the greatest delight and interest to the tourist. I leave a description of them to the ordinary guide-book; none such existed at that time.

We were not sorry to leave Kerouan and to regain our liberty; for, though we greatly enjoyed the society of our hosts, it was impossible not to feel ill at ease in so sacred an atmosphere. Our first stage (12th April 1876) was to Djebel Trozza, where is a remarkable fissure in the limestone rock, called by the Arabs El-Hammam, or the bath, filled with hot vapour, to which the rheumatic people round about flock for the cure of their maladies. We were most hospitably entertained by the Khalifa of the district, who supplied all our wants with lavish hospitality. His treatment of us was what we experienced at almost every stage of our journey; so that I need not revert to the subject. What words shall I use to express our delight at the huge bowls of warm milk which awaited us even before we got out of the saddle? Barley and grass were provided for our horses, and a further supply in bags for our next day's journey. A sheep roasted whole, consousson, butter, eggs, and honey, an abundance of dates, excellent fresh bread, and, above all, a continuous and boundless supply of milk, formed a feast which even Hatim Tai might have set before his guests.

We passed but did not stop at Djelma, and pushed on for Sbeitla. This is merely a corruption of the ancient name Sufetula. No city in Africa possessed finer specimens of architecture; and even as late as the Arab invasion it continued to be one of the most considerable cities in Byzacene. Here took place the last great encounter between the Byzantines and the Arab invaders, who started from Egypt in 647, and swept over the Syrtic desert and north to the province of Africa of which Gregorius was at that time Exarch. The Moslem army was commanded by Abdulla bin Saad, brother of the Khalifa. On their arrival at Sufetula a message was sent to Gregorius, offering him the usual conditions: to embrace Islamism or to accept the payment of tribute, both of which he indignantly refused. His daughter, a maiden of incomparable beauty, fought by her father's side, and her hand, with one hundred thousand dinars, was promised to whomsoever should slay Abdulla. The latter retaliated by offering the daughter of Gregorius to any one who should kill her father. The result was the complete rout of the Christian host, Gregorius and a vast number of his followers were slain, and the daughter of the

Exarch was captured and allotted to Ibn ez Zobeir. Henceforth Christianity almost ceased to exist in North Africa.

The most important of the ruins of Sbeitla is the Hieron, enclosing three semi-attached temples, the central one being of the Composite order, and that on either side Corinthian; the whole forming one composition. Bruce's drawings of these are done with a conscientiousness and ability which could not be surpassed. This monument has not in the slightest degree deteriorated since it was drawn by Bruce. This is shown by the beautiful drawings and restorations of these temples and other monuments at Sbeitla,* by Mr Alexander Graham, who visited the place some years after our journey. He says with truth that 'to the architect the ruins of Sufetula are the most valuable of all the monumental remains yet discovered in Tunisia.' Bruce has illustrated the three temples with the monumental entrance to the enclosure in ten sheets, two of which I have reproduced.

The next very important place we visited was Mukthev, the ancient Maetav. Its position is admirably chosen on a wide and elevated plain between two watercourses. Here is an exceedingly fine triumphal arch, of which Bruce has left eight highly finished illustrations. There is another dedicated to Trajan, which stood in the centre of the town; of this Bruce made four illustrations. This building, in its proportions and treatment, is very grand and simple. It has not suffered much since Bruce's time, except that it is buried almost to the level of the impost in débris. There are several other monuments, and the ground between them is thickly strewn with cut stones.

Another interesting place we visited was Zanfou. Bruce was the first of modern travellers to recognise that it was the ancient Assuras. He has left six sheets to illustrate the triumphal arch here. A little before entering the place we passed a fine spring of water, which issues from a cavity in the rock. A number of Arab girls were washing their clothes at it, and did not appear particularly averse from seeing, or being seen by, us; but as soon as our escort came in sight veils were brought into use, and the youngest of them scampered away and hid their faces till we were out of sight. The appearance of Europeans amongst them, probably for the first time, must have been a rather startling event, to be talked of for years afterwards, and to serve, no doubt, as an epoch in their simple chronology.

From Zanfou we went in two days to Dougga, the ancient Thugga, a city which must have been of great consequence, to judge by the extent and magnificence of its remains. The temple here, dedicated to Jupiter and Minerva, is one of the

* See *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, vol. ii. new series.

most exquisite in North Africa. It is entirely built of *lumuechella*, one of the lost Numidian marbles; it is a very compact limestone, full of crystalline shell-fossils. Bruce's illustrations of this consist of nine sheets. There is another monument here of even greater interest, the celebrated mausoleum from which the Dougga bilingual stone was obtained. Bruce has left a pencil sketch of it, which is the more interesting as the monument was greatly destroyed in getting the stone out. This mausoleum and the Medrassen in Algeria are the only monuments in North Africa of a pre-Roman origin. The inscription is in Punic and Lybian, and is now in the British Museum.

I might prolong indefinitely an account of the good work Bruce did in North Africa; but enough has been said to show what great reason we have to be proud of our distinguished countryman. If he had never been to Abyssinia at all, his explorations in North Africa would have sufficed to place him in the foremost rank of travellers, artists, and archaeologists.

We terminated our journey in Tunisia by going overland through the country of the much-dreaded Khomais, which had never before been traversed by any European. It was the '*intention*' of this tribe which gave the French a pretext for taking possession of the Regency of Tunis.

From El-Badja we went through a remarkable tract of country called the Belad-er-Ramel, or country of sand. This was originally a forest, but has now been engulfed by the sea-sand ever advancing imperceptibly and irresistibly, blown by the prevailing north winds from the beach. There is no uncertain line of demarcation between it and the rich forest-land beyond; it ends abruptly in a high bank rising like a cliff thirty feet high, sometimes sloping gradually down a valley like a glacier, but always advancing and swallowing up vegetation in its course. When we reached the Oued-el-Kebir, or Great River, which enters the sea close to the island of Tabarca, we found it so swollen by rain that no animal, far less a laden mule, could pass. We had no alternative but to turn round and

seek the hospitality of some village of the ill-reputed Khomais. Our escort looked grave; but, as experience had taught us that they were extremely brave where there was no danger, but meek as lambs amongst such as were little likely to brook interference from them, we went straight up to one of the largest *douars*, or encampments, and claimed hospitality for the night. We appeared to be regarded with some distrust; nothing like a cordial welcome was accorded to us, but the owner of a hut placed it at our service. It was not more than fifteen feet square, reeking with foul odours, the ground splashing with liquid mud, and our party consisted of ten persons besides ourselves. We therefore preferred pitching our own tent. No sooner was this done, and we had commenced to prepare our dinner of preserved meat with the aid of a spirit-lamp, than a great circle of wild-looking fellows gathered around us and watched our movements with wondering gravity. They allowed us to eat our meal without interruption, which done, we commenced to amuse them by the exhibition of compasses, barometers, and tricks with pocket-handkerchiefs and string; and Kingston, who was an unerring shot, astonished them with the accuracy of his aim. I do not think, however, that it was till we produced a pot of jam and distributed it to the assembly that we entirely succeeded in gaining their affection and became the best possible friends. They declared that we must never leave them—they would give us land and sheep; and as for wives, the full number of four each were at our disposal on very moderate terms! Ultimately they undertook to escort us to La Calle, the frontier town in Algeria, and we felt that the pacific conquest of the Khomais had been effected. So little was known of these people that when the military authorities of Algeria determined to invade their country, the General-in-chief consulted me as to its topography and resources, and when the '*Association française pour l'avancement des Sciences*' met at Algiers in 1881 I was asked to give a conference on the subject. This I did at a *séance générale* in the theatre.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXIV.



THAT afternoon they boarded the yacht, and Katherine renewed her acquaintance with Jimmy Foote. Maas was also introduced to her, and paid her the usual compliments upon her engagement. Later she explored the yacht from stem to stern, expressing her delight at the completeness of every detail. The pleasure she derived from it, however, was

as nothing compared with that of her lover, who never for one instant left her side.

'Some day,' he said as they stood together upon the bridge, looking at the harbour and watching the variety of shipping around them, 'this vessel will be your own property. You will have to invite whoever you like to stay on board her with you. Do you think you will ever let me come?' He looked into her face, expecting to

find a smile there; but, to his astonishment, he discovered that her eyes were filled with tears. 'Why, my darling,' he cried, 'what does this mean? What is the reason of these tears?'

She brushed them hastily away, and tried to appear unconcerned. 'I was thinking of all your goodness to me,' she said. 'Oh Jack! I don't know how I can ever repay it.'

'I don't want you to repay it,' he answered. 'You have done enough already. Have you not honoured me, dear, above all living men? Are you not going to be my wife?'

'That is no return,' she answered, shaking her head. 'If you give a starving man food, do you think it kind of him to eat it? I had nothing, and you are giving me all. Does the fact that I take it help me to repay it?'

What he said in reply to this does not come within the scope of a chronicler's duty to record. Let it suffice that when he went below with her he might very well have been described as the happiest man in Japan. The history of the following fortnight could be easily written in two words, 'love and pleasure.' From morning till night they were together, seeing everything, exploring the temples, the country tea-houses, spending small fortunes with the curio-dealers, and learning to love each other more and more every day. In fact, there was only one cloud in their sky, and that was the question of what was to be done with Maas. Up to that time that gentleman had shown no sort of inclination to separate himself from the party. Browne could not very well ask him to leave, and yet he had the best of reasons for not wanting him to go on with them. What was to be done? He worried himself almost into a fever to know what he should do. Then, almost at the last minute, Maas settled the question for them, not in an altogether unexpected fashion. Finding his host alone in the veranda of the hotel one evening, he asked outright, without pretence of beating about the bush, whether he might, as an old friend, continue to burden them with his society. Browne found himself placed in a most awkward position. Though he did not want him, he had known Maas for so many years, and they had always been on such a footing of intimacy together, that he felt he could do nothing but consent. He accordingly did so, though with scarcely the same amount of grace that usually characterised his hospitality. Jimmy Foote, however, expressed himself more freely.

'Look here, Jack, old man,' said the latter to Browne when he was informed what had taken place, 'you know as well as I do that Maas and I were never the greatest of friends. I tell you this because I don't want you to think I am saying behind his back what I would not say to his face. At the same time, I *do* think that you ought to have told him straight out that he couldn't come.'

'How on earth could I do that?' asked Browne. 'Besides being exceedingly rude, it would have given the whole show away. What possible sort of excuse could I have made for not wanting him on board?'

'I don't know what sort of excuse you could have made,' replied Jimmy; 'all I know is that you ought to have made it. You have other people besides yourself to consider in the matter.'

The matter was done, however, and could not be undone. For this reason, when the yacht said good-bye to the lovely harbour of Yokohama and Treaty Point was astern, Maas stood upon the deck watching it fade away and drop below the sea-line.

'And now that we are on our way again, my dear Browne,' said Maas when the others had gone below, 'what is our destination?'

'Of our ultimate destination I am not yet quite certain,' said Browne, who was anxious to gain time to think before he committed himself. 'But at first we are going north to have a look at the Sea of Okhotsk. My wife's father has been residing on an island there for many years, and it is our intention to pick him up and to bring him home, in order that he may be present at our wedding.'

'In other words,' said Maas, 'you are conniving at the escape of a Russian convict from Saghalien. Is that so?'

Browne uttered a cry that was partly one of astonishment and partly one of terror. He could scarcely believe he had heard aright. This was the second time since they had been on board the yacht that Maas had played him this sort of trick, and he did not want to be taken in again. Was the other really aware of what they were going to do, or was this, as on the previous occasion, a shot fired at random?

'My dear fellow,' he began as unconcernedly as his excitement would permit, 'what on earth do you mean? Help a Russian convict to escape? Surely you must have taken leave of your senses.'

'Look here,' said Maas with unusual emphasis, 'what is the use of your attempting to keep a secret? Nature never intended you for a conspirator. You may not have guessed it, but I have seen for some considerable time past, long before we left Europe in fact, that there was trouble in the wind. Otherwise, why do you think I should have accompanied you to the East, so many thousand weary miles from Paris and civilisation?'

'Because your health was bad,' Browne replied. 'At least, that is what you said yourself. Was that not so?'

'My health is as good as your own,' the other answered. 'No, Browne, I invented that excuse because I wanted to come with you; because I had some sort of notion of what you were about to do.'

'But, even supposing it should be so, how could you have known it?'

'I will tell you. Do you remember the night at the Amphitryon Club you told me that you were thinking of taking a trip to the Farther East?'

Browne admitted that he did remember it.

'Well, I happened to know who the lady was to whom you were paying such marked attention. I happened to mention her name one day to an old friend, who immediately replied, "I know the young lady in question; she is the daughter of the famous Polowski, the Nihilist, who was sent to Siberia, and who is now confined upon the island of Saghalien." Then you spoke of your yachting voyage to the Farther East, and I put two and two together, and resolved that, happen what might, I would see you through the business. You see how candid I am with you.'

'And do you mean to say that you knew all the time what I was going to do?'

'All the time,' said Maas. 'Did not I give you a hint at breakfast on the morning following our joining the yacht at Southampton? I am your friend, Browne; and, as your friend, I want to be allowed to stand by you in your hour of danger. For it is dangerous work you are engaged upon, as I suppose you know.'

'And do you really mean that you are going to help me to get this man out of his place of captivity?' inquired Browne, putting on one side the other's reference to their friendship.

'If you are going to do it, I'm certainly going to stand by you,' Maas replied. 'That's why I am here.'

'And all the time I was wishing you at Hanover, because I thought that if you knew you would disapprove.'

'It only goes to show how little we know our true friends,' said Maas. 'If you feel that you can trust me now, do not let us have any more half-measures. Let me be in with you hand and glove, or put me ashore somewhere, and get me out of the way. I don't want to push myself in where I am not wanted.'

Browne was genuinely touched. 'My dear old fellow,' he said, putting his hand on Maas's shoulder, 'I must confess I feel as if I had treated you very badly. If you are really disposed to help me, I shall be only too glad of your assistance. It's a big job, and a hideously risky one. I don't know what on earth I shall do if we fail.' Then, in the innocence of his heart, Browne told him as much of their arrangements as he had revealed to Jimmy Foote. Maas expressed his sympathy, and forthwith propounded several schemes for getting the unhappy man to a place of safety when they had got him on board the yacht. He went so far as to offer to land on the island and to make his way into the interior in the hopes

of being able to render some assistance should it be necessary.

'Well, you know your own business best,' said Jimmy Foote to Browne when the latter had informed him of the discovery he had made. 'But I can't say that I altogether like the arrangement. If he had guessed our secret, why didn't he let us know that he knew it? It seems to me that there is a little bit of underhand work somewhere.'

'I think you are misjudging him,' said Browne; 'upon my word I do. Of one thing there can be no sort of doubt, and that is, that whatever he may have known, he is most anxious to help.'

'Is he?' said Jimmy, in a tone that showed that he was still more than a little sceptical concerning Maas's good intentions. 'I don't set up to be much of a prophet; but I am willing to go so far as to offer to lay a hundred to a half-penny that we shall find he has been hoodwinking us somewhere before we've done.'

Jimmy spoke with such unusual gravity that Browne looked at him in surprise. 'Oh, you may look,' said Jimmy; 'but you won't stare away what I think. Browne, old man,' he continued, 'you and I were at school together; we have been pals for a very long time; and I'm not going to see you, just when you're booked to settle down happily with your wife and become a respectable member of society, upset and spoil everything by a foolish action.'

'Thank you, Jimmy,' said Browne. 'I know you mean well by me; but, at the same time, you must not let your liking for me make you unjust to other people. Maas has proved himself my friend, and I should be mean indeed if I ventured to doubt him.'

'All right,' said Jimmy; 'go your way. I'll say no more.'

That evening Browne realised his long-felt wish. He and Katherine promenaded the deck together as the yacht sped on its way across the seas towards their goal, and talked for hours together of their hopes and aspirations. When at last she and Madame Bernstein bade the gentlemen good-night, the latter adjourned to the smoking-room to discuss their plan of action. Maas had been evidently thinking the matter over, for he was prepared with one or two new suggestions, which struck the company as being eminently satisfactory. So sincere was he, and so anxious to be of service, that when at last they bade each other good-night, and he had returned below, Jimmy turned to Browne, who was standing beside the bulwark, and said:

'Jack, old boy, I believe, after all, that I've done that man an injustice. I do think now that he is really anxious to do what he can.'

'I'm glad indeed to hear you say so,' Browne replied, 'for I'm sure he is most

anxious to be of use. Forgive me if I was a bit sharp to you this afternoon. I cannot tell you how grateful I feel to you for all your kindness.'

'Fiddlesticks!' said Jimmy. 'There's no talk of kindness between us.'

Fourteen days after leaving Yokohama, and a little before sunset, those on board the yacht caught their first glimpse of the Russian island of which they had come in search. At first it was scarcely discernible; then, little by little, it grew larger, until its steep and abrupt rocks could be distinctly seen with a far-away line of distant mountain-peaks stretching to the northward.

Katherine, Madame Bernstein, and the three young men were upon the bridge at the time. Browne, who held his sweetheart's hand, could feel her trembling. Madame Bernstein appeared by far the most excited of the group.


Advanced though the time of the year was, the air was bitterly cold. But, for once in a way, the Yezo Strait, usually so foggy, was now devoid even of a vestige of vapour. The season was a late one, and for some hours they had been passing packs of drift ice; but as they closed up on the land it could be seen lying in thick stacks along the shore.

'That is Cape Siretoko,' said Browne. 'It is the most southerly point of Saghalien.'

IRISH HOME INDUSTRIES.

CARRICKMACROSS AND LIMERICK LACE, AND CLARE EMBROIDERY.

By MARY GORGES.

EEDS show' may well be the motto of the Irish lace industries, which, born of poverty and want, have been carried on quietly, persistently, unnoticed, almost unknown, until the hour came, the touch which revealed, the help that placed them on a firm commercial basis; so that now they are taking a foremost position in the industrial world.

Ireland is at this moment dotted over with industries calling into play the industrial spirit of the people. The response has been so eager, so earnest, that no one who observes but must confess that, give the Celt hope once more, raise him above the dead stagnation of a life which has none except that of keeping body and soul together somehow, he will labour with ardour and with a gratitude to the hand which finds him the work greater than was ever felt for the charity dole, popularly supposed to be the aim and limit of his desires. Of this spirit Irishwomen are giving very convincing proof in their own particular province—that of the needle.

The oldest lace industry in Ireland is that of appliqué lace, made in County Monaghan since 1820, when Mrs Grey Porter, wife of the then rector of Donaghmoyne (near Carrickmacross), brought from the Continent a piece of lace which she gave to her servant, Anne Steadman, to copy. So successfully was this done that Mrs Grey Porter further employed her to teach a few girls in the parish; and the work attracted attention and brought so many orders that Miss Reid of Rahans, seeing thus a means of relieving the misery around, took it up from Mrs Grey Porter, and enlarged it. Her brother gave an outhouse in his farmyard—the first school; and here Miss Reid and her sister taught the girls they gathered together

the art of lace-making from Mrs Grey Porter's pattern.

There are now two kinds of Carrickmacross lace (as it was afterwards called); at this time there was only the appliqué. This is worked on a foundation of net; the pattern is traced out on fine muslin, and sewed down round the edges to the net, the muslin being then cut away. Strictly speaking this is more an embroidery on net than lace, but the effect is that of lace, and very light and pretty. The open spaces, too, are often filled in with lace stitches between the pattern.

From an early date this work has been highly esteemed, the great Florentine historian, Vasari, claiming the artist Botticelli as its inventor, while others assign its origin to India or to Persia. Be that as it may, it was very extensively produced in Italy from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, and it was a specimen of this lace which Mrs Grey Porter brought home nearly eighty years ago and employed Anne Steadman to copy.

Under Miss Reid the industry grew apace; a schoolhouse was built, and girls flocked in to learn this remunerative employment. But it depended on private orders only, and, these failing after a time, it began to die out. Then came the terrible Irish famine, and in the fight against starvation for the remnant left of the people the work was revived.

Mr Tristram Kennedy was then agent for Lord Bath's estate of 15,000 acres, tenanted by some 13,000 people, and he, with Captain Morant, agent for the Shirley estate adjoining, turned a vacant house into a school—hence the 'Bath and Shirley School.' He built six schools on the estate, the central one in the town of Carrickmacross, which gives its name to the lace, though

it was not distinctively known as such till exhibited at the Working Men's Exhibition in 1870, where it obtained a first-class certificate and silver medal.

Mr Tristram Kennedy obtained a grant of £100 from the Privy Council in order to establish a class for training young girls in drawing and designing for the lace-schools in the district, and also a yearly grant for the manager's salary from the Board of Education. Nor did his efforts stop here. He brought home from Belgium both Brussels and guipure lace, which he handed to Mrs Keilan, then manager of the Bath and Shirley School. She had them remodelled and put into the hands of her best workers, the result being a very beautiful fabric, celebrated now as Carrickmacross guipure.

In this guipure the design is worked on cambric without any net foundation, the superfluous part cut away, and the pattern joined by 'brides' or 'picots.' A combination of appliqué and guipure forms a very striking and handsome lace, the main design being appliqué with panels of guipure introduced. I may mention here that the Carrickmacross lace is relatively inexpensive. I have seen a fine handkerchief with pretty though simple border of appliqué as low as seven shillings and sixpence, and flounces from twenty-five to seventy shillings per yard. In guipure these would be from thirty-five to ninety shillings. Yet, though this is the more expensive and complicated, the appliqué has so many admirers that the question of superiority seems a matter of taste, and this I find also the case between the Youghal point and the rose or Inishmacsaint, to which in a former article I alluded as 'running a very close second to the point of the south.' But it has an equal share of admiration; and no less a judge than Her Royal Highness the Duchess of York, when on a visit last year to Mount Stewart (Lord Londonderry's place in the north), exclaimed, on observing that Lady Londonderry was wearing some of this lace, 'That is the Irish lace I admire and want to get. Where can I?' Lady Erne promptly told of the girls on the shores of Lough Erne employed by Miss MacLean, who has never let drop the industry founded by her mother—the result being a very handsome order forwarded to Miss MacLean, to gladden the hearts of the workers.

On being elected member of Parliament for Louth in 1852, Mr Tristram Kennedy resigned the management of the Bath estate; but his interest never ceased in the schools he had established. He extended their connection with the London trade; and the success of his untiring efforts to develop the taste and artistic skill of the workers by the training he procured them was noted officially in the Report of the Royal Dublin Society, and also by the fact of Her Majesty having ordered, through a London firm, a large

and handsome piece of guipure. The work has gone on prospering. It was in the hands of private individuals until the death in 1893 of Mr Ben Lindsay, of 76 Grafton Street, the agent for the schools, so often mentioned with gratitude and regret in the record of Irish industries, when the stock and premises were purchased by the Countess of Aberdeen; and this industry is now a limited company, doing a flourishing trade in London, Paris, and America, and giving employment to over two thousand girls.

At the present moment both Carrickmacross appliqué and guipure are very fashionable. Mrs Donaldson, Urker House, Crossmaglen, who established a school in 1866 for the benefit of the suffering poor, and who was one of the first to send a worker for training to a School of Art, has brought this industry to a high standard, as is shown in the guipure flouncing worked from her design exhibited on the occasion of the marriage of the Duke of York and Princess May, in which shamrock, rose, and thistle are combined with the may-flower and ivy-leaf. There were some beautiful exhibits of this lace at Lady Cadogan's Textile Exhibition; and, widely as it is known, yet to some of the visitors it seemed to come as a surprise. A nice old countrywoman from Monaghan, who sat composedly working at some handsome guipure, was quite a centre of attraction to a constantly shifting crowd. She told me that orders for similar lace were showering upon her from the visitors, with offers of much higher pay than that which she had earned from the trade for many years, and which, she said, had enabled her with ease to keep her home in comfort and independence. I dare say the old lady was too wise to throw over steady for temporary employment, however tempting the offers; but she certainly had no idea of how the work is appreciated until she came to Dublin.

All honour to the founders and helpers, through whom to-day the home of many an Irish peasant is free from want, happy, and contented, not only in Monaghan and Armagh, the principal centres, but in other parts of Ireland, for guipure is made elsewhere, though not so extensively.

Limerick lace, on the other hand, is only beginning to retrieve its old reputation, thanks principally to the energetic efforts of Mrs R. Vere O'Brien of New Hall, County Clare. Its palmy days were during the early part of the Queen's reign, when it was the fashion, and used extensively for flounce, shawl, scarf, the bridal veil, and the infant's robe. Those who have had handed down from mother or grandmother the Limerick lace of this period understand well the difference between it and the wretched specimens which later on used to be 'hawked about' the streets of Limerick; for the original Limerick lace, that which is now reviving, was extremely

fine and pretty, and, if not very elaborate, admitted of great variety of design.

This lace industry was introduced into Ireland by Mr Walker, an Englishman. I have never ascertained from whence it came originally; but Mr Walker brought over a band of teachers in 1829. Such apt and clever pupils did they find that the workroom, at first only a disused store, was soon changed to a factory, giving employment to three hundred girls, a number more than doubled after a while. Some of the workers began at the age of six, practising first with the tambour-needle in pricking outline patterns on calico, and afterwards working practice pieces on net. There are two kinds of Limerick lace, tambour and run lace, both worked on a ground of net, the former with a tambour-needle, the latter with an ordinary one and an open stitch, which produces an exceedingly filmy and 'lacy' effect.

I was reminded lately of the difference between the old Limerick lace and that which succeeded, first by seeing in a society paper mention of the late Countess of Shaftesbury's collection of 'valuable Limerick lace,' and then by a discussion which arose from the remark of a lady at whose house I was dining, that one of her most valued presents in her early married life was a set of Limerick lace flounces of beautiful design, from which three sets alone were made, each costing fifteen guineas (no extravagant price, surely). Of these, one was purchased by the Queen, and another by this lady's mother-in-law for herself. I forget who got the third; but I shall not soon forget the astonished exclamation of a lady present: 'Limerick lace!' It proved difficult to convince her that this could be beautiful and valuable; indeed, I am not sure that she *was* convinced in the end.

The decline of the Limerick lace industry was first caused by the Court mourning which followed the death of the Prince Consort. Then pretty and inexpensive machine-made lace was introduced, and the demand for Limerick lace virtually ceased. When Mrs Vere O'Brien tried in 1883 to get some of the finer kind made, she was baffled by finding that only the coarser net and thread were supplied to the few workers left. However, being helped over this difficulty by Lady de Vere of Curragh Chase, who gave her the fine Brussels net and threads, she induced one of the old workers to make a flounce from a good design supplied; and this being a success, Mrs Vere O'Brien collected a few designs, chiefly 'rubblings' of old Brussels or point d'Alençon lace, and employed two or three more of the old workers to make lace at their own homes.

From this small beginning came first orders, then 'the pride and satisfaction of working for the trade,' the late Mr Ben Lindsay being one of the best employers in those early days; while later on Mr Alan Cole, of the Science and

Art Department, gave valuable help. He visited the old workers in their homes, and procured fine lace designs to be worked by them.

Six years ago, after a lecture at the Chamber of Commerce, Limerick, by Mr Cole, it was resolved to start a Lace Training School, which Mrs Vere O'Brien now superintends. It is on a small scale compared with other Irish industries, but like them it owes much to Lady Aberdeen and to the Irish Industries Association; and Mrs Vere O'Brien claims for Limerick lace 'that it has shown such vitality under great difficulties in the past—the rivalry of cheap foreign competition abroad and machine-made lace at home—as to be no small achievement, and of good augury for the future under its present improved conditions.' They are glad to receive visitors and show the girls at work, with specimens of the lace they make, at this lace school, 112 George Street, Limerick.

It may not be without interest to add that Mrs Vere O'Brien, in a private letter, mentions vitality of another description—namely, the memory of past kindness in Irish hearts. She says: 'Some of my very old workers, still living in Limerick, can remember Mr Walker, and have a very good word for him, as a kind-hearted man who gave his workers cheap potatoes when they were scarce and dear.'

This letter further tells of an interesting but little-known industry—namely, Clare embroidery, started about five years ago by Mrs Vere O'Brien, with the help of the clever directress of needlework at the Ennis Convent, and of her own maid, who was familiar with the red and blue embroidery done by the peasantry in the Vosges country. This consists in the manufacture of children's frocks and pinafores, made of fine white mull muslin or holland, and embroidered and smocked by the country girls, some of whom are excellent needlewomen.

Besides the work done at the convent under Sister Mary Patricia, Mrs Vere O'Brien has a weekly class at her own house, where she draws and arranges the designs on the yokes and frills of the little garments, and finds that the girls have become very quick and expert in carrying out an idea. All the Clare embroidery sent to the Dublin and Lancaster Exhibitions this year was sold, and one of the young 'New Hall' workers took a prize at the Irish Industrial Exhibition in Limerick of last November; while this year two of the Clare embroidery girls (one of them under twelve) gained prizes at the Strabane Industrial Show, and a first prize was also taken for Limerick lace at the Horse Show—a skirt and berthe designed by Miss Anderson, and bought by Lady Cadogan. Mrs Vere O'Brien is glad to send specimens of this work on approval, and most thankful to get orders for the girls, who can make the frocks, overalls, &c. to any measurement given.

I can only allude to Irish crochet, a product very unlike crochet as generally understood, and a 'unique creation of Irish taste and skill.' This is a work not confined to any special district, but I single out Clones guipure, as it is there called, partly because of the beauty of the work done in this industry (which last year celebrated its jubilee), and partly because of the pathetic interest attached to the name of its foundress, Mrs Hand of Losely Park, Surrey, wife of the Rev. Mr Hand, rector of Clones. She came to Ireland when the country was yet suffering from the ravages of the potato famine, and witnessed the misery of the starving people. She had tried to teach the crochet in Cambridgeshire, and failed; now she set to work afresh, inspired by the hope of helping the poor. Finding the Irish girls easily taught, she procured old lace suitable for designs, chiefly Venetian point, many a fragment of old church lace, pieces of altar frontals, and scraps from the vestments of foreign priests finding their way through the kindness of friends to the school now formed at Clones, where, under a good teacher, great progress was made. Many pupils were gathered in, till 'in all the parish there was scarce a cottage where the click-click of the needle was not heard.' And when the sale of this new lace became the difficulty, a friend was found. Mr Ben Lindsay undertook to find a market for it, and succeeded. Paris, Vienna, and London welcomed it; orders crowded in, 'money flowed into all the homes where famine had reigned supreme, little home comforts were indulged in, and the smile of content rested on faces lately disfigured by despair. God had blessed the work, and the people knew it.'

She to whom they owe it all has long since been laid to rest in the pretty little churchyard of Clogh-Roslea, among the people for whose lives she sacrificed her own. Careless of herself, Mrs Hand's strength gave way, after years of noble toil. Her work remains a living monument of ceaseless energy and love.

But the industry languished for a while, until

Lady Aberdeen, the good genius of the Irish woman, came forward to 'make the wheel go round once more.' She visited the crochet depôts, made large purchases, exhorted the people not to let so charming a work die in their midst, and re-awakened the dormant industry. Chicago and the World's Fair opened a fresh market; silk began to be used instead of cotton, and beautiful designs were reproduced once more. Last autumn one hundred new designs were made by the Irish Lace Depôt for a leading Paris merchant in close touch with the celebrated house of Worth, the designs being for the pattern costumes of this year.

Perhaps tatting may be thought scarcely to merit mention, yet there were pretty exhibits of this work at Lady Cadogan's Textile Exhibition; not so fine as some I have seen, nor approaching the beauty of such tatted lace as covered the rich blue cushions and lounges of one particular room in Chillingham Castle, the work of the late Countess of Tankerville, but still of very good design and workmanship. I always associate this work with the days of the French Revolution, when the noble ladies of the Faubourg St Germain tatted calmly on in their prisons, while awaiting their turn to be called out to the tumbrel and the guillotine. Possibly, as Lady Tankerville was of French birth, some such thought may have mingled with her fancy for it. But, putting associations aside, I think it one of the prettiest of the minor hand products, so am loath to close without a passing notice of the nice work and exquisite whiteness of the tatting exhibits in Dublin. Yet this is done by girls (chiefly of Louth) who milk cows and help in all the rough farm work, then come in, wash their hands, and sit down, producing the pretty tatting which I saw, and which comes from them without speck or soil, and in no need of washing!

We say in Ireland 'God speed the plough' when we see it cutting the furrows; so I shall close this little account of a few of our industries with 'God speed the work!'

A DEAN OF ST PAUL'S.

CHAPTER II.



DOCTOR HENRY COLE was in no enviable frame of mind as he made his way up Dame Street to attend the council which had been summoned to meet in Dublin Castle at the hour of noon. He had arrived in the Irish metropolis in due course; but ever since his encounter with the Mayor of Chester his temper had been steadily growing worse. Always presuming by reason of his position, refusing all courtesies, ready to treat those into whose society he might happen to be

thrown as immeasurably his inferiors, his travels had not been made particularly agreeable for him. The lugger in which he had crossed the Channel, too, had misbehaved herself in the eyes of the Dean of St Paul's; for, experiencing the full force of the equinoctial gales which were raging at that season, she had rolled violently from side to side; then, trembling like a human being and straining every creaking timber, she had alternately pitched headlong into the trough, or, freeing herself from her liquid encumbrances, had swung herself with equal violence to the

height of the raging crest. The Irish Sea, no respecter of persons, had caused the reverend Doctor to spend a most miserable five days confined in a wretched, stuffy cabin. As if this were not enough—the discomforts attending his journey by water, coupled with the treatment he had received at the hands of Sir Lawrence Smith—Dr Cole discovered, to his intense amazement no less than to his rage, that the Lords of the English Council had not notified their Irish brethren of his impending arrival, and consequently, when he had presented himself at the seat of government, he had been received in a highly suspicious fashion.

'Very good,' he had replied when, on this occasion, asked to produce his credentials, 'I shall do so, but only at the council table and before the assembled council. I have Her Highness's particular instructions not to depart a hair's-breadth from this course.'

To this the Lord-Deputy had replied that before binding or in any way pledging himself he must first discuss the matter with his colleagues. This step had apparently been taken; for, about three weeks after his arrival in Ireland, the Dean was summoned to present himself at the Castle, to relate the terms of his mission to Her Highness's Irish advisers, who would be assembled to meet him.

The Doctor was in an exceedingly irritable frame of mind that morning, as we have said; and, as he entered the council chamber, was vowing to himself that he would speak out his mind boldly, and demonstrate beyond mistake to those Irish bores how in future a Dean of St Paul's should be treated.

The council had met, and many curious glances, the purport of which Dr Cole later understood, were bestowed upon him as he took the seat pointed out. The Lord-Deputy having briefly introduced the stranger, the latter was then called upon to state concisely the nature of his business.

'Before I do so,' replied the Dean, closely hugging his cloak-bag, 'I would crave your lordships to vouchsafe me some explanation as to—indeed, I think I am entitled to say, render me an apology for—the extraordinary treatment I have met with at your hands.'

'Mr Dean,' remarked the Bishop of Meath, at that period the most powerful and the most able of an exceptionally able bench of Irish bishops, 'when we have seen your credentials, and have satisfied ourselves that you in reality are charged with State business, you may perchance be granted your request. At the present moment, beyond your bare word, we have no proof that you are'—here his lordship coughed significantly—'a—er—um—a royal commissioner, in fact.'

'My business,' replied the Dean slowly and pompously, expecting to see the council tremble at his words, 'is to lay before your lordships

Her Highness's most recent instructions as to the manner in which, in the future, you shall deal with the Irish adherents of the so-called faith, the Protestant religion.'

The clerical members of the council gazed each at the other. Here was the cloven hoof of interference again. This continual meddling with Irish ecclesiastical affairs on the part of the English episcopacy was extremely distasteful to them, and it was evident the Irish bishops had made up their minds to no longer submit to it.

'Her Highness,' continued the Dean, enjoying what he took to be a pause of consternation, 'acting on the advice of His Eminence the Cardinal-Archbishop of Canterbury, has'—

'Hold, sir,' cried the Bishop of Meath, who, by virtue of his position as the Irish Metropolitan, apparently with the consent of his brethren, took upon himself the conduct of the business—'Hold, sir,' he said in a peremptory manner. 'The flame of Christianity was burning steadily in Ireland a century or more before it lightened the shores of Kent; and I for one am not going to bow to the rulings of the chair of St Augustine.'

'What!' ejaculated Dr Cole in a tone of pious horror, and raising his hands as if invoking the protection of Heaven, as a deep murmur of approval went round the council table; 'can I have understood your words aright, my lord? The Cardinal! And Her Highness's kinsman, too.'

'I am with your lordship,' exclaimed the Archbishop of Dublin.

'And I,' 'And I,' 'And I,' came from the remainder of the prelates present.

'Her Highness,' the Dean, with rising anger, exclaimed loudly, 'shall surely hear how you have received her envoy. His Eminence'—

'When we have positive evidence you are the bearer of royal commands 'twill be time enough to discuss that matter,' retorted the Bishop of Meath.

'My lords,' the Lord-Deputy, who had been relishing the little scene between the assembled Churchmen, now interposed, 'I pray you calm yourselves. Rest well assured that unless the Dean is the bearer of Her Highness's commission he shall be well punished for his temerity and his insolence.'

At this remark the Dean of St Paul's jumped to his feet, and, throwing his cloak-bag on the green-covered table, without heeding the confusion this act created amongst the documents lying littered thereon, cried:

'Within you will find warrant and sufficient justification for my presence in this accursed country. But rest assured, my lords, I shall make it,' eyeing the Bishop of Meath angrily meanwhile, 'my duty to repeat every word of your conversation to Her Highness. Personal

insult I may submit to; but it shall never be said I did not raise my voice in remonstrance when my sovereign's authority was questioned.'

'Mr Dean,' the Bishop of Meath remarked warningly, 'call to mind the old saying, and shout not till you be clear of the wood. You are now in Ireland—Ireland,' he repeated, smiling pleasantly, 'and subject to Irish laws. Who can say how, or when, or if ever, you will find yourself in a position to fulfil the terms of your insolent threat?'

This menace effectually silenced the Doctor, who sulkily resumed his seat, whilst the Lord-Deputy drew the cloak-bag towards his left hand.

'How long is it since you left London, sir?' asked the latter.

'I have been three weeks awaiting your lordships' convenience,' was the sarcastic rejoinder, 'and was just over a fortnight on my journey.'

'How comes it, then, we have had no intimation of the nature of your errand?'

This question was a poser for the royal commissioner, who knew no more than an unborn babe the cause of this singular omission.

'Perhaps,' the Dean conjectured mildly, 'Her Highness deemed it advisable my journey and the nature of my business had best be kept a profound secret.'

'There is not the slightest call for any justification of our treatment of yourself, sir,' went on the Lord-Deputy. 'But an interview has been hitherto denied you pending full instructions from Her Highness's court. On your presenting yourself here more than three weeks ago, without loss of time we despatched a special courier to London to ask what'—

'That messenger returned this morning,' added the Bishop of Meath. 'In spite of our communication, wherein we asked for advice as to yourself, no notice has been taken—no answer vouchsafed to our request. Had the courier been delayed another month, then assuredly you would have had to wait a similar length of time before you were permitted to present yourself to the council.'

'It is a curious fact, too,' remarked the Archbishop of Dublin, 'that you, Mr Dean, should have been furnished with no personal commission which you could have produced in the event of any necessity arising of declaring yourself.'

'My answer to all these remarks is this: Your lordships will find what you require within the

cloak-bag,' said the Dean, with a contemptuous shrug of his shoulders.

'For your own sake 'tis to be hoped so,' remarked the Lord-Deputy grimly as he opened the bag and peered into its recesses. Then, espying the leathern case, his lordship took it out and unbuckled it, and, raising the lid, allowed an exclamation of the utmost surprise, not to say consternation, to escape him.

For some minutes Stephen Fitz-Walter, Queen Mary's representative in Ireland, gazed stupidly at the contents of the leather box, lost, seemingly, in the most profound thought. At length he leaned forward and rapidly whispered a few words to the Archbishop of Dublin, who, rising and peering into the despatch-case, likewise gave tokens of extreme astonishment.

What could it all mean? the envoy wondered. To whom did the Bishop of Meath refer when he whispered he should be made to pay smartly for this, as he returned bag and case to the Lord-Deputy? Surely there could be nothing wrong with the commission?

The Dean of St Paul's knew well—none better, for had he not been educated in France, where *lettres-de-cachet* were a recognised institution?—the underhand methods resorted to by some sovereigns for the purpose of getting rid of troublesome subjects and importunate office-seekers. Could Queen Mary, wearied of his perpetual demands for a see, have taken this step of ridding herself of his unwelcome solicitations, and, under the guise of a commission which purported to deal with the future treatment of Irish Protestants, by enclosing an order for his imprisonment, have quietly rendered vacant his deanery for bestowal on some other more favoured courtier? And, indeed, Dr Cole had good grounds for uneasiness. He groaned as he saw the bag passed round from hand to hand. Brows became clouded; the most threatening of looks were directed towards the quarter where he sat.

The Lord-Deputy rose slowly. Beckoning to the Archbishop of Dublin and the Bishop of Meath, his lordship retired with them into the recess of a window at the farthest end of the room. Here the trio were some seconds later joined by the Chancellor, the secretary, and the Primate. An earnest discussion ensued, in which the Metropolitan of Ireland, his lordship of Meath, could be observed urging his colleagues on to a course which it appeared they hesitated to adopt.



'SECRET SERVICE MONEY.'



THE term 'secret service money' is usually applied to a fund placed at the disposal of Ministers to be expended, at their discretion, in promoting or protecting the interests of this country. These moneys consist of a sum of £35,000 annually included in the estimates, in respect of which Ministers are only required to make a declaration that the moneys spent have been expended 'in accordance with the intentions of Parliament.' As Ministers are required to give no account of their stewardship, it is obvious we have no means of knowing how these moneys are expended. The reader, however, who carries his mind back to episodes within his knowledge, such as the collapse of the Fenian conspirators, or of their later development, the 'Irish Invincibles,' will have little difficulty in realising how indispensable a fund of this kind is to the protection of a state, and of understanding the infinite variety of uses to which it may be applied.

The term 'secret service money,' as I use it, has a wider signification. I refer to the funds set apart by most civilised states for the advancement or protection of their interests in peace and war, by whatever authority (constitutional or otherwise) such funds are created. From the time of Queen Elizabeth, when 'agents' in the secret service of Philip were testifying their fidelity to a bad cause by dying on the scaffold, 'secret service money' circulates silently through our history, as it circulates through the history of nearly every civilised country under the sun. It was paid to persons who might have been thought inaccessible to corrupt influences, the last to lend themselves to a mean, base, and dishonourable action. To go no farther back than 1792-94, the 'Dropmore Papers' disclose the names of certain English political leaders said to have been systematically subsidised by the Committee of Public Safety. Meanwhile—and here some of the dangers incident to the 'service' will disclose themselves—the English Government was not idle. The committee little dreamed that minute accounts of their own proceedings were regularly forwarded to this country through one of our 'agents' in Italy, still less that such details were furnished by its own secretary, who figured to his colleagues as a violent Jacobin. The bribe must have been large which could induce an officer of the Republic 'one and indivisible' to brave the Argus eyes of St Just.

'Secret service' in war includes not only the procuring of intelligence of an enemy's resources and designs,* but the subsidising (if that end may

be accomplished) of an enemy's officers. Cases of this kind—I do not mean ordinary acts of treachery—are rare, and the evidence on which they rest, strong and conclusive as it may seem, is often inferential rather than positive. Extraordinary cases might be cited; but they hardly fall within the scope and purpose of this article. The following case is of a different character. It rests upon good authority; and as the story in its entirety is probably unknown to the great majority of my readers, I will give it here.

On the 16th of December 1796 a formidable armament left Brest for the invasion of Ireland. It numbered forty-three sail, of which seventeen were of the line, and carried fourteen thousand men, cavalry and infantry, twenty pieces of field and nine of siege artillery, sixty-one thousand two hundred barrels of powder, and forty-five thousand stand of arms. On board the *Fraternité* frigate, carrying the flag of Vice-Admiral de Galle, was the celebrated General Hoche, the leader of the expedition, and in one of the other vessels the notorious Theobald Wolfe Tone, the instigator of the enterprise. Until the 22d the weather had been terrible. On the evening of that day the fleet, with the exception of six or seven vessels, came to an anchor off Bere Island in Bantry Bay, under the command of Admiral Bouvet. The winter was one of the severest on record. A heavy fall of snow had rendered the roads, which between Bantry and Cork at this period were rugged, wild, and mountainous, nearly impassable; travelling on horseback was desperate work; while the unabating fury of the tempest rendered any attempt at landing impossible. On the evening of the 23d a heavy gale from the eastward drove some twenty of the ships to sea, and dispersed the French fleet for the fourth time. Among the missing vessels was the *Fraternité*, with the general on board. That vessel reached Rochelle on the 15th of January; and in the absence of its leader, and the dispersion of a considerable part of the invading force—contingencies which apparently had neither been foreseen nor provided for—the expedition came to an end. So much for the tempest; but there was another influence at work which the commander and organisers of the expedition little expected. 'There can be no doubt,' says the late Thomas Crofton Croker, 'that the captain of the *Fraternité* had accepted a bribe of considerable amount to give the military and naval commanders-in-chief a cruise for a few weeks on the banks of Newfoundland before landing them in Ireland, and that he performed this little delicate art of secret service so well that he boldly drew upon the English Government for double the amount agreed upon; which, however, was ultimately arranged to the perfect satisfaction of all parties concerned.' Croker says he had

* See 'Outpost Duty and Secret Service in War' in *Chambers's Journal* of October 14, 1893.

this from 'unquestionable authority ;' and as his brother was Secretary of the Admiralty, it seems to me we are fairly justified in accepting his statement.

The one thing which will strike the reader in connection with the above is the remarkable way in which the treachery of the French captain was assisted by the elements. Lazare Hoche, the 'Pacifator' of La Vendée, was a General of renown. If those fourteen thousand men, with their *matériel*, had been landed, it is impossible to say what might have happened. Even if Admiral Bouvet and General Grouchy, the second in command, had proceeded to Sligo Bay, and there landed their contingents, as Tone earnestly begged and entreated them to do, it is fairly within the doctrine of possibilities that they might have revolutionised Ireland.

Napoleon's system of secret service is too well known to justify more than a passing allusion. Its genius was Fouché, who displayed a fertility of invention which was marvellous. Into his trap fell Charles James Fox, the English Whig Minister, who figured as a guileless and unsuspecting shuttlecock between the battledores of Talleyrand and Fouché. Wherever Napoleon found himself dominant his 'system' was established ; in other words, had his scheme of invasion succeeded it would have been 'set up' in London, with ramifications all over the country. Let us see what this means, so far as England is concerned. Shortly after Jena the whole administration of Prussia began to be placed under French domination. Prefects were appointed to different departments, and all the offices of state placed under the control of persons named by the Emperor. Here, as in Paris, a *cabinet noir* was established, whose business it was to open and copy the letters of suspected persons. The copies were often so skilfully executed as to be forwarded to their address, while the originals were retained to serve as 'proofs' should prosecution be determined on. A letter from Prince Hatzfeld to the King of Prussia was made the subject of a capital charge against the writer. It consisted simply of an expression of respectful homage to his sovereign, a relation of the mournful feelings of his capital, and some trifling details of the localities occupied by French troops ; this and nothing more. For this the Prince was condemned to death, a sentence which the Emperor ordered to be carried into execution before sunset that very day. Happily for the Prince and the fame of Napoleon himself, Duroc and Rapp were ardently attached to him, and at

their earnest solicitation his life was spared. But the thing was not forgotten, and was very, very dearly paid for when the time of retribution arrived.

The subject admits of indefinite prolongation ; but I think I have said enough to enable the reader to form some idea of the nature of 'secret service money,' and of the infinite variety of ways in which it may be applied. As to the means by which information is obtained, it must be obvious that they are many and various. One of Charles Lever's short stories deals with a spy attached to one of our embassies abroad. On this subject the novelist wrote with authority ; and his knowledge of diplomatic methods is shown by those of his novels which deal with Continental scenes or political people. The Russian spy depicted by novelists is a woman moving—notwithstanding her undisguised employment—in the best society. Russia, however, is not the only Power whose foreign officers are in touch with its 'agents.' Some of those agents do not move in the best society, or, for that matter, in any society at all.

Indispensable as it is for the protection of a state, it would be wrong to say that 'secret service money'—using the term in its extended sense—invariably sullies the hand which touches it. This is not so ; but, as in the case of the Irish informers of '98, there is something in its composition which not infrequently savours of pitch. To go back a hundred and fifty years, the £30,000 offered for the apprehension of Charles Edward Stuart, grandson of James II., would have been worse than pitch in the hands that touched it. What tragedies the informer's fee has wrought it would take too long to tell. The fate of poor Mary Stuart, the betrayal of Sir Thomas Armstrong to the Government of Charles II., the surrender of Dubourg to his implacable enemies, the doom of Duc d'Enghien and of Andreas Hofer, may be traced to its malign agency. Not infrequently it has brought disaster upon those who received it. Within the memory of many of us a well-known London paper came to grief as soon as the fact leaked out that it was 'subsidised' by a foreign government. Occasionally, but I should think rarely, the system has worked on beneficent lines. It is no secret now that the diplomatic intervention of the Czar, which years ago saved France from a second invasion, was in no small degree due to the influence of one of those female 'agents' who, as we have seen, are known to employ themselves in the secret service of Russia.



A TRIP IN A COOLIE-SHIP ON THE CHINA COAST.

MY destination was Singapore, from Hong-kong; and as I had so often travelled by those favourite ships, the P. & O., I thought that I would, by way of a change, take one of the local steamers. Fortunately one of the well-known S. & S. ships, one of the new ones, was leaving that day for Swatow; and very nice and handsome she looked, beautifully clean as the proverbial new pin—the local steamers on the China coast are noted for their cleanliness. So I booked a passage in her.

With my bag and baggage I went on board. I saw the skipper. He was not very talkative; but he told me I would be the only European passenger, and he thought me a fool for not taking the mail or one of the larger ships leaving direct for Singapore, where I would be more comfortable and better fed. But as it was my wish to see what a coolie-ship was like, I told him I was content to go in his ship in preference to one of the larger ones. There were two more officers on board, decent young fellows; and the chief engineer, a canny Scotchman, who was nearly as communicative as the captain, informed me that he was going to Swatow for a full complement of passengers—pigs and newly-caught monkeys he called them, because they were so troublesome and dirty. It was an experience I do not wish to repeat again, even as a saloon passenger, much as I had desired it.

We arrived in Swatow early in the morning; and, as our coolie passengers were not yet all gathered in to Swatow from the surrounding districts, we had to wait until the next morning. They began to come on board about 6.30 A.M., and I was wakened up out of my sleep by the most unearthly yells; in my pyjamas I rushed out of my cabin into the saloon. The captain was quietly having his smoke after his morning coffee; he gave a broad grin when he saw me.

'Did they awaken you? I thought they would.'

'Why,' I said, 'it's enough to waken and frighten the dead.'

'Oh, that's nothing. Wait until you see a good all-round fight, and the claret flowing, and you'll think things are booming.'

The coolies swarmed on board from every side like monkeys, rushing in every direction, shrieking, yelling, and fighting for places to put their mats for themselves and their friends. Luggage they had none, save what they had on; a few had just a small bundle and a long box containing their opium-gear. It was simply pandemonium let loose; you could not hear yourself speak. Some were old travellers; others new, from the country, perhaps hundreds of miles inland, and had never seen a ship or a

European before, and they stood and looked at you in that bland and stupid way that only a newly-caught coolie can put on. Nothing seemed to surprise them or put them about. They came to the saloon-door and stared in, until a roar from the old man and a 'Sentow' ('Go forward') would bring them to their senses. A crowd round the engine-room door and a rush from the old chief would send them flying.

As they were nearly all on board and things began to quieten down a little, the flag was hoisted for the Consul, who acts as immigration officer. He came on board with his constable, interpreter, and also a petty mandarin representing the Taoti, or governor of the district. Some of these Consuls are highly amusing; this one was. He came on board as the 'Great I am,' stood on the top of the gangway, stuck his eyeglass in his eye, and, gazing at the captain in a most condescending manner, said, 'Are you ready, sir?—because if you are not I am going on shore again, as my time is valuable.' As a matter of fact he was going to play tennis. But the captain, equal to the occasion, quietly answered, 'Oh yes, we are quite ready for the immigration officer.' The food for the coolies was closely inspected, and, after the palms of the hands of some of the understrappers had been greased was passed; then the coolies were all rushed to one end of the ship, and the counting and medical inspection began. We had over our full number, the ship not being allowed to carry more than nine hundred; so some had to be sent on shore, to which they objected, and had to be hustled and kicked; they fought the officers, and had to be put into the boats alongside by force. After the counting was finished, the Consul, agent, and captain adjourned to the saloon. Immigration papers signed, Consul and agents took their departure, and we were free to cast off from the buoy and proceed on our voyage.

The coolies soon settled down; and as we passed through Sugarloaf Pass into the open sea and they began to feel the motion of the ship a number of them were sea-sick, and the rest glad to lie down and sleep; so quietness reigned supreme. The next day it was blowing hard, a heavy sea was running, and the ship rolling heavily. Some of the coolie passengers who persisted in remaining on deck rolled with the ship from side to side, perfectly helpless, and were cut and bruised very much. The captain and officers had them carried and placed in a more secure position, and then bound up their wounds, though they did not seem to think it a kindness in the least. On the third day, as we got more south and into warmer weather, the coolies began to come up out of the 'tween-decks into the light and sunshine, all hungry after being sick. Next day it was

very hot, ninety-two degrees in the shade, so everybody wanted to be on deck, quarrels and fights about places being very frequent. We were half-through our lunch in the saloon, when we heard some most horrible yells and cries of 'Ta! ta!' ('Fight! fight!'). 'Hullo!' the captain said, 'another jolly row downstairs. You stay where you are; you'll find a loaded revolver in my room, for use if any one attempts to molest you.' So, lighting his pipe and calling his dog, a fierce-looking English bull, he went on deck to see what was the matter. Broken basins and lumps of firewood were flying in all directions, and knives were drawn—great ugly-looking things. The captain elbowed his way among the coolies, giving first one and then another a dig in the ribs. One fearful-looking coolie, whom they had just doctored, aimed a blow at him with a broken basin; but the dog was too quick for him, and brought the fellow down on his back and held him there. The two principal offenders were caught, their heads banged together until they were brought to quietness, then an explanation asked. Of course, every one wanted to talk and explain at once, but the captain held up his hand until there was silence, then called one man after another, and heard what each had to say, through an interpreter. The row was caused by one man wanting to light his pipe at an opium-smoker's lamp. The most trivial things cause most violent fights.

I said to the captain when it was over, 'Are you not afraid?'

'Well,' he replied, 'to confess the truth, I am; but to show the least fear amongst a crowd like that, or to lose your temper, would never do. But I'm getting used to it; these rows occur every time we have coolies, some worse than others.'

I decided that never again would I travel in a coolie passenger-ship. The voyage began to seem interminable. I longed to reach Singapore. My sleep at night was disturbed by dreams of having my throat cut with one of those horrible knives.

The next episode was the collecting of tickets. The officers were told to get the coolies all aft; then they were passed one by one along a gangway, each delivering up his ticket as he went through. Whilst the coolies were all collected aftside, the officers were searching the forepart of the ship for stowaways; only one was found, and he or his friends paid up. They were then allowed to resume their places again, which they did with a fiendish yell and rush.

'How many coolies are there?' I asked.

'Only nine hundred,' the captain answered; 'and at five dollars each it scarcely pays.'

The coolies seemed somehow to get to know that to-morrow we should reach our destination, and they got more excitable and quarrelsome than ever. They tried to get up a row with the

officers, the sailors, and even with the cooks who look after their wants, throwing their food and dishes overboard, and then wanting a fresh supply.

'Look at those two coolies amusing themselves on the main hatch,' the captain said to me as we were leaning on the forepart of the lower bridge rails; 'they are going to quarrel.'

In a few minutes his words were verified, and we had one of the biggest rows of the whole voyage. About three hundred coolies took part in it; and it took all the Europeans on board—there were only six—to quell the disturbance. It was some time before quietness was restored, and even then some coolies would want to begin again and have another round in spite of there being a dozen of the ringleaders kept in handcuffs on the bridge until we reached port.

On the seventh day from leaving Swatow we anchored off St John's Island, the quarantine station for Singapore, at 3 A.M. Sleeping was impossible, for the passengers were too wide awake, talking and calling out to their friends in other parts of the ship. At seven o'clock the doctor and his assistant came on board to inspect. The passengers were all driven forward, and the women and children separated and taken behind a screen and examined by a Malay woman, to see that there was no infectious diseases. The men, absolutely naked, were marched one by one past the doctor, who felt their pulse and otherwise closely observed their appearance. Fortunately there was not a single suspicious case, so the doctor, boarding-officers, and captain retired to the saloon to inspect the immigration papers; and after a good deal of argument as to whether we were not two short of our consular number, it was at last settled with a stiff whisky-stinger and a good hand-shake (a very suspicious one, I thought). We were then granted *pratique* and allowed to proceed to our anchorage in the harbour and land the coolies. What a blessing! What quietness and calm after the noise and confusion! I was thankful it was over. It was an experience I had wished for; but never again, if I can avoid it, will I travel in a Chinese coolie-ship.

CLOUD-PICTURES.

HERE, far from home and all I love, I raise

My eyes, and see quaint pictures in the sky;

And oh! my heart beats fast as I descry

Pictures of home formed in the mauves and grays

Of clust'ring clouds. Tears dim my upturned gaze

As through a mist I see—though far on high—

That rocky bay where oft my love and I

Saw the sun sink and set the sea ablaze;

The ruined fort—so full of mem'ries sweet!—

By which we watched, in sunset's afterglow,

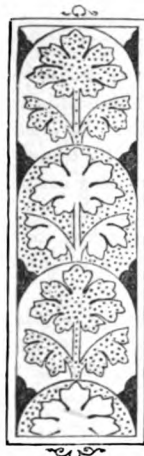
The moon rise o'er the sea, and with its beams

A glitt'ring path from heaven make to our feet.

But as I look the clouds pass onward, so

The pictures fade—and I awake from dreams.

M. H. W.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE BICHIO GAME.



THROUGHOUT nearly all the states of Brazil the Bicho Game is at present rampant. The game is a comparatively new form of gambling; and it is no exaggeration to say that you can hardly move a yard without hearing of it. To add to its fascination is the fact that, being a sort of opposition to the regular lotteries, the game is unlawful, and agents selling tickets are constantly arrested. The system depends on the daily State-protected lottery in Rio de Janeiro, and is very simple, enabling the labourers who cannot read or write to gamble with those who can. The idea is as follows: The numbers from 1 to 100 are divided into twenty-five groups of four two-figure groups. Each of the twenty-five groups has a name; the English equivalent is inserted by the writer:

1. Avestruz.....	Ostrich.....	01	02	03	04
2. Aguia.....	Eagle.....	05	06	07	08
3. Burro.....	Donkey.....	09	10	11	12
4. Borboleta.....	Butterfly.....	13	14	15	16
5. Cachorro.....	Dog.....	17	18	19	20
6. Cabra.....	Nannygoat.....	21	22	23	24
7. Carneiro.....	Sheep.....	25	26	27	28
8. Camello.....	Camel.....	29	30	31	32
9. Cobra.....	Snake.....	33	34	35	36
10. Coelho.....	Rabbit.....	37	38	39	40
11. Cavallo.....	Horse.....	41	42	43	44
12. Elephante.....	Elephant.....	45	46	47	48
13. Gallo.....	Cock.....	49	50	51	52
14. Gato.....	Cat.....	53	54	55	56
15. Jacaré.....	Crocodile.....	57	58	59	60
16. Leão.....	Lion.....	61	62	63	64
17. Macaco.....	Monkey.....	65	66	67	68
18. Porco.....	Pig.....	69	70	71	72
19. Pavão.....	Peacock.....	73	74	75	76
20. Peru.....	Turkey.....	77	78	79	80
21. Touro.....	Bull.....	81	82	83	84
22. Tigre.....	Tiger.....	85	86	87	88
23. Urso.....	Bear.....	89	90	91	92
24. Viado.....	Deer.....	93	94	95	96
25. Vacca.....	Cow.....	97	98	99	00

The last two figures of the first prize in the Rio daily lottery decides what Bicho has won.

No. 77.—VOL. II.

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Say the first prize at Rio falls to No. 64,083; then the Bicho is 'Touro,' or group No. 21. The bankers give you twenty to one against any group. The odds at first glance appear to be in favour of the bank; and as a matter of fact the bankers make a lot of money. There is one drawback to the unlimited success on the bankers' side: there is no limit to the stakes; so, if a person begins betting with a very small sum, he can continue betting until the particular group he chooses turns up. Of course he must continue to bet on the same group every day, and after nineteen days must increase his stake. If the group comes up within nineteen days he loses nothing or gains according to the time he has been betting.

Some of the Bichos do not come out for months—the 'Peacock' did not come up once for nearly five months; and a small calculation will prove that a long purse is necessary very often. The 'Jacaré,' on the other hand, comes up frequently, and often appears two days running. The popularity of this kind of gambling is almost incredible. From the highest to the lowest, a large majority buy tickets every day.

The people of Brazil are superstitious; and well-educated people will back 'coincidences.' I have known cases of people who have given the correct group day after day; two cases I know personally. Strange to say, in both these cases the prophets were given money 'for luck' by people who backed their tips, and invariably lost it. A good dreamer will often dream the right group; but I fear the wrong groups dreamt of are not talked about. There are many strange stories of winnings and losses. Not very long ago a sorrowful family had assembled to bid farewell to a dying old man. It is stated seriously that he told every one present to buy 'Jacaré' at once. He died almost immediately after, and it is a fact that Group 15 came up that day. A young fellow came to town very excited one morning. He had dreamt that he saw a donkey walking along the roof of his house. The 'Cat' came up

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that day, and he lost heavily over the 'Donkey'; but he told every one he met that he was the donkey not to have known that the 'Cat' was almost the only Bicho on the list that could walk along a roof.

The whole affair is, of course, very demoralising; but the government has been unable to cope with the evil. Agents meet you at street corners, and all the small general stores sell tickets. The bankers give a commission of from ten to fifteen per cent. to their agents; and the money is so easily earned that it is almost hopeless to try to put an end to the game. In some cases it is said that bribery will ensure the safety of a banker; and undoubtedly a lot of bribery goes on in connection with the game. If a banker oversteps his limit and cannot pay up he merely runs away, and the backers are left with no remedy. This is by no means a rare occurrence. Theft and dishonesty are on the increase amongst the lower classes, and are said to be due entirely to the gambling fever.

To towns at a distance from Rio the result is telegraphed as soon as known; and about the time the telegram is expected a crowd of agents collect in the streets outside the cable offices. In one town I have seen the approaches to the telegraph office cleared by police, who had to be summoned to get rid of the obstruction. Every one hastens to learn the result, and in a very short time the news spreads by word of mouth and telephone all over the town. At nearly

every railway station on the different railways, agents arrive to receive telegrams containing the result or to try to find out what it is. The evening trains from town are besieged by country people, especially small boys, to hear the correct result.

The Bicho Game seems to have taken hold of the people as the 'rain-gambling' did in India, and I doubt if it will ever be stamped out. In Brazil there is one lottery every day, excepting Sundays and holidays. Often there are two lotteries on the same day; and in most towns the races take place on Sundays and holidays. Gambling goes on in every form; and the entrance-tickets to the racecourses are often numbered, and a lottery drawn during the afternoon for the people who have purchased them. With such a state of things going on every day, and all day long, the government will have a big task if they try seriously to stop the Bicho Game. Almost daily you may hear excited quarrelling over the group that is 'certain to come up,' and the reasons are invariably given why the 'Cat' or the 'Elephant' must come up that day. These reasons, although, of course, childish and absurd, are debated solemnly by people who should know better. An Englishman one day backed the 'Vacca' because he had awakened in the morning to find he had kicked off all his bedclothes, and so thought 00 would win. The group that came up was 'Urso,' and he still declares that he got the tip to back the 'Bear,' but did not read it rightly.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXV.



THREE weeks had elapsed since that memorable afternoon when the party on board the yacht had obtained their first glimpse of the island of Saghalien. In pursuance of the plan MacAndrew had revealed to him in Hong-kong, Browne had left his companions upon the vessel, and for upwards of forty-eight hours had domiciled himself in a small log-hut on the northern side of the Bay of Kropstskoi, awaiting news of the man whom they had come so far and undertaken so much to rescue. It was the night of full moon, and the scene which Browne had before him as he stood wrapped up in his furs outside the door of the hut was as miserable as a man could well desire to become acquainted with. The settlement, as I have said, was located at the northern end of a small bay, and had once consisted of upwards of six huts, built upon a slight eminence, having at its foot a river still ice-bound. At the back rose a still more precipitous hill, densely clothed with *taiga*, or forest. So impenetrable, indeed,

was it that even the wolf and bear found a difficulty in making their way through it. To the right, and almost unobservable from the huts, was a track that once connected with the coal-mines of Dui, but was now overgrown and scarcely to be distinguished from the virgin forest on either side.

On this particular evening Browne was the reverse of easy in his mind. He had left the yacht buoyed up by the knowledge that in so doing he was best serving the woman he loved. It had been arranged with MacAndrew that they should meet at this hut not later than the thirteenth day of that particular month. This, however, was the evening of the fifteenth, and still neither MacAndrew nor the man they were endeavouring to rescue had put in an appearance. Apart from every consideration of danger, it was far from being the sort of place a man would choose in which to spend his leisure. The hut was draughty and bitterly cold; the scenery was entirely uninviting; he had no one to speak to; he had to do everything—even his

cooking—for himself; while, away out in the bay, the ice chinked and rattled together continually, as if to remind him of his miserable position. It was nearly nine o'clock, and he could very well guess what they were doing on board the yacht. His guests would be in the drawing-room. Katherine would be playing at the piano one of those soft German folk-songs of which she was so fond, and most probably thinking of himself; Madame Bernstein would be knitting in an easy-chair beside the stove; while the gentlemen would be listening to the music and wondering how long it would be before they would be at liberty to retire to the smoking-room and their cigars. He could picture the soft electric light falling on a certain plain gold ring on Katherine's finger, and upon the stones of a bracelet upon her slender wrist. Taken altogether, he did not remember to have felt so home-sick ever in his life before. As if to add to his sensation of melancholy, while he was pursuing this miserable train of thought a wolf commenced to howl dismally in the forest behind him. This was the climax. Unable to bear any more, he retired into the hut, bolted the door, and, wrapping himself up in his blanket, laid himself down upon his bed and was soon asleep. When he looked out upon the world next morning he found himself confronted with a dense fog, which obscured everything—the forest behind him, the ice-girdled shore in front, and indeed all his world. It is, of course, possible that in this world of ours there may be places with more unpleasant climates than Saghalien, but it would be difficult to find them. On the west coast the foggy and rainy days average two hundred and fifty-three out of every three hundred and sixty-five, and even then the inhabitants are afraid to complain, lest it might be worse with them. As Browne reflected upon these things, he understood something of what the life of Katherine's father in this dreadful place must be. Seeing that it was hopeless to venture out, and believing that it was impossible the men he expected could put in an appearance on such a day, Browne retired into his hut, and, having closed the door carefully, stirred up the fire, and, seating himself before it, lit a cigar. He had another day's weary waiting before him. Fortunately, when his boat had brought him ashore from the yacht, it had also brought him an ample supply of provisions and such other things as would help to make life bearable in such a place. On the rough table in the centre of the hut were arranged a collection of books of travel and adventure, and, since he did not pretend to be a blue-stocking, a good half-dozen novels, yellow-back and otherwise. One of the latter, a story by Miss Braddon, he remembered purchasing at the Dover bookstall the day he had returned from Paris with Maas. As he recalled the circumstances he could see again the eager,

bustling crowd upon the platform, the porters in their dingy uniforms, the bright lamps around the bookstalls, and the cheery clerk who had handed the novel to him, with a remark about the weather. How different was his position now! He opened the book and tried to interest himself in it; the effort, however, was in vain. Do what he would, he could not rivet his attention upon the story. The perilous adventures of the hero in the forests of Upper Canada only served to remind him of his own unenviable position. Little by little the sentences ran into each other; at length his cigar dropped from his fingers, his head fell forward, and he was fast asleep. How long he slept it would be impossible to tell, but when he rose again and went to the door the fog had drawn off, darkness had fallen, and the brilliant northern stars were shining in the firmament above. Once more his hopes had proved futile. Another day had passed, and still he had received no news of the fugitives. How long was this to go on? Feeling hungry, he shut the door and set about preparing his evening meal. Taking a large piece of drift-wood from the heap in the corner, he placed it upon the fire, and soon the flame went roaring merrily up the chimney. He had made his tea, and was in the act of opening one of his cans of preserved meat, when a sound reached him from outside, and caused him to stop suddenly and glance round, as if in expectation of hearing something further. It certainly sounded like the step of some one who was carefully approaching the hut. Who could it be? The nearest civilisation was the township of Dui, which was upwards of a hundred versts away. He had been warned, also, that the forest was in many places tenanted by outlaws, whose presence would be far from desirable at any time. Before he went to the door to draw the bolts he was careful to feel in the pocket of his coat for his revolver. He examined it and satisfied himself that it was fully loaded and ready for use. Then, turning up the lamp, he approached the door, and called out in English, 'Who is there?'

'The powers be thanked, it's you!' said a voice which he plainly recognised as that of MacAndrew. 'Open the door and let us in, for we're more dead than alive.'

'Thank God you're come at last,' said Browne as he did as the other requested. A curious picture was revealed by the light which issued from the open door.

Standing before the hut was a tall man with a long gray beard, clad in a heavy cloak of the same colour, who held in his arms what looked more like a bundle of furs than a human being.

'Who are you?' cried Browne in astonishment, for this tall, gaunt individual of seventy was certainly not MacAndrew; 'and what have you got there?'

'I'll tell you everything in good time,' said the

other in English. 'In the meantime just catch hold of this chap's feet, and help me to carry him into the hut. I am not quite certain that he isn't done for.'

Without asking any further questions, though he was dying to do so, Browne complied with the other's request, and between them the two men carried the bundle into the hut and placed it in a chair before the fire.

'Brandy!' said MacAndrew laconically; and Browne immediately produced a flask from a bag and unscrewed the lid. He poured a quantity of the spirit into a cup and then placed it to the sick man's lips, while MacAndrew chafed his hands and removed his heavy boots.

'I have been expecting you for the last two days,' said Browne as soon as they had time to speak to each other.

'It couldn't be managed,' returned MacAndrew. 'As it was I got away sooner than I expected. The pursuit was so hot that we were compelled to take to the woods, where, as ill-luck had it, we lost ourselves and have been wandering about for the last four days. It was quite by chance that we reached here at all. I believe another day would have seen the end of this fellow. He knocked up completely this morning.'

As he spoke the individual in the chair opened his eyes and gazed about him in a dazed fashion. Browne looked at him more carefully than he had yet done, and found a short man with a small bullet head, half of which was shaven, the remainder being covered with a ferocious crop of red hair. Though he would probably not have confessed so much, he was conscious of a feeling of intense disappointment, for, from what he had heard from Katherine and Madame Bernstein, he had expected to see a tall, aristocratic individual, who had suffered for a cause he believed to be just, and whom sorrow had marked for her own. This man was altogether different.

'Monsieur Petrovitch,' said Browne in a tone that might very well have suggested that he was anxious to assure himself as to the other's identity; 'or rather, I should say, Monsieur'—

'Petrovitch will do very well for the present,' the other replied in a querulous voice, as if he were tired, and did not want to be bothered by such minor details. 'You are Monsieur Browne, I presume—my Katherine's affianced husband?'

'Yes, that is my name,' the young man replied. 'I cannot tell you how thankful your daughter will be to have you back with her once more.'

To this the man offered no reply, but sat staring into the fire with half-closed eyes. His behaviour

struck Browne unpleasantly. Could the man have lost his former affection for his daughter? If not, why was it he refrained from making further inquiries about the girl who had risked so much to save him? MacAndrew, however, stepped into the breach.

'You will have to be a bit easy with him at first, Mr Browne,' he said. 'They are always like this when they first get free. You must remember that for a good many years he has never been asked to act or think for himself. I have seen many like this before. Once get him on board your yacht, away from every thought and association of his old life, and you will find that he will soon pick up again.'

'And Madame Bernstein?' said the man in the chair, as if he were continuing a train of thoughts suggested by their previous conversation.

'She is very well,' said Browne, 'and is also anxiously awaiting your coming. She has taken the greatest possible interest in your escape.'

'Ah!' said the man, and then fell to musing again.

By this time Browne had placed before him a large bowl of smoking beef-extract, which had been prepared by a merchant in England who had little dreamt the use it would be put to in the Farthest East. As soon as the old man had satisfied his hunger, Browne led him to his own sleeping-place, and placed him upon it, covering him with the fur rugs. Then he returned to the table, and, seating himself at it, questioned MacAndrew, while the other stowed away an enormous meal as if to make up for the privations he had lately endured. From him Browne learnt all the incidents of their journey. Disguised as a Russian fur merchant, MacAndrew had made his way to the town of Dui, where he had made inquiries and located the man he wanted. At first it was difficult to get communication with him; but once that was done the rest was comparatively easy. They reached the forest and made for the coast, with the result that has already been narrated.

'Between ourselves,' said MacAndrew, 'our friend yonder is scarcely the sort of man to travel with. He hasn't the heart of a louse, and is as suspicious as a rat.'

Browne said nothing; he was thinking of Katherine, and what her feelings would be when he should present this man to her as the father she had so long revered. He began to think that it would have been better, not only for the man himself, but for all parties concerned, if he had left him to meet his fate on the island.



PLUMS AND PLUM-CULTURE.



AS the plum is found growing wild throughout the British Islands, it may be assumed to be indigenous in this country, and, as a consequence, capable of the most successful cultivation. This is proved by results; and the difference between plum-fruit grown in the southern parts of Great Britain and the same fruit grown in the northern parts of our island consists mainly in the fact that plum-fruit in Scotland is later in ripening than it is in the country south of the Tweed; and there is a compensating influence in the case of the northern-grown fruit, as, grown in a colder and more humid climate, it is more juicy than plum-fruit in England.

The successful cultivation of the plum is easily within the reach of every person who has a piece of garden ground of average fertility. Here, on dug ground—if possible following a crop of potatoes—let the intending plum-grower mark out the points where he intends to plant his young plum-trees. At each point where a tree is to be planted let the earth be taken out to the depth of a foot, with a diameter of two or three feet, according to the size of the roots of the tree about to be planted therein. Next, if possible, scatter a quantity of sand over the bottom of the prepared hole. Next drive a stout stake down the centre of the hole; this stake should rise at least four feet above the level of the ground. Then take the young tree, and place it in the prepared hole, and tie it securely to the stake with stout matting or other soft tying material. Next scatter sand all over the roots of the young tree, so as to cover them completely, and fill up the hole with good garden soil to a height six inches above the level of the ground around the tree. Proceed in the same fashion with all the trees that are to be planted; and finally cover the surface of the ground round each newly-planted tree with stable-manure of quantity sufficient to keep out the frost in winter and the drought in summer for the first year after planting.

It seems to be pretty much a matter of chance whether trees planted in autumn or those planted in spring will succeed best. If frosted soil be employed to fill up the holes where the trees are planted, it may be expected to be more harmful to young trees planted in autumn than to those planted in spring—say, in the end of March, when the temperature may be expected to improve each day as the sun rises higher in the sky, and his rays become more powerful in promoting growth; and it may be taken for granted that in all cases of a long-continued absence of rain a mulching of farm-yard manure sufficient to cover the surface of the ground all round the trees will be of great benefit.

The young trees, thus carefully planted in good soil, and secured to their stakes to keep them from being shaken at the roots, will in almost every case break into leaf in the spring months, perhaps a little later than old and well-established trees. They ought to take root and establish themselves firmly in the soil, and in most cases send out small shoots, by the end of summer. Should the summer after planting be characterised by hot, dry weather, it will be judicious to water; it will be better in such case to give a thorough wetting of the soil once a week rather than a moderate wetting of the soil once every day; and if farm-yard manure be spread over the ground when newly watered, the benefit to the trees will be much increased and rendered more lasting; and this treatment may be repeated at intervals while the drought lasts.

When in later years the fruit on the young trees begins to ripen, a quantity of soot may be put on the surface, so as to cover the mulch completely; this will help much to keep away snails, insects, &c., and will also, to some extent, accelerate the ripening of the fruit, besides improving its flavour. If the young trees have set a large crop of fruit, and it remain on the trees, it will be safest in the earlier years of their existence to remove the most of the young plums, leaving not more than one out of each cluster. In the fifth and sixth years after planting out, the young trees will most probably set an enormous crop of plums. It is nice to see this, as proving the fertility of the trees, but that is all. Were the enormous setting to be allowed to remain on the trees it would most certainly be very late in ripening, the plums would be of very small size, as well as deficient in flavour, and from a money point of view of not more than the fourth part of the value of full-sized plums, properly ripened. It is much better, therefore, to remove three-fourths of the young plums in the case of an immense set on young trees. This should be done when they attain the size of peas.

As regards the sorts recommended for planting, the Victoria plum has the first claim on the favourable regard of the planter, in its appearance—looking to size, colour, and shape—and also in the quality of the fruit; in these respects its claims are of the highest order. It is also an abundant cropper; a well-grown tree in a favourable season may be counted upon to bear a crop weighing upwards of two hundred pounds. Whether eaten raw or cooked, it is one of the most enjoyable of plums, and is the most largely planted of all. It is also an early kind, ripening in August and the beginning of September, according as the season is early or late.

The next sort recommended is a variety called the Early Prolific, which ripens its fruit a fort-

night or three weeks earlier than the Victoria plum. The fruit of the Early Prolific is mostly used cooked. However, when fully ripe it is very agreeable for dessert, and can with safety be eaten in much greater quantity than almost any other.

Another favourite is an early sort named Prince of Wales. Its flavour is quite distinct, as well as the colour of the fruit when fully ripe. It does not succeed with every grower, however, nor in every place; and even when it is apparently doing extremely well from every point of view, it disappoints its owner by suddenly dying. However, it produces very pretty fruit, and is very early.

Another plum deserving very high commendation bears the name of Prince Englebert. An excellent grower, it is, when fully grown, one of the largest, if not the very largest, of plum-trees. The fruit is large and of agreeable flavour; preserves made from it are also among the most enticing in respect of flavour. It has been frequently observed, too, that a visitor let loose in a plum-orchard to eat his fill will consume more fruit of this plum than any other kind.

A plum that deserves to be grown by every cultivator is the Yellow Magnum. The fruit is of great size and of a beautiful yellow colour. The tree, however, frequently dies without any assignable cause; it is most successfully grown as a standard.

A newer variety than any yet mentioned is styled the Sultan, which, in regard to form, colour, and size, seems to surpass all other plums. It is a vigorous grower, with few large branches, and these having few smaller branches in them. Tested by the weight of its crop, this variety comes out very well, though the quality of the fruit is not of the highest order. In all other respects it is a leading plum, well worthy of a place in every garden where fruit is grown. The colour of the fruit is a rich crimson-purple, and in its shape is round like a ball.

Another kind deserving of being planted largely for its size and appearance is the Czar. The fruit is large, and produced in more abundance than in the case of the Sultan. It is one of those kinds whose fruit when ripe can be eaten in large quantity without injury; for, like the Prince Englebert plum mentioned already, it is of easy digestion. The Czar is also a great cropper. Unfortunately the smaller birds are very fond of its buds in spring-time, and eat them in great quantity; hence the tree needs to have the birds scared away from it at that season by the use of slips of tin or tin boxes swinging about with the wind.

A plum of American origin, named from its raiser the Jefferson, is not surpassed for excellence by any other kind whatever. The only fault of its fruit—if it can be called a fault—is that it is too rich and good. Hardly any one can with safety eat as much of the fruit as he would like after having once tasted it. The knowledge of its excellence is not confined to the human species;

birds and all the insect tribes within reach gather themselves in full force for the feast whenever the fruit is ripe, or even only approaching ripeness; and in a single afternoon a crop of forty or fifty pounds in weight may be entirely consumed. The only thing the owner of the tree can do in case of a general attack of the insect world upon his Jefferson plums is to get a basket at once and pull the entire crop, ripe and unripe, carry them to a room in his house, and cover them with paper, taking care that door and window are carefully closed to keep the insect world at bay.

The next plum recommended for planting is an early sort, the earliest variety that is at the same time a good cropper; it is called the Early Prolific, and it well deserves its name. As a great bearer, it requires very generous treatment year after year, even when, as sometimes happens, the blossom is destroyed in spring; for, with good cultivation and liberal application of bone-meal, as well as a covering of the ground within a radius of six feet all round, the weight of a good crop can be doubled, and the quality of the fruit equally much improved. This plum is mainly grown for cooking purposes and for preserves. When the trees have been generously treated, however, the fruit, improved largely as a consequence, is very pleasing to the palate, and is greedily eaten by young folks. The tree is not a great grower, and commences bearing fruit at an early date in its existence. Under ordinary cultivation the fruit is small, but with high cultivation the size of the fruit is doubled.

Another kind that deserves to be grown—for its great size if for nothing else—is that called Pond's Seedling. This variety, though of very great vigour in its growth, can hardly be regarded as a great bearer in regard to the number of its fruit, but in the weight of the individual fruit it takes very high rank. The fruit is egg-shaped; in colour it is not unlike the Victoria plum; hence, with its great size and brilliant hue, it has a very taking appearance. The tree is a steady bearer year after year if it is generously manured every year.

Another sort, and the last to be recommended, is fit for cooking alone. This is the Goliath plum, a great bearer. The fruit is not usually eaten, but when cooked is most excellent. It is a prolific bearer and a good grower, but should not be allowed to carry fruit till the tree has grown to a considerable size. In this way only can the fruit be had in its complete development of size and quality.

There are many other sorts, more or less resembling those already described, of excellent quality, especially those of the gage family; in this last case the variety recommended—the Jefferson gage—is so much superior in size and appearance to all the others that it may safely be asserted that it holds the field. Year by year

new sorts of plums are raised from seed, and of these many of the most select are offered as improvements on the old and time-honoured varieties; but after most of these new sorts have been tested the answer generally is, 'The old is better.' Certainly, if any of the new sorts raised in America get a fair trial it will be largely owing to the excellence everywhere acknowledged of the Jefferson gage.

After the plums have been planted and made a fair start in growth, two or three years at the least will pass before they bear any fruit. During this period their roots will be busier in the earth, some distance below, extending and taking a firm hold of the soil. If the soil is at all of average fertility, no help in the shape of manure of any description should be given till the young trees have borne at least one crop of fruit. After a start has been made of fruit-bearing, plum-trees should receive every year a supply of manure to enable them to keep up and increase their fertility and to ripen their fruit. Bone-meal or bone-dust dug into the ground all round the tree is a great help. Roughly speaking, the branches of the plum-tree are said to extend themselves from the tree itself as far as the roots have extended themselves below ground. Every year, therefore, after the crops of plums have been removed from the trees, the soil all round the trees should be dug to a depth of not more than four inches, and bone-dust or bone-meal be scattered in the small trench already made. As the trees increase in size and fertility, the branches and roots will run farther out from the stem of the tree; and as the area of ground thus permeated by the roots increases in extent, the quantity of bone-meal dug into the soil around each tree will require to be increased. But the return in the shape of excellent fruit will much more than repay the outlay on bone-meal. Suppose that as much as a stone of bone-meal be applied to each tree. Well, the cost of this quantity will not be more than a shilling, and the increase in the quantity of plums and the size of each individual plum will certainly be twofold; and, as a pound of big plums is worth two pounds of small ones of the same sort, the advantage of doing anything and everything that will increase the size of the fruit is at once

apparent. Farm-yard manure applied to the surface of the soil all round the trees will keep the roots in a proper state to send up moisture into the branches to feed the growing fruit and give it size and quality. A moderate quantity of soot scattered on the surface will keep snails at a respectable distance; and the same sown thickly for the breadth of not more than six inches at the foot of wall trees will keep away earwigs, woodlice, and other enemies of the fruit-grower, and minimise his losses.

When the plum-tree has reached the seventh year of its existence as a fruit-bearing tree, it will be beginning to show by the appearance of its oldest branches that these require to be cut off to make room for the more vigorous and younger growth, which in the case of strong, healthy plum-trees ought to be showing and asserting itself every year. These vigorous, strong, upright-growing shoots or branches invariably produce the largest and most beautiful fruit. When plum-trees are kept in healthy growth by an abundant supply of manure—farm-yard or chemical—the branches that have borne heavy crops of fruit ought to be removed after not more than three years. In this way a constant succession of young, vigorous, fertile growths will year by year be produced by these healthy trees. But, to maintain this constant succession of fertile shoots and branches, there must be yearly application of bone-meal to the soil where the plum is growing, to enable it to maintain its fertility; and if the owner of the plum-trees has it within his power to apply manure-water from the farm-yard, the return from such application, especially in the months when the fruit is growing and ripening, will be immense and immediate, doubling the size and weight of the fruit, and at the same time more than doubling its value.

The number of varieties of plums—though much smaller than the varieties of apples and pears—is very considerable. But most plums have a great many different names—some of them about a dozen or even more. Hence it is quite possible that a plum-grower with thirty differently named plum-trees may really have only half-a-dozen different kinds.

A DEAN OF ST PAUL'S.

CHAPTER III.



WHAT in Heaven's name could it all mean? Dr Cole asked himself. Surely the words 'traitor,' 'learn our intentions,' 'bring us to the block,' which drifted in a disjointed fashion to his ears, were not intended either to apply to him or to refer to the terms of the mandate which he had sup-

posed he was entrusted with? How he wished now he had never left his comfortable deanery for the insane purpose of carrying Her Highness's commands into this savage country—for what else was Ireland but a barbarous land? Ah! if he had only declined. For was it not manifest that a live ass was any day better than a dead lion; that it was better by far to be Dean of St Paul's,

even if he never attained his ambition—episcopal rank—than to languish for years in an Irish dun-geon—mayhap suffer beneath an Irish headsman?

Earnestly conversing, comparing notes, gesticulating, and peering again and again into the cloak-bag, the Lord-Deputy and his companions returned to the table and resumed their seats.

'Do you, sir?' asked the former, 'know the precise nature of the business on which you allege yourself to have been sent over to us?'

'To be sure,' was the Dean's confident reply. His spirits were beginning to rise again, although he did not care for the Lord-Deputy's manner, nor his use of the term 'allege;' and the thought flitted through his mind that, perhaps, he had been personally named in the commission, and that the extraordinary powers delegated to him had so astounded the Irish Council that its members were now beginning to repent of the discourtesy with which they had received him. 'To be sure,' he said a second time, 'or else your lordship'—

'Have the goodness, then, sir, to give us an outline of its nature.'

'My personal opinion,' said the Dean, who did not care for the speaker's manner, 'is that Her Highness is displeased with the laxity with which, in defiance of her express commands to the contrary, the Irish Protestants have been treated by your lordships.'

'Quite so,' remarked the Bishop of Meath pleasantly, a deceptive smile playing over his mobile features; 'of course. What else would bring you here but to see that we return to our duty? That, however, Mr Dean, is your personal—in more ways than one—opinion. Now for Queen Mary's actual commands.'

'As I have said once, so I say again,' rejoined the Dean sulkily, objecting to what he considered a needlessly high-handed form of interrogation, 'your lordships will find all needful instructions within the despatch-case.'

'So be it,' was the Lord-Deputy's reply, as a broad smile went round the assembly. 'But did Her Highness give you no intimation as to the exact nature of—er—the—er—the document you affirm she committed to your care?'

'None beyond this fact: the leathern case contained commands to which your lordships were to rigidly adhere in your future dealings with the heretics.'

The Lord-Deputy paused. With a perplexed look he turned to the Bishop of Meath, who whispered some words in his ear with observable emphasis.

'What,' he asked, again addressing himself to the Dean—'what was the nature of your interview with the Queen?'

Dr Cole was at a total loss to account for this continued cross-examination. If they thought, however, they were going to trap him into a betrayal of confidence, the Lords of the Irish

Council never made a greater mistake, he told himself.

'What has that to do with your lordships?' said he in an insolent manner.

'Very true, and a most pertinent if not *imper-tinent* question,' interposed the Bishop of Meath, with feigned amusement, the while twisting—as was his manner when aroused—his episcopal ring round and round his index-finger. 'What has it to do with us at all? I confess I cannot say, save that, perhaps, you might, Mr Dean, spare yourself grave future unpleasantness by being a little more explicit and,' as if as an afterthought, 'a little more courteous.'

'Tis no great matter, after all, since you force me to it,' the Dean replied, again taking alarm at the veiled threat underlying the Bishop's suavity and geniality. 'Her Highness,' he continued complacently, 'sent for me, and placing yonder leathern case in my hands, bade me carry it across to your lordships without delay. "Mr Dean," Her Highness said, "reposing all trust in your well-known discretion, we bid you tarry not, but hasten to our Council in Dublin. Without loss of time, place this instrument in our Lord-Deputy's hands, and return hither and report to us what has passed between you." 'Tis true,' the speaker went on, visibly swelling with pride, 'Her Highness added that I was the only divine she would dare send forth on such an errand.'

'Ha!' said the Primate, with a frown, as the Lord-Deputy chuckled aloud, 'perchance some deep meaning underlay the Queen's words?'

'I know not,' the Dean answered in a depreciating fashion, as much as to say, 'Think not for a moment I am going to give you the actual words employed.' 'That matter,' he added, 'rests entirely with your lordships.'

'It most certainly does. Said Queen Mary no more?' asked the Bishop of Meath.

'Let me see? Yes,' reflectively; 'Her Highness observed that a sight of the enclosed would gladden the heart of the Lord-Deputy, and that she was convinced his lordship, recognising a duty which was a pleasure, would lose no time in acting.'

At this commonplace observation, to Dr Cole's extreme surprise, the Lord-Deputy, dropping his habitual gravity of manner, sprang to his feet, and, white and trembling with rage, asked:

'Since this'—tapping the despatch-case—'came into your possession, has it ever left your keeping?'

'It never has,' was the decided reply.

'No opportunity occurred on your journey for its being tampered with?'

'None,' Dr Cole replied, with great indignation. He well remembered exhibiting the case to the Mayor of Chester, yet for the sake of his reputed discretion he was not going to admit the fact. 'And what is more,' he continued, 'not a soul ever got so much as a glimpse of it.'

'Then, my lords, that clinches the matter. He'—pointing to the Dean—'is convicted out of his own mouth, and I submit that for our own safety my suggestion should be acquiesced in,' cried the Bishop of Meath in a ringing voice.

'Ay, ay,' exclaimed the Lord-Deputy, rapidly scribbling a few lines on a loose sheet of paper. 'We must show this impertinent rogue he cannot beard us and treat us as fools with impunity, whatever he may be in the habit of doing on the other side of the Channel.'

"Convicted out of my own mouth," I a "rogue," in his turn, Dr Cole, jumping to his feet, shouted aloud. 'What means your lordship by addressing me in such terms? Her Highness shall hear'—

'Silence, fool,' said the Lord-Deputy in a tone of thunder. 'This case contains no royal commission—no despatch of any kind from Her Highness. Investigate the contents for yourself.'

The Dean of St Paul's blanched to his very forehead. A cold perspiration broke out over his brow. If the Lord-Deputy's statement were true, then he need never more show his face in London. And yet, what could it all mean? Who could—

'Come, sir, come,' said the same voice sternly. 'Do as you are bid.'

Dr Cole seized the cloak-bag with his trembling hands, and carefully lifted the despatch-case out. Then, opening the latter with extreme care, as if he feared it might contain some highly dangerous explosive, he brought it beneath the range of his vision.

Heavens! what was it that met his astonished gaze? In place of a royal commission, which he had thought would undoubtedly prove the stepping-stone to a bishopric, a pack of common dirty playing-cards, with that symbol of derision, the grinning knave of clubs, face uppermost, confronted him.

'My lord,' he cried in a terrified voice, as he realised that he stood on the brink of a most perilous precipice, 'there is some fiend's work here. Your lordship is pleased to make merry at my expense.'

The Bishop of Meath, with a malicious smile, inserted his hand into the despatch-box, and, withdrawing the pack of cards, exposed the knave of clubs to the astonished assemblage, crying:

'A pretty royal commission indeed! The devil's picture-book, and rightly so called. A sight of them was to gladden the Lord-Deputy's heart—eh, Mr Dean? He would recognise wherein lay his duty, and cheerfully perform it? Yes, of course.'

The Dean sank into his chair with a low moan. He was in a position of extreme peril. Far from home and friends, he was in the power of the turbulent and hot-headed Irish lords, whose ire he had roused by his continued insolence of

manner. He looked vainly round the room for some means of escape, but saw none; and then his eyes, returning to the table, alit on that grinning knave of clubs, which, to his distorted fancy, appeared to be mocking and jeering at him.

'Sir,' the Lord-Deputy said after a short consultation with his colleagues, 'though not provided by Her Highness on your hitherward journey with any credentials, I now hasten to supply the omission. This'—raising aloft the sheet of paper whereon he had previously scribbled a few lines—'will ensure you such hospitality and good cheer as our prison of the Marshalsea can boast. It is'—

'My lord—my lord,' gasped the Dean, 'beware how you treat me. Jugglery has'—

'I am quite warranted in sending you to the block under the circumstances,' said the Lord-Deputy in a hard, cold voice. 'You arrive here without any letters of introduction; your commission turns out to be an insult to us all; we can receive no reply to our communication respecting yourself. Under false pretences you have obtained an entry into the Council and heard matters of State discussed. You have committed a most serious crime,' the speaker went on with increasing severity, 'for we have notice that Her Highness is not only seriously ill, but that certain ill-conditioned ruffians, in clerical garb, hoping to curry favour with the future sovereign, are ranging the kingdom and essaying to penetrate into the various Councils.'

'I swear before heaven I had Her Highness's commands to'—

'Travel to Ireland to deliver a pack of cards, to insult the Lord-Deputy to his face! Pish! For shame, Mr Dean, or whatever else you be,' cried the Bishop of Meath derisively.

'You are about to be treated with greater leniency than you deserve. You will be confined in the Marshalsea prison until we have had matters satisfactorily explained by the English Council. Your future depends on the tenor of the reply which crosses the Channel. If favourable,' the Lord-Deputy continued, assuming a judicial manner, 'or, rather, if not incriminatory, you will be permitted to leave Dublin. But, on the other hand, sir, if you are unknown, or your mission is disowned, you will leave your cell for the scaffold.'

'And, Mr Dean,' the Metropolitan added as Dr Cole was led away between two of the Council guards, 'you should have no difficulty in reconciling yourself to your fate. Remember how many of the victims, persecuted at your instigation, you have accompanied to the stake, and bear in mind the lesson you sought to impress on them: that death is deprived of all its terrors to the true believer.'

The Very Reverend Dr Henry Cole entered the

'Blue Posts' inn on his return journey a sadder, but it is to be doubted whether a wiser man. After eight monotonous weeks of confinement, he had, one morning, been liberated and summoned before the Lord-Deputy of Ireland. The latter had bidden the Dean quit the country within twenty-four hours, unless he wished his clerical brother, the Bishop of Meath, to lay hands on his person. He had added that no one save the Dean himself was to blame for the unfortunate misunderstanding which had arisen, and again warning him to keep out of harm's way, had summarily dismissed the unfortunate divine from his presence.

On communicating with the Council in London, the Irish Council, after some delay, had been astonished to learn that their previous communication had been overlooked owing to the ill-health of the Queen, but that Dr Cole had in reality been sent across the Channel on an important matter, and that he was, or should have been, the bearer of a royal commission bearing on ecclesiastical matters. The authorities in the English Metropolis were at a loss to account for the miscarriage of the royal mandate, and ordered the envoy's instant release, adding that he was to be commanded to return to render an explanation of his extraordinary conduct.

Here was a nice state of affairs; and although some consolation was to be derived from the fact that, in this instance at least, the Irish Bishops had put their feet down, and had evaded compliance with clerical interference from London, the Lord-Deputy foresaw endless trouble. His colleagues, too, recognised that they could look for nothing but the most bitter hostility at the hands of the English divine when he reached London and contrived to gain the royal ear; and they hesitated to release the Dean, thinking, perhaps, that a little sober reflection in jail would cause him to view the deplorable occurrence in a more favourable light. It was whilst the Council were debating as to their future steps in the matter that the news arrived in Dublin that the Queen had breathed her last, and that the Princess Elizabeth, her half-sister, had been proclaimed in her place. Here was an easy solution of the difficulty. There was sufficient guarantee in this fact of their being free from molestation at his hands in the future to render it safe to deport the Dean, and this was consequently done, with little loss of time and a display of still less courtesy or regret.

To say that the Dean was disheartened at the result of his mission would be to describe his feelings in the mildest manner. He was, however, more greatly disturbed at Mary's—his patron's—death. Had she lived he would have explained matters to her satisfaction, and there was no ground for doubt but that his royal mistress would have severely punished her Irish officials and at the same time rewarded himself. At least

so the Dean thought. Now, with Elizabeth, a Protestant princess, on the throne, the incident assumed another complexion, for was it not well known—

'Come in,' he cried irritably in response to repeated rapping on the door of the very apartment in which, on his outward journey, he had interviewed the Mayor of Chester. 'In Heaven's name come in, and stop that noise,' he shouted.

The door opened slowly, and, with mock humility, Sir Lawrence Smith, accompanied by a stranger, carrying an enormous roll of paper, entered.

'Who is this, sir?' demanded the Dean angrily, gazing at the stranger.

'Henry Hardware, the right worshipful the new Mayor of Chester,' replied the *ex-Mayor* solemnly.

'What is his business? What the cause of this unseemly intrusion?' asked Dr Cole passionately.

'Here, reverend sir,' exclaimed the stranger, 'is a complete list, with the ages, the occupations, the addresses, and the names of reputed heretics and their reputed sympathisers. On learning your commands from Sir Lawrence, whom I succeeded in the mayoral office, I at once proceeded to'—

'Confusion to the pair of you!' cried the Dean, now thoroughly enraged, observing the look of intense amusement which sat on Henry Hardware's features.

'And here, reverend sir,' cried Mrs Mottershead, as she advanced into the room, with a profound curtsey—'here "is what will lash those heretical rascals in Ireland,"' laying on the table as she spoke a long parchment document, folded lengthwise, and bearing in one corner a dangling seal suspended by a ribbon.

The Dean could scarce believe the evidence of his eyes. There was the identical commission the disappearance of which had occasioned him such insult and degradation; and here was the tavern-keeper smiling broadly—ay, and actually winking at Sir Lawrence Smith and his worship the new Mayor.

Then, to the accompaniment of jeering remarks and loud bursts of laughter from the small knot of citizens who had assembled, at the landlady's invitation, on the landing outside, the Dean of St Paul's learned that, passing down from the bedroom which she had been preparing for his use, Mrs Mottershead had caught his remark about the 'lashing' of the 'Irish heretics.' She had a brother in Dublin who professed the Reformed faith. Prompted by an affectionate regard for his safety, during his reverence's journey downstairs with the Mayor she had slipped into the room unobserved by any one, had opened the leathern case, and, taking out the commission, had in lieu thereof inserted a pack of cards. Ignorant of this change, his reverence

had carefully packed up the box, with the results already described.

It must not be supposed that the Dean obtained this information in the concise fashion given above. After much cross-examination and by dint of resorting to threats, which provoked the unqualified merriment of the spectators, Dr Cole eventually unravelled the mystery. His rage was unbounded. Speechless with passion, he was just able to cry out that he would see Mrs Mottershead was well repaid for her tampering with the late Queen's despatches.

Good as his word, Dr Henry Cole, after considerable trouble, contrived to obtain an audience of Her Highness the Queen. To her he narrated his pitiful story, asking for the punishment of the Irish lords, and above all of Mrs Mottershead, at whose door he laid the blame for all the disasters which had overtaken him. But the Doctor had been forestalled by Sir Lawrence Smith. The latter, on giving up the office of Mayor, had been made acquainted by Mrs Mottershead of the trick she had played. Without loss of time he hastened to London, and obtained audience of the new Queen, to whom he

described the circumstances in such a humorous fashion that that august individual, so far from exhibiting any signs of resentment, had dismissed the knight with a promise that the tavern-keeper should be molested in no way.

The Dean, not being aware of this circumstance, stated his case in his most impressive fashion. But beyond being heartily scoffed at—Elizabeth's laughter was immoderate as she pictured the Irish Council gazing in consternation at a knave of clubs in place of a royal commission—and thoroughly rated by Her Highness, who commented strongly on the gross carelessness with which he had acted, the Dean was threatened with deprivation, and dismissed.

'Go home, sirrah!' cried the Queen, 'and make no further appearance at our court, else we may be tempted to have ye whipped and your ears cropped.'

It was only some time later Dr Cole learned that his ill-timed intervention had recalled the episode to Her Highness, who straightway rewarded the ingenuity and affectionate zeal of Mrs Mottershead with a life-pension of forty pounds a year.

THE RAT OF FUNAFUTI.



HE rat occupies a unique position in the natural conditions of Funafuti. Excluding the birds and a few lizards, the indigenous terrestrial vertebrate fauna appears to be comprised in it. Among the investigations recently carried out in the Funafuti atoll, in the Ellice group of Polynesia, none is more interesting than that relating to this ubiquitous little quadruped of the atolls and other islands in the great South Sea.

Much of the literature of this sunny portion of the globe contains mention of a native rat, without, for the most part, any technical description of the animal being attempted. Peale, however, described rats obtained from widely separated islands; and it seems probable the rat from all the Pacific islands may be referred to this species. Indeed, the fine Maori rat of New Zealand is, in all probability, also identical with the same form. There are specimens in the British Museum from the Fiji Islands, Norfolk Island, and New Caledonia. Moreover, this view is supported by Maori tradition, to the effect that 'the kumara or sweet potato, the taro, the calabash-plant, . . . the rat kiore, the pukeko, and the green parrot kakariki are said to have been imported from Hawaiki.' This traditional ancestral home is considered by modern ethnologists to be Savaii, one of the Samoan Islands.

Immense, then, and therefore of particular interest, is the geographical distribution of the

Pacific rat. In the West Pacific there runs an enormous chain of islands, extending in a semi-circular sweep from the Marshall Archipelago, north of the equator, to the Austral or Tubai Islands in the south-east; and from each of the main links of this long chain we possess records of the occurrence of the native rat, while of localities to the eastward and westward of the direct chain very many have been published; the list is closed by the inclusion of New Zealand as the last rat-inhabited island to the south. Its north-eastern limit is suggested by a statement that 'rats and mice have always been a pest on the Hawaiian Islands; and the old Hawaiian, before the introduction of cats, used a bow and arrows to destroy them. There can be little doubt that the rat exists, or rather did exist, at one time or another on all the islands of the Pacific. That ocean being bounded by the land masses of Asia, Australia, South and North America, and the genus *Mus* being exclusively confined to the Old World, it must have entered these islands from an Asiatic source; consequently this is opposed to the theory of a migration westward from America, across a Mesozoic Pacific continent, as advocated by some naturalists.

On the Funafuti atoll the rat goes by the name of *tikimoa*. Unlike its European relative, it is usually said to feed only on vegetables or fruit; in Mangaia, in the Cook group, only upon coco-nuts, bananas, arrowroot, candle-nuts, and papao (*pawpaw*) apples; growing coco-nuts being

generally defended from its depredations by the making of a sort of screen cleverly secured all round the tree, close to the fronds, at a great height from the ground. On the Tonga Islands roasted coco-nut was used as a bait. In these islands it is supposed to live chiefly on sugarcane and bread-fruit; and some add the pandanus, pronouncing the fruit of this plant to be the staple food of the rat. The stomach of the Funafuti example when examined contained a white vegetable substance, possibly coco-nut or pandanus. The Maori kiore, said to be extinct, was frugivorous. 'Considering the vast numbers of these (the New Zealand) rats that periodically congregate round the homes of settlers in the bush, the mischief done by them is extremely small. This is owing to their food during the time being green vegetables. In kitchen-gardens they are certainly annoying, devouring peas, beans, cabbages, and even onions as they appear above ground, climbing up poles to nip off the shoots of the vines, &c.' Were the rat partially carnivorous, it is suggested it would be found to prey upon the land crabs and molluscs on the shore. Such, however, is not the case. If it preceded the human inhabitants of the atolls, the pandanus, being indigenous, would probably be its principal food; and as the coco-nuts and other fruits and vegetables were introduced, it would acquire a taste for these edibles.

Vegetation also serves for its dwelling. In Funafuti the coco-nut trees, just at the base of the fronds, are selected; and the rats have been frequently noticed peeping out of the matting that sheathes the butts of the fronds, and scampering about the heads of palms fifteen or twenty feet high. They likewise nest in the crowns of tree-ferns, under the roots of trees, in tussocks of grass, and among rushes. On the ground they seem awkward creatures, but are excellent climbers, ascending trunks with the nimbleness of flies, and scudding out to the very extremities of the branches. Hence, when pursued they invariably make for trees, if any are within reach. Taking up abode in the thatched roof of houses they become a plague, sallying forth at night in such numbers as to be exceedingly troublesome.

But, as elsewhere, the native rat has a great enemy; when brought into competition with the common brown rat of Europe, introduced by ships throughout the world, it usually disappears—an example of the evils of the influx of aliens. The depredations of the latter are such that in Funafuti the indigenous breed has been driven from the village, and indeed almost exterminated upon the main islet by the foreign rat; in many of the islands it has been completely rooted out. Even more deadly onslaught has been carried on against it by the domestic cats, which, originally brought over by missionaries, and afterwards emigrating to the bush, have proved of service in destroying the rats. In the old days, when unchecked, rats literally overran most of

the islands of the Pacific. On moonlight nights hundreds have been often seen gathered together round the native quarters, feeding upon waste rice or bread thrown out. A large bottle-shaped hole was dug in the earth in Mangaia, and baited with candle-nuts, of which rats are excessively fond; and when the hole was pretty well filled with rats, two men would go down with knobbed sticks to kill them. A hole which would contain two men would hold a goodly number of rats! Rat-killing under these conditions would seem anything but an enviable task. Keeping the rats within bounds was a matter of such importance with the inhabitants that in Funafuti, by law, each individual was at times obliged to catch and destroy a certain number, for which purpose an ingenious trap was employed. The natives destroy the rats with another object, shooting them for sport. *Fanna gooma*, or rat-shooting, as practised on Hoonga in the Tonga group, apparently was an amusement reserved for chiefs, and was undertaken with much ceremony. Attracted by bait previously distributed, the rats were shot with formidable unfeathered arrows six feet long. The game was not an individual but a party affair, the side first killing ten rats being accounted the winners; and, if the rats were plentiful, three or four games were generally played.

A still more interesting reason for the native destruction of rats may be mentioned: in many of the islands they formed an article of food. Necessity may have originated the custom; yet the flesh must have been regarded as very delicious, for the Mangaian have a proverb, 'Sweet as a rat.' Owing to the nature of its food, the native specimen would be less objectionable than the omnivorous European rat, which was nowhere utilised.

The entertaining writer Gill affords a glimpse of the cooking of rats as practised in Mangaia: 'Tamangoru, a solitary cannibal, on one occasion discovered two boys roasting a number of rats over a fire—a joyful sight for a famishing Mangaian; he ambiguously remarked, "Cooked rats are capital eating." The word "rats" thus used might apply to the lads as well as to the little quadrupeds. A cooked boy would be indifferently called a "fish" or a "rat." These two brothers subsisted chiefly by rat-catching, in which they were adepts. . . . They thrust long green reeds through the rats, eight on each reed, and grilled them over the fire. There were four skewers or reeds of rats—that is, thirty-two in all. When the rats were done, the elder took two reeds of rats (sixteen) to Tamangoru; the famished man greedily devoured them and called for the remaining two reeds.'

Curiously, in the neighbouring island of Rarotonga rats were not eaten, the people reviling the natives of Mangaia as the rat-eating Mangaian. Nor did the habit obtain in Funafuti, notwithstanding that this small mammal was the sole member of its class.

THE AWFUL STORY OF HELEY CROFT.

By A. S. APPELBEES.

HELEY CROFT is the best old house in the town of Fensham. It is a quaintly-gabled structure of Elizabethan date, covered with white stucco and wistaria, and abutting right on the main street of the town at its juncture with North Lane. At the end of the North Lane front of Heley Croft there are two or three cottages which run up into the corner of the Croft, one being almost embedded in its crooked walls. Otherwise, the house is surrounded on two sides with a garden—a genuine old-fashioned affair, with a lawn like velvet and the shade of some venerable elms.

When Whyte took the place he had just purchased a partnership with the Beddards, the family solicitors of Fensham, and he had also just married a young wife. I saw a good deal of the Whytes about this time. Curiously enough I had known them both years before they first knew each other and surprised their friends by their mutual attachment. It was a strange marriage, for Tommy Whyte was a smart, level-headed man of the world, and Margaret—Mrs Whyte I suppose I should call her—was a successful opera-singer, an ethereal beauty, who had been wholly wrapped in her art since she was a child, and whose purity of character and superb voice had captivated the world as soon as she appeared behind the footlights. In ordinary affairs she was a baby, but she and Tommy got on like turtle-doves.

I see from my diary that it was 17th October when the story of Heley Croft began for me. I had had a heavy day for a country town—forty-one patients; and, feeling tired in the evening, I stepped across the street after dinner to have a chat and a cigar with Whyte.

'This is providential, old man,' was his greeting. 'My wife has been upset all day, and would not hear of my sending for you. She says there's nothing the matter; but it would ease my mind if you would have a look at her.'

I smiled at the young husband's anxiety, but received a shock when we had hunted up Mrs Whyte. She had the pallor and heavy expression of sleeplessness, and sat in a listless attitude; but, worse than that, her beautiful eyes had acquired a foreign expression—one of abject terror. Her whole bearing was utterly strange to her, and I could not ascertain that there was anything to account for her indisposition. Her state was a puzzle. It seemed that Whyte had gone up to town the previous day on business, and had been detained overnight, but not unexpectedly. When he arrived home he found his wife just as I had seen her, and not a syllable of explanation could she offer.

We sat up chatting long after Mrs Whyte had retired to rest, at my suggestion; and Whyte explained to me, with an agitated expression, that she had imperatively desired him to occupy a spare bedroom which looked out into the street, whilst she had gone to her usual chamber. This was on the other side of the house, and had a big window commanding the garden.

'I humoured her, of course,' he said; 'but, all the same, I do not understand the wish. She seemed so very intent upon it.'

'No doubt,' I replied, 'she is only afraid of restlessness, and wants you to be fit for work to-morrow. I can see she had a poor night last night. I will look in again to-morrow.'

'But listen, Aspley,' objected Whyte. 'She says she is not ill, and that there is no need to see you further professionally. In fact, she says she won't see you.'

'With a little romancing, I dare say I can find a reason for coming,' I laughed. 'Don't worry yourself.'

Well, next day I went to Heley Croft again in the evening, and I found Whyte had worried himself. His wife was worse—much worse. She had just the air of a woman thoroughly run down, and her fixed gaze of horror was quite trying to look at. She appeared about five years older, too. The transformation in twenty-four hours was so marked that it gave me a disagreeable surprise, and the unfortunate husband was quite distracted.

'She persists,' he confided to me, 'that she will be alone at night, and it was during last night that she got so much worse. I never heard a sound, although I had a sleepless time myself through the anxiety.'

I prescribed a mild tonic and a change of scene for a few days, for really there was nothing in the British Pharmacopœia to meet the case as far as I could make it out.

Whyte had only just come home from his honeymoon, and it made the Beddards grumble when he took himself off for another week; but he went with his wife to Malvern, where an intimate friend of mine is in practice. There was no need to consult him, for Mrs Whyte got rapidly better, and looked almost herself when she returned to Heley Croft. While she was away, too, we tried a little experiment, and invented an excuse for putting one of the servants in her room at night, for I could not somehow divest my mind of the idea that there was some connection between the two solitary nights and the illness. We might have saved ourselves the trouble. The servant made no complaint.

I met the Whytes at the station accidentally when they returned, and was so much reassured

that I began to feel rather foolish at having been so very interested in the case. Judge of my astonishment, therefore, when at the breakfast-table next morning the following note was handed to me from Tommy:

'DEAR ASPLEY,—Come across at once, for God's sake. Margaret is much worse than before.

'T. W.'

I hastened across to Heley Croft, and Whyte himself met me at the door, looking terribly alarmed.

'It is worse than ever,' he said as he conducted me inside. 'Maggie would be alone last night, and when I got up this morning she was simply deathly. What the dickens can be the matter?'

The patient's appearance more than confirmed his words. She was in a shocking state of prostration, and could scarcely rise or speak.

'Tom,' I said, 'I want a confidential chat with your wife.'

He took the hint, and went out. We sat in her old-fashioned, oak-panelled boudoir or morning-room, and I plunged into the matter at once.

'My dear lady,' I said, 'if your husband had to defend a case he would require to know all the facts, whichever way they might tell, and then use his own judgment. Now, forgive me, you are keeping something back. You must be cured; but we cannot get at the seat of the trouble till we know all about it. You really must trust me with what you have been hiding from Tom.'

Her whole frame trembled and shuddered; but she made no answer.

I pressed the matter again, and then she spoke, in little more than a terrified whisper.

'Dr Aspley,' she murmured, 'you would not believe me. It is too horrible.'

'On the contrary,' I replied, 'we doctors have to believe what seems to be impossible every day. I won't rest till I know the worst. I promise to believe you.'

She shuddered again.

'Ugh!' she said. 'It is horrible! It is killing me!'

'It may kill you if you won't let me help,' I replied. 'But there is no reason why it should, if you let me fight it.'

'Dr Aspley,' she asked, turning up her beautiful but horror-struck eyes, 'can you fight occult powers?'

'Certainly,' I said. 'Why not? Occult powers are only disordered cerebrations.'

There were, fortunately, no theosophists present.

'Could you,' she went on, 'arrest the hand of God?'

'Of course,' I replied, with, I am afraid, rather

hopeful blasphemy; 'if it were a visible hand. Why not?'

Then she collapsed. She burst into a torrent of tears like a child. I soothed and comforted her gently, and by very slow degrees arrived at the following narrative:

'When my husband went to London last Tuesday week I was the happiest woman in England. It came first that night. I woke in the pitch-dark and found the room rapidly growing light. Distinct beams of light appeared to shine from wall to wall, and at last formed a dim circle. Then marks—horrid creeping marks—appeared on the bright circle, and these gradually shaped themselves into the fingers of a moving hand. It was like a human hand cut off at the wrist, and it began—O God! I swear to you it began to write slowly on the wall. The letters grew into words, and the words grew into a sentence. At last I read in a strangely formed caligraphy the awful warning:

PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.

I was terrified to death and unable to move; and as I watched, spell-bound, the fearful letters faded away, and the room was left in utter darkness again.

'I lay the rest of the night reflecting upon this apparition, and wondering whether it was meant for me, or for Tom, or for both of us. When daylight returned my nerves felt rather more steady, for the room was exactly as usual, and showed no sign of the ghostly writing. I almost expected to find it indelibly recorded upon the wall. I thought perhaps the whole thing had been a nightmare, and determined to say not a word about it, but to sleep alone in the room again and see if it were repeated.

'That was the day you sent me to bed early; and, being worn out as the result of the previous night's experience, I soon fell into a fitful doze. On one of my awakenings I found that the room was getting light just as before. The circle reappeared, the marks in it, the great black hand, the gradually formed letters; but the warning was different. It said:

GOD SHALL JUDGE.

I sprang out of bed and rushed to the writing. I put my hand on its horrible sable sign, and it vanished instantaneously. It was no dream.

'You can imagine the condition in which I awaited the break of day. I did not call my husband, for I had an indefinable sense that some danger, in which he was concerned, was impending in this room, and that a warning had been vouchsafed to me that he would be unable to perceive with his different and rather unbelieving constitution.

'That morning he insisted upon my going with him to Great Malvern; and while we were away from this fearful house I felt a sense of freedom,

and regained a measure of composure. I began almost to think again, as the days went by, that the whole thing must have been a passing madness, and determined, on my return, to spend yet one more night in the room alone before asking him to come back to me.

'But last night was more horrible than all. I awoke with a great start in black darkness. There came a burst of white light, which disappeared as suddenly as it had come, and left a darkness that could be felt. Then another burst, and then darkness again. Then the dim circle began to appear in the same hideous outline, and as it got brighter the hand traced slowly the cruel doom :

YOUR HOUR IS NIGH.

I fainted away, and recollect nothing more until daylight this morning.'

As she spoke it occurred to me that the whole appearance must be nothing more than a vivid hallucination—possibly the harbinger of insanity. If so, it had had an extraordinary physical effect, allowing for the girl's delicately strung nerves and artistic temperament. Still, the effort must be made to fathom the mystery.

'Answer me one more question truly,' I urged. 'Do you know any one who has a grudge against you?'

'Doctor,' she replied, with a troubled look in her innocent eyes, 'so far as I know, I never injured a living creature. I never disagreed with any one much, except an Italian in my stage days, who would persist in wanting to marry me after I was pledged to Tom.'

'His name?'

'Count Belloni, a vile creature; but I have not seen or heard anything of him for a year.'

That night Tom Whyte and I entered into a little conspiracy. I asked him and his wife across to dinner, nominally to stop Margaret brooding, and having got them away from home, insisted on keeping them for the night. Tom pretended to refuse and then to assent; and I hinted to Margaret that, if he were in any danger, it was at least lessened while he was with me, and so gained her acceptance of the invitation. When they had retired I went across with Tom's latch-key, let myself into his house unknown, even to his servants, and prepared to spend the night sitting in his bedroom.

As I waited, thinking deeply about the mystery, I became more than ever convinced that a hallucination was the true key to the trouble. There is said to be a kink somewhere in the mental constitution of every one of us; and surely, I thought, there must be some such explanation, which would put these weird visitations into the category of imaginings. My meditations on the pathology of the matter were rudely interrupted. The room was filled with an instantaneous flash of white light, which came and went in a second, leaving every-

thing totally dark. I started up and waited breathless. The flash appeared and vanished a second time, as before. My brain seemed stirred to abnormal activity. I felt, rather than thought positively, that here was evidence which destroyed the hallucination theory, for I was in prosaic health. I even reasoned unintentionally that here was a flash whose first appearance would discompose a sleeper, and whose second, when he had been disturbed, would complete his awakening.

Then began the most appalling moment of concentrated horror that has fallen to my lot. I am held professionally to have a good operating nerve; but to think of that brief interval even now sends a chill down my back. At the time my eyes seemed to start from my head, and my hands were lifted up in terror. Slowly, but steadily, the white circle grew on the wall. There was a dark mark in the centre, which gradually formed itself into the awful hand whose writing pronounced doom. Instantly the word-painting of the Book of Daniel rushed into my mind:

'In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace: and *the king saw the part of the hand that wrote*. Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.'

And even while these thoughts coursed through my burning brain the hand began to write. It traced one fearful word, and only one:

TEKEL.

Daniel himself has translated that portentous symbol: 'Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting.'

The vision disappeared from my unwilling gaze, and I was again sitting in the darkness. How long I remained comatose I cannot say. Ultimately I lighted the gas, and found that it was twenty minutes past three. The power of thought seemed to return to me slowly; but after a time I recovered my mental faculties, and began to try and unravel the tangle. The hallucination theory being obviously impossible, I began to look for a physical explanation. I was still at it in a dull kind of way when the dawn of another day broke, and then I began to think that I could see a light in a double sense.

I placed a table under where the hand had appeared, and stood upon it. Putting my eye about on a level with the writing, I looked out of the window. The direction was not at right angles to the wall of the bedroom, but inclined to the left and downwards, thus ending with a view of a brick wall, instead of looking squarely into the garden. This wall was the back of a modern stable, and quite blank, the creepers

planted at the base not having grown up it. It was unsightly, but it suggested a further idea. No one was astir yet, and I let myself out noiselessly, and made my way to the stable. By placing the loft-ladder against the wall and climbing up backwards I managed to reach about the spot where my glance from the bedroom had been fixed. Of course, to look at the bedroom window now it was necessary to turn to the right and upwards. It is an elementary law of optics that the angle of reflected light from a plane surface is equal to the angle of incidence. I roughly estimated with my eye an equal angle again to the left and downwards. The glance ended at the back window of the first cottage in North Lane. A mirror, then, hung where I stood would reveal in the bedroom what was going on in the cottage, or *vice versa*; and the distance was not great.

I slipped back into the Whytes' house. It was half-past six, and everything was still quite quiet. I went out by the front entrance, made my way round to the cottage in North Lane, and rapped loudly at the cottage door, intending to get a peep inside before the usual hour for callers. After a protracted interval I was answered by a surly-looking man, half-dressed.

'Is this Mr Smith's?' I asked. No better question came into my head for the moment, and I had foolishly gone without one ready prepared.

'No,' said the man shortly. 'Tompkins. What do you want at this time of day?'

The table in the room had nothing on it; but at that moment, peeping round the man, my eye lighted upon a piece of wire on the floor, curled and silk-bound. It told its own tale.

'Tompkins the electrician?' I hazarded, looking at the wire.

'Lectrician? No,' said the man sulkily, but with ill-concealed surprise. 'What do you want?'

'I want to see Count Belloni or his representative,' I said, stepping past the man into the room.

He started, and turned round fiercely.

'What do you mean?' he cried. At the same moment I caught sight of a roll of the film used in instantaneous photography for a series of pictures, packed away on a shelf.

'The game is up,' I said. 'You are found out. That is all.'

The man's hand went into his pocket; but I anticipated him as he drew it forth, and landed him fairly between the eyes with all my strength. As he staggered backwards the weapon he was raising flew from his hand, and I picked it up. It was a Colt, loaded.

'Now,' I said, covering him, 'the positions are changed. You have tried to murder me. No tricks, or I shoot. Now, set your vision-plant at work, or I will give you in charge. And look sharp.'

He had to comply, but it was with a good deal of profanity. As I had expected since my visit to the cottage, the idea was worked out with an electric light, a cinematograph of beautiful construction, and a large mirror, hung on the stable wall. With the aid of the Colt I soon had the whole story out. My prisoner was the jealous Count's tool, and was trying to frighten Margaret into her grave.

The habits of the household had been so carefully watched that it was known when the Whytes left for Malvern, and when they returned. The trick was rendered possible from the fact that Whyte's old house, like all of its kind in the Midlands, had unshuttered upstairs windows, whilst it had also white blinds on rollers to relieve the gloom of the oak panels within. The rascals had discovered a trick of Maggie's of reposing with her blind up; but I found they had actually provided themselves with plant to perform on the white blind as a screen if she should forget her usual practice. The cat's-paw was allowed to escape on easy terms; but I do not think Margaret will be troubled any more with the Italian. He has gone abroad indefinitely.

NOCTIS DE A.

FAR in the west the glowing colours fade

While sober Evening darkens all the sky;

And Night, with lagging steps too long delayed,

Unfolds her mantle as she passes by.

Like to a maiden, smiling through her tears,

The silvery moon looks through a wandering cloud

As fair and bright as in far-distant years

When Greek and Roman in her temples bowed.

Once, long ago, on Egypt's ancient lands,

That moon shone down with soft, mysterious light,

When the new pyramids, upon the sands,

Rose dark and sombre in the lonely night;

Or where the dusky daughters of the Nile

Amid their lotus-blossoms sank to rest,

In sweet forgetfulness beneath thy smile,

Pale Queen of Night, in queenly radiance drest.

The lotus-blossoms have long since decayed,

The towering pyramids are wrapt in gloom,

The Pharaohs' mouldering dust long time has laid

Within the dreary portals of the tomb.

But thou, refulgent, dost ascend the sky

And flood the world with streaming silver lights

While the swift ages pass unheeded by;

Serene thou reignest, sovereign Queen of Night.

ALFRED EGERTON.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE DARK CABINET.

By A. ANDERSON.

WHEN the Englishman drops a confidential communication into the letter-box he has no misgivings that his missive will be opened and its contents read and copied before it comes into the hands of the person to whom it is addressed. In reality, though we hardly realise it, the inviolability of our correspondence is one of the many precious privileges we enjoy as a matter of course, the mass of which make up what we understand by 'liberty.' To find a different state of things prevailing we need make no more hazardous journey than the short sea-passage that separates Dover from Calais.

During the crisis in the throes of which France is still writhing the French Radicals have not been backward in insisting on the burlesque character of the scenes of which the War Office is the theatre. Surely a Gilbert, even in his best moments of inspiration, never imagined anything more ludicrous and topsy-turvy than a score of stalwart, fiercely-moustachioed professional fighting-men, accounted in all the glittering panoply of war, who pass their days from morning to night laboriously piecing together filthy little scraps of paper supposed to have been grubbed out of some dust-bin or wastepaper-basket in one of the foreign embassies. The branch of the War Office where this sort of thing goes on is known as the Intelligence Department!

It is said, and more than probably with considerable truth, that the booted and spurred warriors are habitually hoodwinked in the most outrageous manner. It would be strange indeed were it otherwise. Once it is known that there is a place where chinking golden louis d'or are to be obtained in exchange for a packet of dirty paper, provided the latter comes from certain other specified places, the entire clan of *chevaliers d'industrie* is put on its metal; and when your *chevalier d'industrie* is put on his metal, there are not many true chevaliers who can hope to play successfully against him.

In spite of the vigorous denunciations of the

Clemenceaus, the De Pressensés, and the rest, however, the great mass of the French public hear these monstrous stories with almost unruffled countenance! This is probably because espionage of one kind and another is known to be so commonly practised that it has come to be regarded as the most natural thing in the world. A thousand proofs of this might be given. One will suffice. The French author places his hero, whom he has represented to us as a paragon of all the manly virtues, in a room by himself. He hears the sound of voices in an adjoining chamber. His curiosity is at once aroused; and, without any preamble, we see him creeping on tiptoe to the door of the room whence the sounds proceed, and putting his ear to the keyhole, like an inquisitive scullerymaid. Other men similarly situated to the Frenchman might perform a similar action; but, at least, the author would adopt all sorts of devices to palliate and excuse such conduct. In France no such periphrasis is required. It is little wonder if there is a periodical recrudescence of that peculiar malady which the sub-editors of our evening papers sum up for us every now and then in the familiar headline, 'Spy Mania in France.' People would not be human did they not attribute to others, rivals or enemies, faults which they have come to look upon in themselves as mere peccadilloes.

It is quite understood that the practices of the Cabinet Noir in the Post-Office are never quite in abeyance in France. The weapon is too good a one for any Government to voluntarily relinquish, unless under extreme pressure of public opinion. To discover what your opponent's intentions are by opening and reading his letters, which he has rashly entrusted to your charge, is a chance not to be missed. During the Boulangist troubles it was an open secret that the Cabinet Noir was working night and day; and, not more than a year ago, M. Lockroy, a few weeks before he was appointed Minister of Marine, publicly complained that his correspondence was being

systematically violated. M. Goron, the late head of the Paris detective department, is even now publishing his memoirs; and in the course of them he asserts that almost every person, man or woman, of note in the French capital, and many persons of no note whatever, have their secret *dossiers* in the police archives—*dossiers* composed of all sorts of scurrilous tittle-tattle gleaned from the most suspicious sources—your door-porter, your cook, and your tradesmen's assistants—and of course open to the inspection of the powers that be for the moment. These *dossiers*, the late head of the detective department categorically declares, are often the *fons et origo* of the many mysterious ministerial shufflings that are so often inexplicable to the outside world. Blackmailing is, in fact—if M. Goron is to be believed—the very commonest offence in France to-day.

Now and again the Government makes a half-hearted attempt to deny that the practice of opening letters goes on; but nobody is deceived. Telegrams, according to the actual law of the land, are not considered private communications; and one of the duties of the prefect of each department is to look through copies of all the telegrams sent to or by persons residing in his jurisdiction, and signalise any that may strike him as suspicious to the attention of his superiors. Between reading your neighbour's telegram and reading his letter there is a very narrow margin, and it would be surprising if the margin were not often lost sight of entirely!

The institution of the Cabinet Noir is attributed to Louis XV., his principal object, apparently, being to gratify idle curiosity by prying into the private affairs of his subjects. Once instituted, it has never since been abolished. Napoleon resorted to it in order to get on the scent of political plots and crimes; but, in the few years that followed the Restoration, after Waterloo, all was fish that came to the inquisitors' nets.

'Immoral, I admit. But can you suggest any surer way of discovering the trend of public opinion?' Such was the answer of Louis XVIII. to a courtier who had ventured to call his attention to the scandalous abuses that were taking place in connection with the Post-Office. Every morning, Foudras, the Inspector-general of Police, received a bulky packet from the postal administration, containing copies of all the letters sent to or from Paris which, for one reason or another, it had been deemed advisable to open and read before sending on to their destinations. A similar duplicate packet was sent to the king. This, in itself, would have been bad enough; but the matter was made far worse by the way in which it was carried out. The clerks employed in copying the letters were always ready on a hint from their superiors to omit and even to interpolate passages in the letters, so that the copy conveyed a totally different impression to that intended by the writer of the original.

When the allied sovereigns were in Paris in 1815 they could not make a movement nor utter a word that was not immediately noted down by a spy in the pay of the police. The very detectives whom the foreign princes brought in their train were themselves, in turn, shadowed. For the next four or five years nothing that went on in the various embassies but was brought to the notice of the police. Every despatch was copied; no precaution availed aught. Within the hour the messenger who carried the despatch was bribed and the cipher read. None had more reason to complain of the surveillance to which he was subjected than Count von der Goltz, the Prussian Minister. His weekly despatches to the king and the Prussian Chancellor were in the hands of the police almost before the ink was dry on them, the principal 'observer' attached to the person of the Prussian envoy being particularly smart.

It is a strange experience to wade through the heterogeneous mass of correspondence preserved to-day in the dusty archives in Paris. The most unlikely discoveries are made. All sorts of letters are thrown together pell-mell—letters from kings and queens down to letters sent by the humblest of their subjects. Among the lot are two epistles dated from London, bearing the signature of a well-known member of Parliament of the day, and addressed to two separate ladies in Paris. The letters are couched in almost identical terms, and in each the faithless Briton assures his correspondent that he lives for her and her alone, the phraseology being as ardent and apparently as sincere as that of any Romeo. Had he foreseen that seventy years afterwards the two letters were to be read side by side by the first comer!

If the police treated the correspondence of foreigners with such scant ceremony, it may easily be imagined they displayed even fewer scruples when their own compatriots were concerned. Woe betide the unfortunate individual who fell under suspicion. Chateaubriand, from 1815 to 1820, was scarcely allowed to wink without the fact being consigned to writing. Two agents were specially told off to watch him. Nothing in his house was respected. Not merely his wastepaper-basket, but the ashes in the fireplace, and even the spittoon, were carefully overhauled several times a day. His relations with Madame Récamier troubled the police tremendously for a long time, though they finally concluded that there was nothing political underneath them. 'She writes carefully sealed-up letters to him every day; but he hides them away on his side so well that the "observers" have not yet succeeded in seeing one.' So says the report. The persecution of Chateaubriand only ceased when he was appointed ambassador to Berlin, prior to coming to London in a similar capacity.

It is instructive to read Napoleon's opinion of the Cabinet Noir as recorded in the memoirs of


General Gourgaud just published, compiled from the diary kept by the latter at St Helena. 'The Paris police inspires more fear than it does harm. There is a great deal of charlatanism in connection with it. . . . The post supplies excellent information; but I am not certain whether the good is not compensated by the evil. The French are so peculiar that they frequently write what they do not think, and, in this way, one is apt to be led into error.' *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*, evidently.

For the people who consented to serve him in the capacity of spies Napoleon had the greatest disdain. Speaking of Madame de Bouillé, who acted as one of his principal policewomen, he says: 'Such people are very despicable.'

History repeats itself, and the character of a nation is not necessarily changed because the form of government is differently designated. To understand much of the extraordinary course of events in France of late, it is necessary to look a good way below the surface.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OW, what about the yacht?' inquired MacAndrew. 'We mustn't be caught here. It is impossible to say how soon the troops may be after us. There is a guard-house in Aniwa Bay; and they are certain to know before long that a man has escaped from Dui and is heading this way.'

'The yacht will be within signalling distance of this hut to-night at midnight,' said Browne. 'And you can see for yourself there are some rockets in that corner which I can fire. Then, within half-an-hour, she will send a boat ashore.'

'Good,' he said in a tone of approval. 'Very good. You are the sort of man I like to do business with. For my part, I shall not be sorry to get out of this.' He pointed to his disguise.

'I dare say you will not,' said Browne. 'You have succeeded wonderfully well. I cannot tell you how much obliged I am to you.'

'I am equally obliged to you,' said MacAndrew, 'so we can cry quits. I flatter myself that, all things considered, it has been a pretty good escape; but I could tell you of one or two which have been better. We mustn't shout too soon, however; we are not out of the wood yet.' As he spoke he mixed himself another glass of grog and lit a cigar, the smoke of which he puffed through his nose with the enjoyment of a man to whom such a luxury had been forbidden for some time past. Browne followed his example, and the two men smoked in silence, while the ex-Nihilist snored on the bed in the corner. Hour after hour they talked on. As Browne had suspected, MacAndrew proved the most interesting companion in the world. His life had been one long series of hairbreadth escapes; he had fought both for civilisation and against it; had sold his services to native sultans and rajahs, had penetrated into the most dangerous places, and had met the most extraordinary people. Strange to relate, with it all, he had still preserved the air of a gentleman.

'Oxford man?' asked Browne after a moment's pause, without taking his eyes off the fire, and still speaking in the same commonplace tone. The

other mentioned the name of a certain well-known college. Both felt that there was no more to be said, and they accordingly relapsed into silence.

'Rum thing this world of ours, isn't it?' said MacAndrew after a little while. 'Look at me. I started with everything in my favour; eldest son, fine old place in the country, best of society; for all I know I might have ended my days as a J.P. and member for my county. The Fates, however, were against it; in consequence I am sitting here to-night disguised as a Russian fur-trader. It's a bit of a transformation scene— isn't it? I wonder what my family would say if they could see me?'

'I wonder what some of my friends would say if they could see me?' continued Browne. 'If I'd been told a year ago that I should be doing this sort of thing I should never have believed it. We never know what's in store for us—do we? By the way, what's the time?' He consulted his watch, and discovered that it only wanted ten minutes of twelve o'clock. 'In ten minutes we'll fire the first rocket,' he said. 'It's to be hoped it's clear weather. Let us pray that there's not another vessel outside, who, seeing our signal, may put in and send a boat to discover what is the matter.'

'You're quite sure that the yacht will be there, I suppose?' said MacAndrew.

'As sure as I can be,' replied Browne. 'I told my captain to hang about at night, and to look round this coast at midnight, so that if we did signal he might be ready. Of course, there's no saying what may have turned up; but we must hope for the best. How is our friend yonder?'

MacAndrew crossed the hut and bent over the man lying on the bed. He was still sleeping.

'Poor beggar! he is quite played out,' said the other. 'It will be a long time before he will forget his tramp with me. I had to carry him the last three miles on my back, like a kiddy; and in that thick scrub it's no joke, I can assure you.'

Though Browne was quite able to agree with him, he did not give the matter much consideration. He was thinking of Katherine and of the

meeting that was shortly to take place between the father and daughter. At last, after what seemed an infinity of waiting, the hands of his watch stood at midnight. Having acquainted MacAndrew with his intention, he took up a rocket, opened the door of the hut, and went outside. To his intense relief the fog had drawn off, and the stars were shining brightly. Not a sound was to be heard save the sighing of the wind in the trees behind the hut, and the clinking of the ice on the northern side of the bay. To the southward it was all clear water, and it was there that Mason had arranged to send the boat.

'To be or not be?' said Browne as he struck the match and applied it to the rocket. There was an instant's pause, and then a tongue of fire flashed into the darkness, soaring up and up, until it broke in a myriad of coloured lights overhead. It seemed to Browne, while he waited and watched, as if the beating of his heart might be heard at least a mile away. Then suddenly, from far out at sea, came a flash of light, which told him that his signal had been observed.

'They see us,' he cried in a tone of delight. 'They are getting the boat under way by this time, I expect; and in less than an hour we shall be on board. We had better get ready as soon as possible.' With that they turned into the hut once more, and MacAndrew shook the sleeping man upon the bed.

'Wake up, little father,' he cried in Russian. 'It's time for you to say good-bye to Saghalien.'

The instantaneous obedience which had so long been a habit with him brought the man to his feet immediately. Browne, however, could see that he scarcely realised what was required of him.

'Come,' said Browne, 'it is time for us to be off. Your daughter is anxiously awaiting you.'

'Ah, to be sure—to be sure,' replied the other in French. 'My dear daughter. Forgive me if I do not seem to realise that I shall see her so soon. Is it possible she will know me after all these long years? When last I saw her she was but a little child.'

'Her heart, however, is the same,' said Browne. 'I can assure you that she has treasured your memory as few daughters would have done. Indeed, it is to her, more than any one else, that you owe your escape. But for her endeavours you would be in Dui now. But let us be off; we are wasting our time talking here when we should be making ourselves scarce.'

'But what about these things?' said MacAndrew, pointing to the books on the table, the crockery on the shelf, and the hundred and one other things in the hut. 'What do you intend doing with them?'

'I scarcely know,' replied Browne. 'The better plan would be for us to take with us what we

can carry and leave the rest. If they are of no other use, they will at least give whoever finds them something to think about.'

'I wish him joy of his guesses,' said MacAndrew as he led the old man out of the hut.

Browne remained behind to put out the lamp. As he did so a smile passed over his face. How foolish it seemed to be taking precautions, when he would, in all human probability, never see the place again! The fire upon the hearth was burning merrily. Little by little it would grow smaller, the flames would die down, a mass of glowing embers would follow, then it would gradually grow black, and connection with the place would be done for ever and a day. Outside it was all brilliant starlight, and for this reason they were able easily to pick their way down the path towards the place where Captain Mason had promised to have the boat.

So weak was the old man, however, that it took something like half-an-hour to overcome even the short distance they had to go. He could scarcely have done as much had not MacAndrew and Browne lent him their support. At last they reached the water's edge, where, to their joy, they found the boat awaiting them.

'Is that you, Phillips?' inquired Browne.

'Yes, sir, it's me,' the third mate replied. 'Captain Mason sent us away directly your signal was sighted.'

'That's right,' said Browne. 'Now, just keep your boat steady while we help this gentleman aboard.'

The boat's crew did their best to keep her in position while MacAndrew and Browne lifted Monsieur Petrovitch in. It was a difficult business, but at last they succeeded; then, pushing her off, they started for the yacht. For some time not a word was spoken. MacAndrew had evidently his own thoughts to occupy him; Katherine's father sat in a huddled-up condition; while Browne was filled with a nervousness that he could neither explain nor dispel.

At last they reached the yacht and drew up at the foot of the accommodation-ladder. Looking up the side, Browne could see Captain Mason, Jimmy Foote, and Maas leaning over watching them. It had been previously arranged that the meeting between the father and daughter should take place in the deck-house, not on the deck itself.

'Is he strong enough to walk up?' the captain inquired of Browne. 'If not, shall I send a couple of hands down to carry him?'

'I think we can manage it between us,' said Browne; and accordingly he and MacAndrew, assisted by the mate, lifted the sick man on to the ladder, and half-dragged, half-carried him up to the deck above.

'Where is Miss Petrovitch?' Browne inquired when they reached the deck.

'In the house, sir,' the captain replied. 'We

thought she would prefer to be alone there. She knows that you have arrived.'

'In that case I will take you to her at once,' said Browne to the old man, and slipping his arm through his, he led him towards the place in question. When he pushed open the door he assisted the old man to enter; and, having done so, found himself face to face with Katherine. She was deadly pale, and was trembling violently. Madame Bernstein was also present; and, if such a thing were possible, the latter was perhaps the more agitated of the two. Indeed, Browne found his own voice failing him as he said, 'Katherine, I have brought you your father!'

There was a moment's hesitation, though what occasioned it is difficult to say. Then Katherine advanced and kissed her father. She had often pictured this moment and thought of the joy she would feel in welcoming him back to freedom. Now, however, that it had come it seemed as if she could say nothing.

'Father,' she said at last, 'thank Heaven you have escaped.' She looked at him, and as she did so Browne noticed the change that came over her face. It was as if she had found herself confronted with some one she did not expect to see. And yet she tried hard not to let the others see her surprise.

'Katherine, my daughter,' said the old man, 'do you remember me?'

'Should I be likely to forget?' said Katherine. 'Though I was such a little child when you went away, I can remember that terrible night perfectly.'

Here Madame Bernstein interposed, with tears streaming down her face. 'Stefan,' she sobbed, 'Heaven be thanked you have at last come back to us!'

Thinking it would be as well if he left them to themselves for a short time, Browne stepped out of the house on to the deck, and closed the door behind him. He found MacAndrew, Maas, and Jimmy Foote standing together near the saloon companion-ladder.

'Welcome back again,' said Jimmy, advancing with outstretched hand. 'By Jove! old man, you must have had a hard time of it. But you have succeeded in your undertaking, and that's the great thing, after all—is it not?'

'Yes, I have succeeded,' said Browne, in the tone of a man who is not quite certain whether he has or not. 'Now, the question for our consideration is what we ought to do. What do you say, MacAndrew; and you, Maas?'

'If I were in your place I would get away as soon as possible,' answered the former.

'I agree with you,' said Jimmy. 'By Jove! I do.'

'I cannot say that I do,' added Maas. 'In the first place, you must remember where you are. This is an extremely dangerous coast about here, and if anything goes wrong and your boat runs

ashore, the man you have come to rescue will be no better off than he was before. If I were in your place, Browne—and I'm sure Captain Mason will agree with me—I should postpone your departure until to-morrow morning. There's nothing like having plenty of daylight in matters of this sort.'

Browne scarcely knew what to say. He was naturally very anxious to get away; at the same time he was quite aware of the dangers of the seas in which his boat was just at that time. He accordingly went forward and argued it out with Mason, whom he found of very much the same opinion as Maas.

'We have not much to risk, sir, by waiting,' said that gentleman; 'and, as far as I can see, we've everything to gain. A very strong current sets from the norward; and, as you can see for yourself, a fog is coming up. I don't mind telling you, sir, I've no fancy for manœuvring about here in the dark.'

'Then you think it would be wiser for us to remain at anchor until daylight?' said Browne.

'If you ask me to be candid with you,' the skipper replied, 'I must say I do, sir.'

'Very good, then,' said Browne. 'In that case we will remain.' Without further discussion he made his way to the smoking-room, where he announced to those assembled there that the yacht would not get under way till morning.

'Pon my word, Browne, I think you're right,' said Maas. 'You don't want to run any risks, do you? You'll be just as safe here, if not safer, than you would be outside.'

'I'm not so sure of that,' said Jimmy; and then, for some reason not specified, a sudden silence fell upon the party.

A quarter of an hour later Browne made his way to the deck-house again. He found Katherine and her father alone together, the man fast asleep and the girl kneeling by his side.

'Dearest,' said Katherine softly as she rose and crossed the cabin to meet her lover, 'I have not thanked you yet for all you have done for—for him and for me.'

She paused towards the end of her speech, as if she scarcely knew how to express herself; and Browne, for whom her every action had some significance, was quick to notice it.

'What is the matter, dear?' he asked. 'Why do you look so sadly at me?'

She was about to answer, but she changed her mind.

'Sad?' she whispered, as if surprised. 'Why should I be sad? I should surely be the happiest girl in the world to-night.'

'But you are not,' he answered. 'I can see you're unhappy. Come, dear, tell me everything. You are grieved, I suppose, at finding your father so changed? Is not that so?'

'Partly,' she answered in a whisper; and then, for some reason of her own, she added quietly,

'but madame recognised him at once, though she had not seen him for so many years. My poor father, how much he has suffered!'

Browne consoled with her, and ultimately succeeded in inducing her to retire to her cabin, assuring her that MacAndrew and himself would in turns watch by her father's side until morning.

'How good you are!' she said, and kissed him softly. Then, with another glance at the huddled-up figure in the easy-chair, but without kissing him, as Browne had quite expected she would do, she turned and left the cabin.

It was just two o'clock, and a bitterly cold morning. Though Browne had declared that MacAndrew would share his vigil with him, he was not telling the truth, knowing that the other must be worn out after his travels of the last few days. For this reason he persuaded Jimmy to take him below, and to get him to bed at once. Then he himself returned to the deck-house, and set to work to make Katherine's father as comfortable as possible for the night.

Just after daylight Browne was awakened by a knocking at the door. He crossed and opened it. It proved to be the captain. He was plainly under the influence of intense excitement.

'I don't know how to tell you, sir,' he said. 'I assure you I would not have had it happened for worlds. I have never been so upset in my life by anything.'

'But what has happened?' inquired Browne, with a sudden sinking at his heart.

'Something has gone wrong in the engine-room,' replied the captain, 'and until it has been repaired it will be impossible for us to get under way.'

At that instant the second officer appeared, and touched the captain on the shoulder, saying something in an undertone.

'What is it?' asked Browne. 'What else is wrong?'

'He reports that a man-o'-war can be just descried upon the horizon, and he thinks she is a Russian!'

(To be continued.)

COLOUR AND QUALITY.



COLOUR is perhaps the surest guide we possess to the quality of all marketable commodities, from milk to whisky, or from butter to white-lead. More than this, colour is an index of health and even of good-breeding, as witness the term 'blue-blooded' applied to the old nobility, although why blue rather than red blood should be considered aristocratic has long been a mystery to us. Our sense of smell should be quite as good or even a better guide than our sense of colour; but, probably through living in evil-smelling cities where a refined sense of smell would be distinctly inconvenient, we have lost the use of our olfactory organs to a great extent. The appreciation of colour, especially of small differences in colour, varies greatly from one individual to another; but colour-blindness is much less common than is generally supposed. Consequently, colour is used very largely in discriminating between different qualities of a particular material, and with very good reason, as we shall see. So much have colours become associated in the public mind with certain products—not necessarily coloured—that it has become necessary to colour them artificially to please the public taste. Rum in the olden days owed its rich red-brown colour to the occasional boiling over of the liquor in the crude stills of the period. Nowadays rum, as it leaves the still, is perfectly colourless; but as it would be considered a foolish joke to offer water-white rum for sale, the spirit is coloured artificially. Brandy is coloured with caramel; whisky is coloured by maturing in a sherry cask or by the addition of caramel. Vinegar used to be made

from malt, and owed its colour to the caramel in the malt, but now the greater portion of it is made by diluting pyroligneous acid and colouring with caramel; even the better-class vinegar is made largely from damaged rice and other grain, with a little malt introduced just to swear by, and the whole coloured with caramel. Londoners have got so into the habit of drinking poor milk coloured with anatta, containing an extra dose for the product of the cow 'specially kept for invalids and nurseries,' that they refuse to regard the natural uncoloured lacteal fluid as genuine.

The only practical instrument devised for measuring colour is the ingenious tintometer of Mr J. W. Lovibond, a short description of which appeared in *Chambers's Journal* for February 1896. In this instrument the colour of a substance or liquid is matched against standard-coloured glasses, which are graduated from colourless glass up to the strongest tone that can be graded accurately. Three series—namely, a red, a yellow, and a blue—have been found sufficient for all purposes. The system is very logical—equal tones of the red, yellow, and blue standards giving neutral gray; equal combinations of red and yellow produce orange; yellow and blue produce green; and blue and red produce violet—so that by means of the three series of standards any colour can be matched and recorded.

Since our last article was written, Mr Lovibond has applied his discovery of colour-curves to the examination of a number of substances with very interesting results. Naturally enough his own industry of brewing has taken up a large share of attention, and it has been found that not only can

the colour-producing properties of a malt—so important a factor in making pale ales—be gauged to a nicety, but the actual behaviour of the malt in brewing, and the keeping properties of the beer made from it, can be foretold with certainty. The secrets of the malt that has been overheated and quenched with cold water, and of the malt that has been unevenly dried and faked, all come out in the colour-curves. Chemical analysis even is unable to detect the differences between malts that the delicacy of the colour-curve will render visible. It is possible by means of the curves to tell whether a whisky has been matured in a sherry cask or has been coloured by caramel. The method has been applied to caramel itself, and it has been found that the yellow colour is the important constituent, not the blackness.

Dr George Oliver has applied the system to the measurement of the red colouring matter of blood, and gave a full account of the method, which is now in use at most of the hospitals and universities, in the Croonian Lectures before the Royal College of Physicians of London last year. It is this red colouring matter that conveys the oxygen from the lungs to wherever it is required in the body, and the general health depends largely on the presence of the correct amount of this material in the blood. An excess generally indicates gout, whilst a deficiency causes the disease known as anæmia, so common amongst young women. It is painful to look down the scale of the curve and see what a pitiful condition it is possible to be reduced to by anæmia. So delicate is the method that the variations in the blood between breakfast and bedtime can be traced quite easily. During the day a continual destruction of the red corpuscles is going on, and this deficit is made up during sleep. Amongst other interesting things, Dr Oliver found that he and a companion who assisted him were as healthy in London as they were in Switzerland, taking the state of the blood as a criterion. His experiments were made twice a day for a considerable length of time, and the condition of his blood improved

steadily the whole time, from which it would appear that a little systematic blood-letting is good for the constitution.

Another service the tintometer seems likely to do to the medical and other professions is to attach definite names to definite colours, by means of a little interchangeable set of standards; so that when an individual says that a particular substance was blue-green, every one interested in the matter will know what he means. At present definitions of colours are most vague and heterogeneous. What one person calls red another terms scarlet; what one calls violet another calls blue; and so on. We frequently hear a colour described as being, for instance, a 'dirty-greenish' or 'bluish-white,' which is quite meaningless. The use of the tintometer standards is the only available method for conveying a conception of colour from one individual to another.

Many fresh applications for the tintometer have arisen during the last two years. The London County Council, the Liverpool Corporation, and the Massachusetts Board of Health use the instrument for controlling and registering the state of the rivers and the water-supply. The colours of our postage-stamps are kept to a constant standard by means of the tintometer, and it seems likely to be used by philatelists for fixing standards of colour for different issues of stamps. The value of rosin depends on its paleness, and the tintometer is being substituted for the old standards, which soon became useless through fading. Tanners are using it for checking the value of their extracts; papermakers, book-binders, and others for keeping the colours of their materials constant. The instrument is employed in several kinds of scientific and industrial research, for it is found that colour and quality go hand-in-hand, the colour-curve of a substance being as characteristic of it as its physical structure. It is seldom that what was in the first instance a rich man's hobby conquers such a wide field of industrial and scientific usefulness as has been won by the tintometer.

FROM MAJUBA TO OMDURMAN.

By T. B. TOWNSEND.



TO learn from your enemies is a maxim which has lost none of its force down to the present day; and it interests every one amongst us to know whether the British army is in the hands of men who are capable of profiting by the lessons that from time to time are rudely administered to us by our foes. Most of us remember only too well the short-lived English domination in the Transvaal during the later part of the seventies, as well as the way in which misfortune seemed to dog the steps of those on whose shoulders fell the burden

of upholding it there. We had found the country in a bankrupt condition, and had restored its finances; we had found it threatened by the formidable Zulu monarch, with his army of fifty thousand fighting savages, thoroughly drilled and in a state of high military efficiency. After a desperate struggle, in which we suffered some very severe losses, including the battle of Isandula, where our camp was taken and the whole of its defenders slaughtered, the British arms finally achieved a complete but hard-won triumph. We had broken the power of Cetewayo, and dispersed his regiments of 'celibate, man-destroying gladi-

ators,' to use the phrase in which Sir Bartle Frere once described his justly-dreaded impis. Subsequently, in the Transvaal itself, we had overthrown Secocoeni, a powerful native chief who had successfully defied the Boer Government; while enterprising British traders had supplied an abundance of excellent sporting rifles to the people of the country, who earned not a little money by shooting down the game with them. In brief, we had removed one by one every obstacle to a revolt on the part of the emigrant farmers, who made up the bulk of the population of the Transvaal outside the towns.

The revolt followed, as might have been expected. It broke out in the month of December 1880, during the warm summer of the southern hemisphere, and it came to an end with the peace that was concluded after the disastrous battle of Majuba Mountain on February 26, 1881. The tale of misfortune begins with the affair of Bronkerspruit in December. The 94th Regiment, forming a part of the British garrison of the Transvaal, had been ordered to concentrate at Pretoria, and was on the march thither. No actual fighting had as yet taken place; but the Boers had held a mass meeting, proclaimed a republic, and announced that they were going to begin. At Bronkerspruit they laid a carefully prepared ambush along the road by which the 94th were advancing, and awaited their victims. The British colonel had been warned to look out for traps; but, as far as can now be known, he had no idea that these sharp-shooting farmers were really in earnest, and he failed to profit by the warning. The 94th were strung out for half a mile along the road; the weather was hot, and many of the soldiers had put their rifles in the wagons; in short, the march was conducted as if in a time of profound peace. At a certain spot the long column was halted by a Boer patrol. There was a brief colloquy between the colonel and the Boers; they ordered him to go back, and he refused. Nobody seems to have noticed the ambushed riflemen, or to have observed the little heaps of stones with which these skilled hunters of wild game, old hands at shooting over the bare veldt, had thoughtfully marked out beforehand at one hundred, one hundred and fifty, and two hundred yards, their exact distance from their intended targets. The Boer rifles cracked, and in twenty minutes all the officers and half the British troops were shot down, and the rest were made prisoners; the loss on the side of the farmers was almost *nil*. As a Western American crudely observed, it was a case of a lot of first-class frontiersmen taking in a crowd of tenderfeet out of the wet. It was a terribly severe lesson that in the face of a possible enemy a soldier must never be off his guard.

After the Bronkerspruit disaster the whole country was up. All the British garrisons in the

Transvaal were beleaguered by the Boers; and one garrison, Potchefstroom, was known both by them and by Sir George Pomeroy Colley, the general in command in Natal, to be short of provisions. Colley gallantly determined to cut his way in, if possible, and relieve it. He knew well enough that ere long an army from overseas must be sent to retrieve the honour of the British arms; but he was also aware that it must inevitably arrive too late to save Potchefstroom. The Boers had occupied Laing's Nek, the pass leading into the Transvaal from Natal; and, with the small British force he had at his command, he hoped to be able to dislodge them and clear the road. General Colley was considered to be one of the very best officers in the British army. He had had some experience of actual fighting in China, and he had exhibited extraordinary skill and courage and resource in the very difficult task of organising the transport in the Ashanti campaign. He certainly could not be called a novice in war. But unfortunately there was one thing of which all his previous experience had taught him nothing, and that was how to fight against good shots armed with modern breech-loaders.

On January 28, 1881, Colley moved upon Laing's Nek with about eleven hundred men and six guns. The force of Boers opposed to him is said by Alfred Aylward, who appears to have acted as their military secretary, to have numbered fourteen hundred and thirty-seven, under Generals Joubert and Smidt. The Boers had no guns, and dreaded artillery fire more than anything else; accordingly, they dug some dummy trenches in soft ground on a conspicuous part of the Nek, and then judiciously disposed themselves in safety elsewhere. Colley's guns opened fire at a mile and a half, and appear to have principally occupied themselves in shelling the empty trenches, as, according to Alfred Aylward, no one was hurt or even frightened by the cannonade. It may be noted that Alfred Aylward's figures are not contradicted by Sir William Butler in the *Life of Sir George Colley* which he has recently published; and, indeed, with reference to this particular action, General Colley himself deplores the ineffectiveness of his artillery practice in one of the letters printed by his biographer.

Posting the naval brigade, with the rocket apparatus and some of the 60th Rifles, in an enclosed ground, where they were under cover, and keeping about half his force in reserve, Colley despatched five companies of the 58th Regiment, numbering four hundred and eighty bayonets, together with about a hundred mounted men, to assault the left of the Boer line. In broad daylight, the foot advanced in column of companies across the open ground and up the hill, against nearly thrice their own number of the best shots in the world, who were under cover and armed with good modern rifles. The charge of the Dervish host at Omdurman was not

so gallant or so futile. In a few minutes the handful of mounted men were scattered, and one-third of the 58th lay dead or wounded on that bloody slope. The survivors drew off, re-formed their shattered lines behind the 60th Rifles, and retired in good order. The Boer loss is said to have been two. It was magnificent, but it was not war. It proved, if any proof were needed, that for infantry in column to charge in broad daylight works thus strongly held by resolute men who can handle breech-loaders is to court ruin and disaster.

After Laing's Nek the exultant Boers threatened Colley's communications, and on 8th February he sallied out from his camp at Mount Prospect to clear the road in his rear. This time he took with him five companies of the 60th Rifles—who, being in reserve, had not been cut up at Laing's Nek—and four guns, together with thirty-eight mounted men. A few miles from camp he left a half-company and two guns to guard the drifts of the flooded Ingogo River, and a mile or two farther on he encountered a strong party of Boers. With a confidence begotten of their easy victory at Laing's Nek, the Boers did not wait to be attacked, but, without hesitation, assumed the offensive. Colley took up a position on a flat-topped hill, and stood on his defence, having now about three hundred men and two guns with him. According to Alfred Aylward, the Boer patrol numbered one hundred and sixty-seven. The Boers took cover all round the hill, and a prolonged rifle duel ensued between the two forces. Avoiding the British tactics at Laing's Nek, the conditions of which were exactly reversed upon this occasion, the Boers refrained from any attempt to take the hill by direct assault in a body; but as independent sharp-shooters they kept up an incessant rifle fire until near nightfall. In accuracy of shooting, and in the skill with which they sheltered themselves, they proved to be superior to the defenders of the hill. They drew off at last with a loss of twelve killed and fourteen wounded; but the defenders had actually lost six times as many. The sharp-shooting skirmishers had put no less than half the force they were attacking *hors de combat*. After the withdrawal of the Boers, Colley, whose horses were nearly all killed, with great difficulty succeeded in saving the guns, dotted all over as they were with the splashes of the Boer bullets; and, by a desperate night-march, he regained his camp under cover of darkness with the remnant of his forces. England had to learn by bitter experience that valour without good shooting is but a waste of the lives of her bravest sons. The spirit and staunchness of the British troops were admirable; and Colley's own letters warmly acknowledge the fact. But as shots they were completely outclassed.

Reinforcements now began to arrive. Colley's force at the front, which had suffered so heavily

in these two engagements, was strengthened by the arrival of the 92d Highlanders, fresh from their victories in Afghanistan; and with them he resumed the offensive. This time he decided to avoid making a direct attempt on Laing's Nek, and aimed at turning that position by occupying the Majuba Mountain, which overhung the pass on the south-west. After Laing's Nek, Colley had promised the survivors of the 58th to give them another chance of trying conclusions with their opponents; and to seize Majuba he took with him a force composed of three companies of the 92d, two of the 58th, and two of the 60th, supplemented as before by a naval contingent. By a skilful and daring march, on the night of 25th February, he occupied, without opposition, this post of vantage, which appeared to him impregnable. 'We could stay here for ever,' he remarked to his chief of staff when daylight revealed the nature of the ground on which they stood; and he sat down in fancied security to hold it till further reinforcements should arrive, intending then to make with their aid a combined movement against the Nek. But, unfortunately for Colley, the position he had seized was not so strong as he had imagined. The Majuba Mountain was what Western Americans would call a belted *mesa*: it was a flat-topped, or rather a saucer-topped height, with a belt of perpendicular cliff running round it a little below the summit, broken only here and there by a few gullies, through which access to the summit might be gained from the lower slopes. These lower slopes were steep, and the upper parts of them were screened from view from the summit by being below the belt of cliff which looked so formidable to the eye. Technically speaking, they were 'dead' ground.

In his fancied security, Colley omitted to fortify his position, the very error which two years before had led to the disaster of Isandula. He allowed his staff to distribute most of his men around the rim of the saucer-shaped basin, where they contented themselves with piling up little heaps of stones to lie down behind. 'Oh, it's all right, sir; it's good enough for what we shall want up here,' said a Highlander confidently to an observer who suggested that such a protection was hardly sufficient; and against a distant enemy perhaps the man was right. The idea of the Boers even attempting to take such a position by storm appeared preposterous.

Alas! it was not so preposterous as it seemed. As soon as daylight revealed to the force holding Laing's Nek that their flank was threatened, they began indeed to prepare to send their wagons to the rear; but they determined also before retreating to try the effect of a direct assault upon Majuba. According to the account given by General Sir William Butler, some of the Highlanders showed themselves boldly on the sky-line in the morning light, shaking their fists defiantly

at the hostile camp, which lay two thousand feet below, and of which they could now see every detail. 'Come up here, you beggars,' they cried; and if Alfred Aylward may be trusted, two hundred and twenty-three Boers accepted the invitation. Part of the Boer assailants took cover at once with their usual skill, and opened a long-range fire on the summit of Majuba. This fire did but little execution, though a single shot at nine hundred yards mortally wounded the brave Romilly, commander of the naval contingent. But, generally speaking, the defenders of the hill took good care not to expose themselves unnecessarily to the marksmanship of the Boers, with the result that the actual loss inflicted by the long-range fire was small. Though the Boers kept it up incessantly all that long summer's morning, scarcely any one except poor Romilly was touched.

Nevertheless, the Boers were not throwing away their powder for nothing. They succeeded in their object of compelling the defenders of the hill to keep closely under shelter, and prevented them from observing what happened on the slopes below the encircling girdle of cliff. Protected thus by the fire of their companions, small parties of Boers were creeping as stealthily as deer-stalkers over wide spaces of the mountain-side where the cliff wall above screened them both from the sight and from the fire of the defenders. Sir William Butler gives an excellent map, shaded so as to exhibit clearly the 'dead' portions of the hillside across which these experienced hunters made their way unobserved. So stealthy and so cautious were they that they took the whole morning over their stalk; but their caution and skill were crowned with perfect success. At one part of the circumference of Majuba there is a little outlying *kopje*, or peak, which is really the key of the position. With unerring instinct one of the Boer leaders made for this point. According to Sir William Butler, he had about sixty men with him; and when he arrived quite near it, with his party still undiscovered, he detected a picket of several soldiers, who were standing in an exposed position, unconscious of the near neighbourhood of their foes. The Boer leader ordered a number of his men to hold their rifles at the 'present,' step back out of cover, and fire a rapid volley. The manœuvre was skilfully executed; the whole picket was clean swept away, and in a few minutes more the Boers had got the key of the position in their hands. By this success they had turned the left of the British troops, who were holding the northern face of the rim, and took them in the flank. The troops, thus suddenly surprised, fell back from the rim, and immediately other parties of Boers rushed up by another gap, and seized the abandoned positions. Practically, Majuba was taken by surprise. Till the enemy were actually on the top the general and his staff never dreamed that they could lose the hill. But, once established on the

summit, the rapid and accurate fire of the Boers swept away the defenders. It seems as if no provision had been made for the unexpected contingency of the hill being stormed; no second line of defence had been provided, and such reserves as existed were either not ready or could not be got into place at the critical moment; and a general *saute qui peut* followed. It is a scene that one does not care to think about. Colley, endeavouring to rally his broken lines, despairingly fronted the hailstorm of bullets that mowed down his men, and fell with his face to the foe. Nearly half the British force were killed, wounded, or made prisoners. The Boer losses are given by Sir William Butler at six, of whom only one was killed. Here indeed was a lesson to every commander to secure his weak point. Like every other post of vantage, Majuba Hill had its vulnerable spot, and that spot was neither sufficiently fortified nor guarded.

There is one other matter that should be mentioned. The absurdly small loss inflicted on the men who stormed Majuba would be incredible but for one reason. It has been already observed that the fire which covered the stealthy advance of the stormers was all at long range. The British soldiers replying to it fired also at the same range; nor need we be surprised that, against an enemy so skilled in selecting sheltered positions, their fire did not effect much. But, as it was a long-range duel, they were of course compelled to raise their sights, with the result that when they were suddenly rushed by the Boer storming-parties they all had the sights of their Martinis set to five and six hundred yards elevation; but the stormers were at point-blank distance. Consequently, the volleys fired at close quarters by the defenders of the hill went harmlessly over the heads of their assailants. Proof of this was found in the hundreds of rifles picked up by the victors after the action was over, all of which, by their account, had the long-range sights raised. So we may add yet another lesson, and that is the necessity of perfect fire-control on the part of the officer immediately in charge of the firing line. The best-aimed volleys fired without strict attention to the regulation of the sighting are only too likely to waste themselves in empty air.

With Majuba hostilities came to a standstill. That well-equipped army, indeed, for which Colley had hoped arrived in South Africa after his fall; but it was not allowed to retrieve the tarnished glory of the British arms. For good or for evil, a peace was made, which doubtless seemed to be honourable and satisfactory to those who were responsible for it, believing as they did that to continue the war would involve us in the sin of blood-guiltiness. However, the remote consequences of our actions are often far other than we expect; and the many and bloody battles we have fought since then in Egypt and the Soudan,

down to the recent reconquest of Khartoum, may be traced to the loss of prestige that unquestionably followed the disasters in South Africa. The belief that the power of England might be defied with impunity emboldened Arabi Pasha to head a military revolt against our *protégé*, the Khedive, at Cairo. He was woefully undeceived by the crushing British victory at Tel-el-Kebir in 1882, the very next year after Majuba. The lessons taught in South Africa had been laid to heart. True, at Tel-el-Kebir works held by riflemen were assaulted by infantry in front; but the infantry were brought close up to their objective under cover of night; and it was known that the Arabists were no such marksmen as the Boers. And now it was the Arabist rifles that were picked up in hundreds after the victory, sighted for an idle long-range fire by the express orders of their leader; while it was a British regiment that attacked in rushes, halting every fifty yards to fire volleys at a stated range fixed by their musketry instructor. One dare not say that the mistakes made in South Africa will never be repeated. To err is human; and we have high

authority for saying that he is the best general who makes fewest blunders. But it becomes possible to look forward hopefully to the future if our leaders show that they do not despise the lessons of experience. The late campaign in the Soudan would seem to indicate that these have at last been laid to heart, and the result has been in gratifying contrast to the failures of 1881. Failures they were, and the fact must be acknowledged; yet in speaking of them we would guard ourselves from using any language that may seem to reflect upon the devoted men who on field after field have laid down their lives in the service of their country. As the thought of the lonely graves that mark their last resting-place rises before the mind, one seems to behold the pallid line of ghosts, the victims of the war-god:

Slowly comes a shadowy train,
Souls of warriors brave in vain.

It was not all in vain that they fought and fell, if those who come after them have striven, under happier auspices, to surpass them in skill and not to fall short of them in valour.

THE LOATHLY SAURIAN.

By JOHN MACKIE, Author of *They that Sit in Darkness*, &c.



EXT to the ravages of the wild blacks amongst my horseflesh, I have suffered most from alligators; and there is nothing that lives I more loathe and stand in fear of than those horrible saurians. A six years' close and unbroken acquaintance with them has in no way overcome my prejudice—indeed, the reverse. They not only cost me yearly many pounds sterling in horseflesh, but they were a continual menace to my own personal safety. The following is perhaps the closest call I ever had with those truly diabolical creatures.

It was on the south-western coast of the Gulf of Carpentaria, in the northern territory of South Australia, and I had settled on the Calvert River, at the crossing where the salt water meets the fresh. I was the first and only settler in that part of the country, the principal features of which were cannibal blacks in the bush and ranges, large mobs of wild horses in the neighbourhood of the salt-pans near the sea, and no end of voracious, cunning alligators in the rivers and still, deep arms that opened out from them. One could be more or less on the lookout for blacks, and know how to deal with them; but as for the alligators, their untiring patience, and the diabolic ingenuity which, in combination with their great strength, they brought to bear upon the accomplishment of their fell designs was something that could not always be guarded against. Nearly all the great rivers flowing into the Gulf, notably

the Norman, Albert, Calvert, Robinson, and Roper, are infested with those scourges, and many and wonderful are the legends and stories told by old-timers concerning them. Alligators, as most people know, live to a patriarchal age. There was one gigantic old fellow that haunted the Albert River close to Burketown; he was there when Landsborough, the explorer, first opened up the Gulf in the early sixties, and even then his prowess and terrible deeds were historical, and had been handed down among the myall or wild blacks for many generations. When I went there to assist in the resurrection of Burketown in 1883—the township had lain desolated for years by reason of the plague—Big Ben, as he was then called, was currently reported to be some twenty-five feet in length, and of proportionate girth; but alligators, like sharks, lose nothing by hearsay. When I was there he coolly picked a gin and a black fellow off the river-bank when engaged in fishing; and though a policeman, who was a noted alligator-hunter, tried time and again to get a shot at him, Big Ben was too experienced a hand to be caught by any of his wiles—generally a dog or a goat—having 'been there before.' I saw him once as he floated down-stream like an immense partially submerged log; and he haunts Burketown to this day for all I know to the contrary. But to my particular alligator story.

When I settled on the Calvert early in 1885, what with the wild blacks and the alligators, my

time was pretty fully occupied in keeping an eye upon my horses. Before I fenced it off, my horses used to go down to the crossing to drink, and on several occasions they came back most horribly scared. At night and when the tide was high were the most dangerous times for the depredations of the reptiles. Their modes of procedure were ingenious. They would lie in deep water close to the spot where cattle and horses or marsupials were in the habit of coming to drink, and then, shooting up silently and swiftly, catch their victim in cruel, jagged, powerful jaws, and drag it below water. Or they would lie alongside some footpath leading through the reeds, taking advantage of their resemblance to a log, and then, when their unsuspecting prey was alongside, either grapple with it boldly or hit it a stunning blow with their tails. On calm nights I have often lain awake listening to their strange, hollow, tremulous bellow; it was a weird, horrible sound. On fording rivers on horseback at the various crossings on the lonely Port Darwin track, when the tides were not high enough to make swimming necessary I used to throw my legs forward over the horse's neck, and with my rifle in my hand keep a pretty sharp lookout on either side alternately.

My ketch had been round to the Norman for supplies, and lay some three or four miles down the river; for the wet season had come on suddenly, and the Calvert had come down in flood, thus preventing the boat from getting up. I had run out of sugar, so, taking my saddle-horse and a pack-horse, had gone down to where it lay to fetch up what I wanted. It was the first week in January, and the day was very hot, the thermometer registering about one hundred and twenty-five degrees in the shade. I had slung two fifty-pound mats of sugar on either side of the pack, and was making my way back again from the boat to my place. As usual, I led the pack-horse by means of a halter-shank on the off-side. Having delayed rather long at the boat, I knew that in consequence my horses were in want of a drink, for on account of the high banks it had been impossible to water them. I was about a mile below the crossing, just above a great, broad, deep reach, which I knew to be one of the worst spots for alligators in the river, when suddenly my horses quickened their pace. For the moment I could not account for this unexpected display of zeal; but I very soon found out, to my cost, what it meant. Some sixty yards ahead the bank sloped gently down to the water's edge, and at any other time of the year there was a broad pebbly shallow just at this point, where the horses were in the habit of drinking when they strayed down the river. It may be interesting to a good many to mention that I have noticed a great difference between the forethought of a horse and a dog; while the former seems to apprehend danger but little, and will often rush unthinkingly

into it, a dog generally exercises much the same caution as a human being. I have often seen a dog, though very thirsty, scrape a hole in the sand a few feet back from the water's edge, so as to let the water run in slowly, and permit of its drinking in safety, when alligators seemed to be about.

At first I took little heed of the intentions of my horses, as I did not intend letting them drink there, seeing the water had risen several feet, and they would inevitably be carried off their feet and down the river into what I had named Alligator Pool. But I found it no such easy matter to balk their design as I had imagined. My pack-horse quickened its pace to a jog, and headed right for the treacherous bank. As it had only a green-hide halter on its head, I had but little power over it, with the result that I was literally dragged along. What was more awkward still, the horse I rode seemed to have got the bit in its teeth, and was determined on aiding and abetting its companion. Do my very utmost, I could not stop their insane onward course. In another minute they had plunged into the water, and, as I expected, were instantly out of their depth. At first I resolved, if possible, to remain seated in the saddle and pilot them safely to the other side. I had swum dozens of flooded rivers before, and was no novice at the job. But the current was strong, the pack-horse nervous, and I realised that there was danger of the latter colliding with my horse, and thus bringing about a catastrophe. Moreover, we were being carried downstream. In another moment I had flung the loose halter-shank from me, and let the pack-horse head for the opposite bank. Then I slipped off the saddle on the off or up-stream side, and, twisting a lock of my horse's mane round the fingers of my left hand, got ready to swim, and endeavoured to guide my steed to the other side. Now, it may be mentioned that it is as well to leave the reins alone when in the water; to bear on the bit only seems to bewilder the animal, and causes it to rear and lash out with its fore-feet. The best way to guide is by pressure of the hand or by splashing water against the face of the horse in the required direction. When it is heading properly some men catch hold of the tail and are towed ashore. I have found this way answer well on occasions; there is at least not much danger of interfering with the action of the animal. My horse by this time had been carried into Alligator Pool; but I noted with satisfaction that the opposite shore was not more than fifty yards distant. I hoped that, owing to the discoloured condition of the water, and the swish of it as it eddied amongst the undergrowth, the alligators would not discover our presence. I kept a wary lookout, for I knew there would be little chance for me if once attacked.

Then, all at once, my heart seemed to leap into my mouth, and I knew that my worst fears

were about to be realised. My horse had stopped swimming, and, with a wild snort of fear, assumed a perpendicular position, lashing out wildly with its forefeet. At the same instant I saw, only a few yards in front of me, the ugly brown gnarled snout of an alligator poked above the swirling surface. It was doubtless at the moment as much taken by surprise as my horse. As best I could I put the latter between me and it, and, as luck would have it, I did not do so a moment too soon. The horse was beginning to spin round as horses will do when they lose their heads, and in another minute I would be right in front of that alligator again, for I knew it had only disappeared in order to make a rush in upon us. Then there was a shock as, like a battering-ram, the alligator came full tilt against the off shoulder of poor Prince; its great jaws gripped it by the fleshy part of the neck. With something like a horrible scream, the poor brute managed to release itself from that cruel, horrible grip, and lashed blindly out. I heard a quick, firm thud as a powerful hoof beat down on the horny skull of the saurian; but an alligator's head-covering is one of the toughest things in nature, and therefore it probably only served to spur the ferocity of the reptile. The latter got inside its victim's guard again, and this time it fairly caught the horse by the throat and clawed it with its short, powerful fore-arms or legs—whichever is the proper term—endeavouring to drag it down below the surface. The commotion was something terrible; the blood poured in torrents from the horse's wounds, and it was sure to attract more of those cruel reptiles. I could do nothing to assist my horse. I knew only too well it was doomed; so, throwing myself on my back, I pushed off from it, then turning on my side, swam for the shore

with powerful side-strokes. Every moment I expected to be dragged down into that horrible hole. At last, with a feeling of inexpressible relief, I reached the bank, and catching hold of some boughs, drew myself up. I looked around to where my poor Prince had been struggling with his assailant; but all I could see was the cantle of the saddle and part of the neck and floating mane. The alligator was gradually dragging him down; in another moment part of the body came to the surface quivering, and then with a sudden plunge it disappeared. It was a horrible, sickening sight! There was a great red streak stretching away down the river—the life-blood of poor Prince. Oh, how I vowed vengeance on those alligators!

I ran to where my pack-horse was trying to effect a landing; but the bank was treacherous, and every time it essayed to spring up, the loose turf would give way, and it fell back into the river. If it remained there the alligators would assuredly soon make short work of it. I was determined the brutes should not have it too; and, with a foolhardiness that afterwards considerably astonished even myself, I jumped in alongside of the pack-horse, caught it by the mane, and guided it down-stream to where there seemed to be a better landing. In a few minutes we touched bottom and scrambled ashore—I am sure none too soon. When I think of it now, it was an extraordinary piece of luck that we were not both seized by the alligators; but perhaps most of them were by this time assisting in the partition of my poor saddle-horse. I led the pack up the river, and managed to recross in safety.

When the floods subsided I watched that fatal pool for days and weeks, and managed to shoot two of its loathsome denizens.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.



By the aid of Signor Marconi's apparatus, telegraphic messages have been lately exchanged between France and England, the two spots chosen for the experiment being thirty-two miles apart. The correspondence between the two places has been carried on with ease and certainty, although there was no communicating wire between them. This achievement is still more remarkable when it is found that neither wind, rain, fog, nor other meteorological conditions affect the results in the slightest degree. It is also noteworthy that the new method of signalling across space costs very little when compared with the heavy expense of constructing and laying a cable. The system, now quite in its infancy, will probably prove of enormous importance as a

means of communication between ships and shore, as well as between passing ships at sea, and is doubtless destined to be the means of saving many from the peril of shipwreck. It is not yet known how far the method will be operative; but experiments are to be conducted between London and Paris—the Eiffel Tower in the latter city offering a favourable altitude for the accommodation of the apparatus. Enthusiasts are suggesting that some day communication may be possible by means of the Marconi method between the earth and her nearest neighbours in space.

HER MAJESTY'S PIGEON MESSENGERS.

Although our country was at one time behind Continental nations in employing pigeons as war messengers, three years' good work has placed in the hands of the British Naval Intelligence Department an army of birds which is as well trained

and reliable as any to be found in the world. At this moment there are available about one thousand pigeons which are able to fly from ten to one hundred and fifty miles over land or water. There are three principal stations where the birds are carefully bred and educated—namely, at Gosport, Devonport, and Sheerness. Each bird has an aluminium ring on one leg, bearing its official number, a reference to which in the carefully kept records of the department will at once show the bird's capabilities and performances. The trials are carried out with the greatest care, the distance which a bird is required to fly being gradually increased. Its arrival at its home is announced by an automatic electric bell, which rings directly the pigeon steps on the arrival platform. The message—on a piece of paper which measures about four inches by one and a half—is rolled round the bird's leg, and secured by an india-rubber band. In case of need, quite a long despatch could be thus sent by photographing the original document on a roll of flexible celluloid.

IDENTIFICATION BY THUMB-MARK.

It seems an astonishing thing that the natural signature, the impression of the thumb or finger-tip, is not used to a greater extent than it is for purposes of identification. If the thumb be lightly pressed upon a surface smeared with printing-ink, and then pressed upon clean paper, an impression is obtained which is distinctive for the particular individual who owns the member. No two thumbs or fingers are alike in the arrangement of their multitudinous lines; each, therefore, is a seal which is unique, and a seal which cannot readily be mislaid or lost. The French police use this test to assure themselves of the identity of a prisoner; but surely the system could be usefully extended. A newspaper correspondent who recently pleaded for such an extension of the thumb-mark test stated that once when abroad he was in great straits for money, although he held cheques for a considerable amount, simply because he could not prove his identity. If the local banker had only had an impression of his finger-tip, as well as authority to pay, all difficulty would at once have vanished.

THE METRIC SYSTEM.

The advocates of the metric system are once again clamouring for a radical change in our system of weights and measures; and they urge their claims with such plausibility that the ordinary individual is puzzled as to whether the present system should hold good, or whether the reformers should have their way. The demand for the introduction of the metric system is nothing new, the subject having been brought before the British Parliament seventy-five years ago. Since that time various committees have been appointed to report upon the matter; bills

have been brought forward and rejected, and various societies have been established to help in the work of reform. But, with all this machinery at work, nothing has been achieved, save that in scientific work the metric system has been found convenient, and has been generally adopted. That there are cogent reasons against the general use of the French system is pretty evident from the facts mentioned, and our old methods of weighing and measuring—although they are open to many objections—are likely to be continued for some time to come. In the meantime it would be very desirable to make more common a practice pursued by certain writers in dealing with figures, and that is to put side by side with the British measures their equivalents according to the metric system. This is a matter of urgent necessity in the case of trade catalogues which are intended to circulate abroad.

STEREOSCOPIC PROJECTION.

The beautiful instrument invented by Brewster, which, by the combination of two photographs taken from slightly different points of view, gives the observer the impression that he is looking at a solid thing, was once considered an almost indispensable adjunct to the drawing-room. There have been many attempts to produce the same effects upon a lantern screen, so that the exhibition can be appreciated by a number of spectators instead of by the individual. These generally have depended upon the use of two lanterns, while, by some device or other, the pictures superposed upon the screen are combined upon the retina of the eye. As an easily understood example of how this can be brought about, we may refer to one method by which a green and a red image are thrown together upon the screen, and viewed through a pair of spectacles having a red and green glass. Mr J. H. Knight, of Barfield, Farnham, Surrey, has lately exhibited at the Camera Club (London) a very effective method of stereoscopic projection, which employs one lantern only, and which, by the help of a very simple and cheap piece of apparatus, brings a very beautiful application of photography within the reach of the painstaking amateur. The two images are thrown side by side upon the screen, and combined on the retina by the use of an adjustable mirror held in the hand.

BURGLAR ALARMS.

In the report of a recent burglary on the outskirts of London, in which the thieves carried off several hundred pounds' worth of jewellery from a shop without arousing the manager, who slept on the premises, it was stated that after the robbers had opened and closed the outer sliding-door of steel, their first task was the delicate one of removing all the burglar alarms from the premises. This done, they had no difficulty in selecting and getting clear away with their

valuable booty. We do not know the nature of these alarms, which offered such facilities to those against whom they were designed to act; but they must have been of very primitive construction, if not actually faulty in design. A novel form of burglar alarm has recently been patented by Mr A. D. Risley, of Richfield Spa, New York, which seems to promise efficiency, without being in the least obtrusive. It takes the form of an elastic matting, which can be placed beneath carpet or door-mat without attracting any more notice than the thick felt or paper which is usually placed in such situations. Its construction is such that pressure in any part will bring metallic connections into contact, and a bell will thereupon ring at any predetermined spot. It is certain that pieces of this matting placed beneath the carpet near windows and doors likely to be opened by burglars would most effectually warn a householder that such unwelcome guests were paying him a visit.

GOOD COFFEE.

It is the exception and not the rule in this country to meet with a really good cup of coffee, even at the best hotels; and so much is this the case that would-be coffee-drinkers order tea in preference to the turbid mixture which is offered to them as 'Mocha.' It is difficult to ascertain where the failure of British coffee-makers occurs, and whether it is in the article itself or in its cooking. The French, who are famed for delicious coffee, boil it, and use a large quantity of milk in the process. A new invention, of American origin, is known as Humphrey's Percolator Package for making coffee; and possibly this contrivance may bring better success to those who wish to obtain a palatable breakfast beverage. The percolator consists of a muslin oblong bag, weighted at the end. It is filled with freshly-roasted and freshly-ground coffee, and put into a vessel of water, which is allowed to boil. The bag assumes different positions owing to the movement of the water, and a decoction of coffee which is quite free from grounds is the result. The contrivance is so simple that it can readily be made by any one with the aid of a needle and thread.

GAS EXPLOSIONS.

Explosions of gas in private houses are, unfortunately, very common occurrences, and could nearly always be avoided by the exercise of a little care. It is only occasionally that we hear of an escape of gas being due to some ignorant person blowing out the flame instead of turning off the gas at the tap; for, except in a few remote places, gas and its ways are familiar to all. It is this familiarity which breeds the proverbial carelessness and callousness which prompts people to seek an escape of gas with a light. In nine cases out of ten the escape is due to the telescopic fitting of a gas-alier becoming

dry. This is obviated by the addition to the water with which the fitting is charged of a few drops of sweet oil or paraffin, which forms a layer on the surface and stops evaporation. If this precaution were commonly adopted the number of gas explosions would be sensibly decreased.

RATTLESNAKES' FANGS.

A photograph was recently published in the *Scientific American* which showed, in a very interesting manner, a case of abnormal development of a rattlesnake's fangs. In all rattlesnakes there are, besides the poison-fangs, rudimentary ones which, if the old fangs are lost, develop and supply their place; but in the specimen under consideration the development of the second pair of fangs has proceeded while the other fangs are still *in situ*, and the curious spectacle is afforded of four powerful fangs projecting from the upper jaw. The old fallacy that a poisonous serpent kills its victim by the employment of a *sting* is at once refuted by a photographic illustration such as this, which shows that the reptile must actually get a biting-hold upon its foe before its terrible powers can be fully exercised.

IMPROVED PHOSPHORUS MATCHES.

The recent outcry for a form of lucifer-match the manufacture of which shall be innocuous to the workers has led to the introduction of a new coating composition, which is now, after a period of satisfactory trial, being used exclusively in France. The principal substance used is a combination of amorphous or red phosphorus with sulphur—the sesquisulphide of phosphorus, as it is called—which has all the good qualities without the baneful ones of the ordinary white phosphorus. It emits no vapours and can hardly be regarded as a poison, for a dose which would contain enough phosphorus to coat thousands of match-heads has no perceptible action upon an adult human being. The new product is mixed with chlorate of potash, powdered glass, &c., in order to give it the necessary inflammable and percussive qualities. A match made by the new French formula will strike on any surface, and one of its chief recommendations is that the process of manufacture is in no sensible degree altered from that of former days.

SHIPBUILDING EXTRAORDINARY.

A wonderful piece of work has recently been brought to a successful issue at the ship-building yard of Messrs Swan & Hunter at Wallsend, on the Tyne. To trace the history of the matter it is necessary to go back to the autumn of last year, when the *Mihwauckee*, a steamer built by this firm, ran on a reef of submerged rocks on the coast of Aberdeen. Divers reported that a huge mass of rock had cut through the main hold of the vessel, but that the after-part of the ship, including the engine-room, remained undamaged. To save the steamer as a whole was impossible, and

the hitherto unattempted task of cutting her in half by means of separate charges of dynamite was conceived and acted upon. In the sequel, the forward section of the steamer was left impaled upon the rocks, the stern part—separated from it and floated into deep water—subsequently being towed to the builders' yard on the Tyne. Here the vessel was fitted with a new stem, and has been launched to recommence her career as a first-class ocean-going passenger steamer.

MOTOR-CARRIAGE COMPETITION.

All interested in motor vehicles should note that at the end of July there is to be a competition which will last from the 31st of that month until the 2d of August. Four classes of vehicles are eligible to compete; but they must run by their own mechanical power, the nature of that power being optional. The minimum loads are stated at two, three and a half, five, and six tons. All details as to other conditions may be obtained by application to Mr E. S. Smith, hon. secretary to the Self-propelled Traffic Association, Royal Institution, Liverpool.

PROTECTION AGAINST FIRE.

The recent burning of an hotel in New York, with awful sacrifice of life, has been the means of calling attention to the inadequacy of the ordinary means of escape available in modern buildings, and has prompted one of the London District Councils to pass a most drastic bye-law, which awaits the approval of the Local Government Board. The new regulation provides that 'every person who shall erect a new building, the stories of which shall be intended for separate occupation, shall cause a staircase constructed of fire-resisting materials to be provided outside such building, for access to every story above the lower story, when such lower story is not constructed below the level of the adjacent ground.' It will thus be seen that the new bye-law is especially intended for the protection of persons living in 'flats;' and in many districts flats are being built in preference to houses of the old suburban villa type. It will be extremely difficult to find a suitable material for these outside stairways; for, although iron appears to be the only available material, it is not fireproof, in that it gets red-hot, when it is worse than useless. The new bye-law, should it pass, will therefore afford much scope to the ingenuity of inventors.

AN OLD CANNON.

The *Sketch* publishes the photograph of a piece of ordnance which was found in the bed of the river Thames at Twickenham. Its age is computed at four hundred years. It consists of an iron tube with thick bands of the same metal welded on to it at intervals of a few inches, and has a total length of twenty-eight inches. This primitive form of cannon is without trunnions,

and it rested in a rough wooden block which served as its carriage. It is obvious that the powder used must have been of a very squib-like kind, or the recoil would have brought more injury to friends than the projectile would to foes. The contrast it affords to the modern triumphs of mechanism which now do such deadly work in warfare is extraordinary. A recent advance in field artillery equipment affords us a ready illustration.

A MOTOR-DRAWN MAXIM.

During the Easter manoeuvres at Aldershot the South London Volunteer Brigade was distinguished by possessing a Maxim-gun drawn by means of a motor tricycle. The tricycle was fitted with a one-and-a-quarter horse-power motor, and was powerful enough to draw the gun up hill and down dale over some very rough ground; moreover, it went at a speed which gave the military cyclists in attendance plenty of work to keep pace with it. Recent events have shown us that victory goes with the machine-guns; and it would hardly be possible to imagine a more valuable form of weapon than one of these guns which can be moved rapidly from point to point by an attached locomotive. It remains to be seen whether the War Office will take the hint from the Volunteers, or will leave Continental armies to do so.

GOLDEN SILENCE.

UNDER the beeches we sat at rest,
In the waning summer day.
Hers was the voice that I loved the best;
Yet I found no words to say.
'Speak on, dear lips!' at length I cried,
'For your speech it is silver sweet.'
In the still blue air my pleading died,
And the brook sang low at our feet.
'Ah! like the river,
Murmur for ever!
Thy speech is so silver sweet.'

Then my words came fast. Oh, heart of mine!
Does thy stillness say, 'I love'?
The brook sang under the eglantine,
And the thrush sang high above;
But silence beneath the spreading beech!
While our hearts the moments told.
Then I laughed, 'My love hath silvern speech;
But her silence is all of gold.
Silence, love-laden—
Ah! sweetest maiden!
Such silence is all of gold.'

MARY E. PEPPIN.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the *writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL*.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE TAPU OF BANDERAH:

A TALE OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

By LOUIS BECKE and WALTER JEFFERY, Authors of *A First Fleet Family*, &c.

CHAPTER I.—THE 'ISLAND MAID.'

THE broad red streaks of the rising sun had just begun to pierce the misty, tropic haze of early dawn as a small white-painted schooner, of about one hundred tons burden, bore down from the eastward upon the densely wooded shores of Mayou Island, which lies in placid seas between the coast of south-west New Guinea and the murderous and fever-stricken Solomon Islands.

The white population of Mayou was not large, for it consisted only of an English missionary and his wife (who was, of course, a white woman); a German trader named Peter Schwartzkoff (whose wife was a Samoan woman); an English trader named Charlie Blount, with his two half-caste sons and three daughters; and an American trader and ex-boat-steerer of a whale-ship, named Nathaniel Burrowes, with his wives.

Although the island is of large extent and of exceeding fertility, the native population was, at the time of this story, comparatively small, numbering scarcely two thousand souls. The principal village was situated at the south-west end of the island, the rendezvous of the few trading-vessels from Australia that occasionally visited the place. Sometimes, however, a surveying vessel attached to the Australian station would call; and at longer intervals still a 'blackbirder,' or labour-recruiting schooner, from Fiji or the Navigators' Islands, would drop anchor off the village. At such times the monotony of the lives of the white residents of Mayou was pleasantly broken, for in the South Sea Islands generous hospitality to strangers is a ruling trait in the character of the isolated white men who have cast their lines in those lonely parts of the world. Once a year, too, a missionary vessel would drop anchor in the little reef-bound port nestling within a fringe of waving coco-palms

and sandy beach; but her visit was of moment only to the Rev. Mr Deighton, his wife, and their few native converts. The ship's presence in the harbour was scarcely noticed by the other white men, much to the sorrow of the good-hearted missionary. But by the average trader in the South Seas, from Pitcairn Island to the Carolines, a missionary ship is not regarded as a welcome visitor. He considers, rightly or wrongly, that his business suffers considerably by an institution known as the *Mé* (the May offering of the Christianised natives to the mission funds), by which some portion of the natives' produce in copra, pearl-shell, and ivory-nuts goes into the hold of the mission-ship, instead of sometimes into the traders' storehouses in liquidation of debts contracted long months beforehand.

Almost with the rising of the sun, the schooner had been sighted by a party of natives who were fishing off the south end of the island, and in a few minutes their loud cry reached other natives on shore, and by them was called from house to house along the beach, till it reached the thickly clustering dwellings of the town itself. And presently from a thousand throats came a deep, sonorous shout, '*Evaka! Evaka!*' ('A ship! a ship!'); and then the brown-skinned people swarmed out of their thatched dwellings like bees from their hive, and ran, laughing and shouting together, down to the beach in front of the village.

As the clamour increased, the Rev. Henry Deighton opened the door of his study and stepped out upon the shady veranda of the mission-house, which stood upon a gentle, palm-covered rise, about five hundred yards from the thickly clustering houses of the native village. He was a tall, thin man, with deep, earnest eyes, and his face wore a wearied, anxious expression, very different from the calm, dignified air so

generally seen on the features of clerical gentlemen in other places besides the South Sea Islands. His long, lean body, coarse, toil-worn hands, and shabby clothing indicated, too, that the lines of the Rev. Henry had not been cast in a pleasant place when he chose the wild, malarial island of Mayou as the field of his labours. But if he showed bodily traces of the hard, continuous toil of mind and body he had undergone during his seven years' residence among the savage denizens of Mayou, his eyes were still bright with the fire of that missionary spirit which animated the souls of such men as Moffat and Livingstone, and Patteson of Santa Cruz. For Henry Deighton believed in his work, and that he had been 'called' by the Almighty to that work; and so did his wife, a pretty, faded little woman of thirty, with a great yearning to save souls, and a greater yearning still to see once more a certain little village in Sussex, which for ever appeared in her dreams, and made her pillow wet of nights with home-hungering tears.

Standing on the veranda, the missionary shaded his eyes from the glare of the sun with his bronze-hued hands, and looked seaward at the advancing vessel. His wife followed him, and placed her hand on his shoulder.

'What ship is it, Harry? Surely it cannot be the *Glad Tidings*. She is not due till December.'

'No, Alice,' he answered, 'it certainly is not the *Glad Tidings*; and yet not a trading-vessel, I should think. She looks more like a yacht. Perhaps she may be a new man-of-war schooner from Sydney. However, we shall soon know. Put on your hat, my dear, and let us go down to the beach. Already Blount, Schwartzkoff, and Burrowes have gone, and it certainly would not do for me to remain in the background when the new-comers land.'

With her pale face flushing with gentle excitement at the prospect of meeting Europeans, Mrs Deighton retired to her room, and soon rejoined her husband, who, white umbrella in hand, awaited her at the gate.

The three traders were sitting on an upturned canoe on the beach when the missionary and his wife approached. Blount at once rose and shook hands with them; the American and German gave them a brief 'Good-morning.'

'Have you any idea of what vessel this is, Mr Blount?' asked the Rev. Henry. 'She certainly is a stranger.'

'None at all,' answered Blount; 'we were just wondering ourselves who she is. Doesn't look like a trader; she's more like a gunboat.'

Meantime the schooner had worked her way in through the passage between the reef, and, surrounded by a fleet of canoes, soon brought up and anchored. Her sails were very quickly handled; then, almost as soon as she swung to

her anchor, a smart white-painted boat was lowered from the starboard quarter, and the people on shore saw the crew haul her up to the gangway ladder.

Presently a white man, who by his dress was an officer of the ship, followed by another person in a light tweed suit and straw hat, entered the boat, which then shoved off, and was headed for the shore. As she approached nearer, the traders and the missionary could see that the crew were light-skinned natives of Eastern Polynesia; they were dressed in blue dungaree jumpers, white duck pants, and straw hats. The officer—who steered with a steer-oar—wore a 'brass-bound' cap and brass-buttoned jacket, and every now and then turned to speak to the man in the tweed suit, who leaned back in the stern-sheets, smoking a cigar.

'She's a yacht, I believe,' said Blount, who had been keenly watching the approaching boat; and then, turning to Mrs Deighton, he said, with a laugh, 'I'm off, Mrs Deighton. I don't want to be bothered with people of this sort. I know them too well—had a lot of experience of them when I was trading for Godeffroy's in Samoa and Tahiti—glorified drapers or Australian cow-merchants (otherwise called squatters) from Sydney, who ask, "Have you—ah—got good shooting heah?" and wear coats with many pockets;' and turning on his heel, he raised his hat to Mrs Deighton, nodded to the other white men, and sauntered along the beach towards his house.

'I guess Blount's kinder set agin meetin' people like these,' said Burrowes, nodding in the direction of the boat, and addressing himself to Mr and Mrs Deighton; 'reckons they might be some all-powerful British swells he clawed off the same plug with when he was one himself. Guess sich mighty people don't skeer me much—not a cent's worth.'

'Id vas brober dad he should veel so,' remarked the German. 'If some German shentlemans vas to come here und zee me dressed like zom dirty zailor mans, den I, too, would get me home to mein house.'

'My friends,' said Mr Deighton, speaking reproachfully, yet secretly pleased at Blount's departure, 'no man need feel ashamed at meeting his countrymen on account of his poverty of attire. I am sure that the sight of an English gentleman is a very welcome one to Mrs Deighton and myself, and that we need be under no fear of having our clothing criticised by one.'

'Wal,' said Burrowes, with easy but not offensive familiarity, 'I guess, parson, thet you and Mrs Deighton had better form yourselves inter a committee of welcome, and interdooce me and Dutchy here to these British dukes or whatever they air. I reckon I ain't much in the speechifyin' line myself, neither is Dutchy'—nodding

at his stolid-faced companion—'and you can sling in somethin' ornymental 'bout me bein' the representative of the United States—a gentleman a-recrootin' of his health in the South Sea Islands.'

By this time the boat was close to, and in another minute her bows ploughed into the white beach, and the straw-hatted, tweed-suited gentleman in the stern jumped lightly out. Taking off his hat with a graceful circular sweep, which included every one in the little group before him, he said with languid politeness:

'Good-day, madam and gentlemen. I scarcely hoped to have had the pleasure of meeting Europeans in this place, and certainly never imagined that that pleasure would be enhanced by the presence of a lady, whom, I doubt not, is a countrywoman;' and he bowed again to Mrs Deighton, who stood a little apart from the others.

'I am pleased to meet you, sir,' said the missionary, shaking hands with the new-comer. 'You are welcome, sir; very welcome to Mayou, and to anything that it lies in our power to furnish you with for your schooner—or, I should say, yacht, for such, by her handsome appearance, I presume she is.'

The visitor, who was a handsome, fair-haired man, with a blonde moustache and blue eyes, bowed and smiled his thanks, and then said sweetly, 'May I introduce myself? My name is De Vere.'

'And I am the Rev. Henry Deighton, missionary-in-charge of Mayou; and this is Mrs Deighton. My two'—he hesitated a little at 'friends,' and slurred it over softly—'my two friends here are Mr Peter Schwartzkoff and Mr Nathaniel Burrowes.'

'Delighted to meet you, gentlemen,' said Mr De Vere, first bowing to the lady, and then extending a white, shapely hand to the men. 'I shall be very glad indeed, Mr Deighton, to avail myself of your kind offer. We are in want of water, and anything in the way of vegetables and poultry that we can get. We met with very bad weather coming through the southern portion of the Solomon Group, and the little live-stock we had was washed overboard; in fact, we shall have to repair damages to our bulwarks here.'

'Might I inquire, mister,' asked Burrowes, 'if your vessel is a trader, or jist a pleasure-schooner, as the parson here says?'

'Mr Deighton is quite correct,' said Mr De Vere, with another graceful bow; 'the *Island Maid* is a yacht. I can quite understand your not being able to make her out at first. She was originally built for the navy as a surveying vessel, but was sold in Sydney after a few years' service. I bought her, and had her altered into a yacht, to cruise among these delightful islands. My friend, the Honourable Mr Morecombe-Lycett, accompanies me. Our English yachting experience had much to do with our determination to make our present cruise. In fact'—and here Mr De Vere showed his white, even teeth in a smile, and stroked his drooping, blonde moustache—'we left England with the intention of chartering a vessel in Sydney to visit the South Seas. Mr Morecombe-Lycett is, however, very unwell to-day, and so did not come on shore; but here am I, and I am very happy indeed to make your acquaintance.' Then, turning towards the boat, and addressing the officer who still kept his seat, he said, 'Come ashore for me at noon, Captain Sykes.'

BACTERIA IN HARNESS.

By J. B. C. KERSHAW.



AS a result of the investigations made during the last fifteen years relating to the connection between bacteria and specific diseases, and of the numerous discoveries in this new field of human knowledge, the majority of people to-day have entirely lost sight of the fact that there are useful micro-organisms in the world, and they are firm in their belief that all bacteria are harmful and exist solely to create and propagate disease.

There would undoubtedly be great relief in many minds if it could be announced on good authority that the conditions which favour the existence and reproduction of these minute organisms had ceased to be present on this earth, or that germ-life had suffered extermination by a natural process. The

life of many of the human race has become a burden to them since they heard of the close connection that exists between bacteria and disease. They realise in a most vivid manner that the food they eat, the water they drink, and even the very air they breathe are rarely free from these 'pestilential microbes.' Life as these nervous ones see it is a long-drawn-out conflict between the human unit and countless myriads of invisible but deadly enemies. The attack is delivered at every movement and at every step of the man's path through life; and the end is foregone—the microbes invariably win, though their triumph may be long delayed. The writer knows of a distinguished scientist who is so overpowered by the thought of the constant danger to which he is exposed that his life is passed in a

state of nervous dread of infectious disease; and the calmness and serenity of mind which are generally characteristic of the true philosopher are entirely lost.

It is not the writer's purpose in this article to discuss the connection between these minute organisms and specific diseases; but it may be stated that the views to which expression has been given above are not supported by facts. There are undoubtedly immense numbers of these forms of bacteria which cause disease in existence in the world to-day; but types and forms which are perfectly harmless to human life are present in far greater numbers, and these are performing work which is absolutely essential for the continuance of the human race. The average man's danger from infectious disease is not greater, but less, than it was fifty years ago; for, now that the true cause of infection is known, it is possible to take a rational course in guarding against it. The real safeguard is to keep one's mind and body in a good condition of health. The tissues of the body when perfectly healthy are able to kill the disease germs that may find their way into it; and it is asserted by some biologists that the white corpuscles of the blood are the agents which perform this service for man. Safety, then, is to be found, not in fussy and abortive attempts to exterminate all the bacteria in the water we drink or the air we breathe, but in a state of physical health which will resist the attacks of the comparatively small numbers of disease bacteria which we may meet in our daily life.

Turning now to a consideration of that much larger number of micro-organisms which perform useful service in the world, it is the writer's intention in the present article to give some account of the operations of these, and of the manner in which man has called them to his aid in certain of the industries which he carries on, and in dealing with one of the problems of modern life. Man has, in fact, learned how to control these microscopic germs, and he has harnessed them, with the great forces of Nature, to the car of his social and industrial progress.

The scientific name for the minute forms of life which are popularly known as bacteria, microbes, or germs is *Schizomycetes*. These organisms occupy in the biological classification of living forms the border-line between vegetable and animal life; and biologically considered they are minute vegetable organisms allied to the algae but devoid of chlorophyll. They are found everywhere when the necessary conditions for their life exist. These conditions are heat, moisture, and organic matter. We thus see that the desire of some people to live in a world where no micro-organisms are to be found could only be realised by migration to the arctic regions or to the moon. Little was known of bacteria until the latter half of the present century, because the microscopes in use were not sufficiently powerful to distinguish

one form from another. When we find that they vary in length from $\frac{1}{1000}$ to $\frac{1}{2000}$ of an inch, this fact is not very surprising. According to Pearmain and Moor, when seen under the highest microscopic power, they are little larger than dots of ink on paper; while a man of average height seen under the same magnification would be higher than Mont Blanc. They multiply by fission so rapidly under favourable conditions that, according to Cohn, one bacteria in twenty-four hours becomes the primary parent of sixteen and a half millions. Luckily for man, this rapidity of reproduction is checked under normal conditions by failure of the food-supply. That man has learned not only to recognise different varieties of these minute organisms, but to control and regulate their operations, is certainly not the least of his achievements during the present century.

BACTERIA THE CHIEF AGENTS IN THE MANUFACTURE OF ALCOHOL.

Sugar when subjected to the action of a minute organism known biologically as *Saccharomyces cerevisiæ* (its more humble name is yeast) splits up into alcohol and carbonic acid gas. This change can only occur within certain limits of temperature—a fact well known to those housewives who still make their own bread. *Saccharomyces cerevisiæ*, like many of his human brethren, is lazy and lethargic in the cold; and it is only when comfortably warm that his peculiar activities become manifest. The use of this organism for producing carbonic acid in dough, and thereby causing the bread to 'rise,' is, however, a comparatively unimportant branch of his life's work. The greater number of *Saccharomyces cerevisiæ* in existence to-day are to be found in breweries, and in the fermenting vats of the wine districts of Europe and Australia. In these two wine-growing industries countless millions of these micro-organisms are engaged converting malt and grape-sugar into alcohol; and the manufacture of beer and of wines would undergo a revolutionary change if, from any cause, *Saccharomyces cerevisiæ* were no longer available for this purpose.

BACTERIA THE CHIEF AGENTS IN THE MANUFACTURE OF VINEGAR.

Vinegar is obtained by the oxidation of alcohol. If the alcohol has been obtained by fermentation of malt-sugar, the product is known as malt-vinegar. When grape-sugar is used we obtain wine-vinegar. This oxidation, or substitution of one atom of oxygen for two atoms of hydrogen in the molecule of alcohol, can be carried out chemically in many ways in the laboratory. On a manufacturing scale, however, such methods would be very costly; and bacteria again come to man's aid, and provide him with a certain and simple means for effecting

the desired change. The organism used for this purpose is known as *Mycoderma aceti*. The manufacture of vinegar is most expeditiously carried on in large vessels filled with deal shavings, and kept at a temperature of thirty-six degrees to forty degrees centigrade. These shavings become in course of time covered with colonies of *Mycoderma aceti*, and the alcohol which is passed over the shavings is, by the agency of these micro-organisms, converted into acetic acid or vinegar. Only malt-vinegar is made in this country.

BACTERIA AS THE SCAVENGERS OF THE EARTH.

We now come to the most important and most useful forms of the bacteria with which the earth is crowded. These micro-organisms are the minute scavengers of creation. They are continually at work, wherever dead organic matter is to be found, breaking up the complex chemical compounds which it contains, and restoring to Dame Nature the raw material of her manufactory. The forms of bacteria which we have hitherto been discussing are only partial in their work; they carry oxidation up to a certain point, and leave an organic molecule of still fairly complex structure. Those which we are now considering are more thorough in their activity; and they convert the nitrogen, carbon, and hydrogen of the most complex organic compounds into nitrates, carbonic acid, and water. Bury any organic substance in the ground; in a few days or weeks it will be resolved into its elements by the activity of these minute germs. Even rags similarly buried will completely disappear. The micro-organisms which produce these changes are broadly classed as *aërobic* and *anaërobic* germs. The former require light and oxygen for the exercise of their activities, and are found in great numbers in the upper layers of the soil. The latter work chiefly in the absence of these conditions, and are therefore found deeper down where neither light nor air can penetrate. It is these two classes of micro-organisms that render life possible on this earth to-day.

Vegetable forms of life have been engaged for many thousands of years in building up complex bodies which are known as cellulose and protoplasm from the inorganic materials presented to them in the air and soil. The animal world in its turn feeds on this vegetable matter, and converts the protoplasm and other compounds which it finds in the plant into flesh, bone, and muscle. Had there been no counter-process at work in the world, all the oxygen, nitrogen, and carbon would have been long ago locked up in animal or vegetable forms, and life would have become extinct because these necessary elements of physical life were missing. The great work of breaking up the complex organic compounds that form the physical frame of vegetable and animal

life has been entrusted to those minute organisms which we are now discussing; and it is to them that we owe it that, after life has existed upon this earth for many thousands of years, and after millions upon millions of living forms have occupied its surface, there is still practically a virgin earth at Nature's command, and, instead of a perfect charnel-house of dead remains, we find a world as fresh and sweet as it was thousands of years ago.

But, while man has known for many years that these *aërobic* and *anaërobic* germs were Nature's scavengers, he has not known how to call them to his assistance in dealing with certain forms of organic matter; and it is only within the last five years that practical steps have been taken to utilise these micro-organisms for the solution of the greatest problem of the present day. The disposal and treatment of the drainage and refuse of our great cities and towns has engaged the attention of sanitary engineers for years. Probably no subject has called forth such a fruitless expenditure of energy and money. After fifty years of effort, not one of the methods of treatment tried up to the year 1890 has proved absolutely successful. The idea that bacteria might be called to man's aid in dealing with this problem first found expression in certain reports made by Dr Sorby, Professor Dupré, and Mr Dibdin in the years 1884-90. The Massachusetts Board of Health then carried out some experimental trials in the United States; and quite recently applications of this method of treatment upon a practical scale have occurred in this country, and have been surprisingly successful. The *aërobic* or the *anaërobic* types of micro-organism seem equally efficient for the attainment of the desired end—the production of a clear and harmless effluent from the liquid containing both solid and liquid organic matters which flows from the city drains. The method of treatment is simple in the extreme. In the one case a large pit is excavated and covered in. The whole of the drainage of the town is then allowed to flow slowly through it. If the temperature be favourable, *anaërobic* germs multiply in enormous numbers in this pit, and so active do they become that in twenty-four hours all the solid organic matters have undergone liquefaction, nitrogen compounds have been converted into nitrates, and a clear and innocuous effluent can be obtained by merely filtering the overflow from this pit through an ordinary filter-bed. Exeter, Sutton, and other places are already using these 'septic tanks' with most satisfactory results.

The activity of the *aërobic* germs is utilised by forming a suitable *habitat* for them in filter-beds made with large-sized pieces of coke. The drainage is passed through these intermittently, since it is found that it is necessary to allow air to enter all the interstices of the bed

periodically, in order to maintain the bacteria which are present at their highest level of efficiency. A recently patented form of bacterial filter-bed may, however, be worked continuously. As in the case of the septic tank, these filter-beds only yield their best results when kept within fairly narrow limits of temperature. Bacterial filters have been tried at Radley, Epsom, Claybury, Accrington, and Leeds during the last two years, and in every case success has attended their use.

Micro-organisms are thus about to become man's efficient servants for the solution of one of the greatest problems of modern civilised life. It may be pointed out that this newest method of treatment is the direct opposite of that which has been hitherto used. The sanitary engineer's efforts in the past were directed towards preventing bacterial decomposition of town drainage; they are now to be directed towards expediting it. Under the old methods of treatment it was customary to add chemicals with the very aim of killing or rendering inoperative the micro-organisms which were known to be present. Under the

new system, the aim is to supply the conditions (heat, &c.) favourable to the rapid increase of the micro-organisms, and to the highest efficiency of their destructive activities. By the older method of treatment, the ultimate decomposition of the organic matter was postponed but not avoided; and somewhere, in the estuaries of rivers or farther out at sea, it was occurring with the usual unpleasant accompaniment. By the new method, the work of decomposition will be carried to completion in a few hours, in localities which man selects as the most suitable; and so rapidly and efficiently will the work be performed that its objectionable characteristics will be entirely eliminated.

As already stated, many towns have already initiated this new method of treatment, with most successful results; and the writer has little doubt that in the coming century these colonies of bacteria working in the service of man, and completely under his control, will be as common a feature of city life as the town fire-brigade and the city police force of the present day.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

By GUY BOOTHBY.

CHAPTER XXVII.



HE horror which greeted the announcement that a man-o'-war had made its appearance upon the horizon may be better imagined than described.

'By heaven, we have been trapped!' cried MacAndrew as he ran out of the smoking-room in Browne's wake, and gazed out to sea.

They formed a small group in front of the door: Browne, MacAndrew, Maas, Jimmy Foote, the captain, and the chief-engineer. Day was scarcely born, yet the small black spot upon the horizon could be plainly descried by every one of the party, and was momentarily growing larger. Without doubt it was a man-o'-war. What was more to the point, she was coming up at a good rate of speed. The position was an eminently serious one, and what those on board the yacht had to decide was what should be done.

'If she's a Russian, we're in no end of a hole,' said MacAndrew; 'and, when you come to think of it, she's scarcely likely to belong to any other nationality.'

'Let us come into the smoking-room and talk it over,' said Browne; and as he spoke he led the way into the room he mentioned. Once inside, they seated themselves, and fell to discussing the situation.

'We'll presume, for the sake of argument, that she is Russian,' said Browne. 'Now what is to be done? Mr M'Cartney,' he added, turning to the chief-engineer, 'what was the cause of the breakdown in your department?'

'A bit of foul play, if I know anything about such things,' replied the other. 'Early this morning, or last night, somebody removed the main crosshead-pin of the high-pressure engine.'

'With what result?' inquired Browne.

'That we're as helpless as a log, sir,' replied the chief-engineer. 'Until it has been replaced it would be useless for us to attempt to get any steam out of her.'

'But surely you have some duplicate pins,' said Browne a little testily. 'Why not put one in, and then let us get ahead again without further loss of time?'

'For the simple reason, sir, that all the duplicates have been taken too,' the old man replied. 'Whoever worked the plot must have the run of the ship at his fingers'-ends. I only wish I could lay my hands upon him, that's all. I'd make him smart, or my name's not M'Cartney.'

'Surely such an important point can easily be ascertained,' said Maas. 'Will you leave it to me to make inquiries?'

'Oh, don't you trouble,' said Browne. 'I

shall sift the matter myself later on.' As he said this he noticed that Jimmy Foote had not entered the smoking-room with them. In an idle sort of a way he wondered at his absence.

'How long will it take you to repair the damage, do you think?' Browne inquired of the chief-engineer.

'Well, sir, it all depends upon circumstances,' said that officer. 'If we find the duplicate pins we can do it in less than an hour; if we cannot, it may take us twelve hours, and it may take us twenty-four.'

'And how long do you think it will be before that boat comes up?' said Browne, turning to the captain.

'Oh, a good hour at least, sir,' the captain replied. 'She has seen us; and I'm afraid it would be of no use our even thinking of trying to get away from her.'

'But how do you know that she wants us?' Browne inquired. 'Being aware of our own guilt, we naturally presume she knows it too. As Shakespeare says, "Conscience makes cowards of us all." I don't think there can be very much doubt but that she's after us,' said Browne lugubriously. 'Her appearance at such a time is rather too much of a coincidence. Well, Mr McCartney, you'd better get to work as soon as possible. In the meantime, Captain Mason, keep your eye on yonder vessel, and let me know how she progresses. We,' he continued, turning to MacAndrew and Maas, 'must endeavour to find some place in which to hide Monsieur Petrovitch, should the commanding officer take it into his head to send a boat to search the ship.'

The captain and the engineer rose and left the room; and when the door had closed behind them the others sat down to the consideration of the problem which Browne had placed before them. It was knotty in more points than one. If, as Browne had the best of reasons for supposing, the warship was in search of them, they would hunt the yacht from stem to stern, from truck to keelson, before they would be satisfied that the man they wanted was not on board. To allow him to be found would be the most disastrous thing that could possibly happen to all of them. But the question that had to be settled was where he could be hidden with any reasonable chance of safety. They had barely an hour in which to make up their minds on this point and to stow the fugitive away before the man-o'-war's boat would arrive. In vain they ransacked their brains. Every hiding-place they hit upon seemed to have some disadvantage.

'The only place I can think of,' said Maas, who was lolling in a corner smoking a cigarette, 'would be in one of these lockers. He might manage to crouch in it, and they would scarcely think of looking for him there.'

'It would be one of the first they would try,' said MacAndrew scornfully. 'No, Mr Browne; the only spot I can think of is in the tunnel of the tail shaft. We might squeeze him in there, and I could go with him to take care that he makes no noise.'

'The very idea,' Browne replied. 'There's plenty of room, and no one would ever suspect his presence there. If you will take charge of him, and get him down there at once, I will go off and see Miss Petrovitch, and tell her what has happened, and what we intend to do.'

'And is there nothing I can do to help?' Maas inquired, raising himself to a sitting posture.

'Oh yes,' said Browne. 'You can keep your eye on the warship, and warn us when she gets too close to be pleasant. By the way, I must confess I should like to know where Jimmy Foote is. It's not like him to be out of the way when there's trouble in the wind.'

Without waiting for a reply, he ran down the companion-ladder and made his way along the saloon in the direction of Katherine's cabin. On reaching it he rapped upon the panel of the door, and bade Katherine dress as quickly as possible, and come to him in the saloon. The girl must have gathered from his voice that something very serious had occurred, for it was not long before she made her appearance with a scared look upon her face.

'What has happened?' she asked. 'I can see something is the matter. Please tell me everything.'

'Something very unpleasant,' Browne replied. 'In the first place, some evilly-disposed person has tampered with the engines so that we cannot go ahead for the present; but, worse than that, a man-o'-war—presumably a Russian—has come up over the horizon, and is steaming towards us.'

'A Russian man-o'-war?' she cried, with a look of terror in her eyes. 'Do you mean that she has come after us?'

'I cannot speak positively, of course,' said Browne, 'but since she is here, it looks very much like it.'

'Oh Jack, Jack,' she cried excitedly, 'what did I tell you at the beginning? This is all my fault. I told you I should bring trouble and disgrace upon you. Now my words have come true.'

'You have done nothing of the kind,' Browne replied. 'There is treachery aboard, otherwise this would never have happened.'

Afterwards, when he came to think it all over, it struck Browne as a remarkable fact that on this occasion her first thought was not for her father, as was her usual custom, but for himself. What did this mean? Had she been disappointed

in her parent, as he had half-expected she would be? Her quick womanly intuition must have told her what was passing in his mind, for her face suddenly flushed scarlet, and, clenching her hands together, she said slowly and deliberately, as if the question were being wrung from her, and she were repeating something she had no desire to say:

'But if it is a Russian man-o'-war, what will become of my poor father?'

'We are going to hide him,' said Browne. 'MacAndrew has taken him below to a certain place where he will be quite safe. He will remain there while the ship is in sight, and rejoin us when she has disappeared again. Believe me, dear, they shall not get him, whatever they may do.'

There was a little pause, and then Katherine said, as if she were following up the conversation:

'It would be too cruel if he were to be captured, just as he has got away.'

'He shall not be captured; never fear,' said Browne. 'And now, dear, you had better go and tell Madame Bernstein all that has happened. I think you had better both remain in your cabins

for the present. When the Russian officer arrives, if all turns out as I am very much afraid it will, I will ask you to dress and come on deck, for they will ask to be allowed to search your cabins for a certainty.'

'I will go to madame at once,' she answered; 'but I think'—

She was about to say more when a footstep sounded upon the companion-ladder, and a moment later Jimmy Foote, his face surcharged with excitement, looked down upon them.

'For heaven's sake, Browne,' he cried as he held on to the brass hand-rail, 'come up to the smoking-room at once! There is not a moment to lose.'

'What on earth has happened?' Browne inquired as he left Katherine's side and bounded up the ladder.

'Just what I suspected,' said Jimmy. 'I never could have believed such villainy could be possible.'

Having reached the deck, they hastened towards the smoking-room. As he did so Browne glanced out to sea, and noticed that the man-o'-war was now so close that her hull could plainly be distinguished. At most she could not be more than eight or nine miles away.

A PORTUGUESE SEASIDE RESORT.



HE formality and etiquette of the Portuguese Court is as rigid as that of the Spanish—for nine or ten months of the year at least; and the sojourner at Lisbon rarely sees the king and queen except in semi-state. But when the Court moves to the seaside, and takes up its residence in the village of Cascaes, everything is changed, and the royal couple and their children delight in a freedom that is astonishing in its contrast.

Cascaes originally was nothing more than a big fort, built on a small promontory near the mouth of the Tagus, yet far enough to be outside the 'sphere of influence' of its yellow flood, charged with the waste of the City of the Seven Hills. It was only accessible by a rough mule-track along the coast; and, when modern guns demonstrated, even to the sleepy Portuguese, the uselessness of thick stone walls as a means of defence, its isolated position was thought just the thing for a prison; a prison it was made, and it answered its purpose admirably. In course of time a few fishermen built their huts and cottages on the shore of the little bay, not a hundred yards wide, that nestled under the protection of the headland, and beached their boats on the strip of sand that fringed it, and thus formed the nucleus of what is now the most fashionable watering-place in Portugal.

It was Dom Louis, father of the present king,

who, struck by the health of the prisoners and the coolness of their prison in the summer, promptly turned them out, and set to work to modernise the interior of the building. He built himself a long, low, unpretentious kind of bungalow along one side of the great inside square of the fort, turning the warders', officers', and soldiers' quarters into accommodation for his suite and servants. Here, to this humble abode, he delighted to retire during the hot months, and amuse himself as he listed. But the queen, Maria Pia, did not care for it, and Cascaes knew her not.

Of course, fashionable Lisbon was not going to be left out, and very soon every available bit of ground within sight of the fort was built upon; but nobody dreamed of buying up the fishermen, and so their huts and cottages remained; and thus you find the place a jumble of magnificent villas and dirty hovels, plastered about regardless of plan or surroundings, wherever a level spot can be found to build on.

In Portugal, as elsewhere, the enterprising, if impecunious, scion of nobility exists, ready to turn an honest penny if he can; hence it was not long before a certain count formed a little syndicate, and bought a most lovely property about a mile along the coast, which he proceeded to lay out in French fashion, after the style of Nice or Cannes or any of the Riviera resorts. He built châteaux, villas, and magnificent houses,

laid on water and electric light, installed up-to-date baths, hotels, and a casino, not to mention lovely gardens and lawn-tennis courts. He brought the railway from Lisbon, and turned out his property dazzling with pines, mimosa, roses, and eucalyptus; in fact, he made a perfect paradise of it; but, alas! it was not Cascaes; rough, dirty, rocky Cascaes was under the royal eye. Estoril, the new place, though quite close, could not be seen from the fort. Thus the *crème de la crème* would have none of it, but preferred to huddle up anyhow in a royal atmosphere; and the count's venture had to put up with wealthy bankers and tradesmen. But perhaps it was better for the company, as these worthy folks paid their rents, a little transaction often overlooked by their betters. However, Cascaes benefited in so far as the railway was continued past Estoril up to its doors; but there improvements ended. Gas or electric lighting was scorned, water was scarce, and sanitation was unknown.

Although every available house and lodging is snapped up early in the year, the place is empty until the end of July, when the Court comes; then everything is bustle and animation. I am writing now of the present king and queen, Dom Carlos and Donna Amelie, the latter a sister of the Duke of Orleans. Simplicity is the order of the day. Most of the grand carriages and high steppers are left behind, brakes, dog-carts, mules and rope-harness taking their place. Even the servants' liveries—the newest, I should say—are put away, and old weather-beaten ones, the silver lace worn and tarnished, take their place.

At Cascaes everybody who is anybody gets up at five o'clock, and—in flannels of every shade and style, white linen coats and frocks, and such-like easy and airy garments—wanders down to the little sandy bay to bathe. Here the arrangements are very primitive. Little flimsy cotton tents, too small for an average Englishman to stand up or turn about in, are pitched anyhow in a compact mass; they are nearly transparent, and collapse at a puff of wind or an incautious foot treading on a guy-rope. Their discomfort is intense; yet, although several Frenchmen have tried to get a concession to put up bathing-cabins, to be removed in winter, they are always refused, and things go on in the old happy way. However, the gaiety of the bathers is in no way affected by the wretched accommodation. Everybody knows everybody, and the chatter and laughter is incessant. The royalties bathe with everybody else, splashing and skylarking in the water without restraint with their subjects; and all the world seems to enjoy the early dip amazingly.

At Estoril you may see the garments of Trouville and Dieppe; but at Cascaes the old-fashioned long blue serge shapeless garment of our ancestors is *de rigueur*. By seven all is over, the beach

deserted and the tents struck, and the good folk betake themselves home to breakfast, and then, with closed sun-blinds, sleep away the heat of the day. At least this is the prevalent idea; but, should you get a peep behind the jealously-closed green shutters, I fancy you might see many a merry card-party, in light and airy costume, in the cool and shady north rooms, ice-drinks being much in evidence. Your 'Portuguese' is an inveterate gambler, dice being his chosen method. During these playing-hours of sunshine the place is, to all appearance, dead; a stray dog or an English tourist the sole living thing that may venture out.

About five o'clock in the afternoon the human ant-heap wakes, and the one drive, a level stretch of road along the top of the cliffs to the north, extending about a mile, and catching every stray breath from the Atlantic, is crowded. But the morning's simplicity has changed, at least as far as the ladies are concerned. The latest Parisian creations dazzle the eye; even the men, while still sporting flannels and white ducks, have them cut in the latest fashion, and the ties must be seen to be believed. A Portuguese swell devotes his whole attention to his linen and his tie; both are beautiful to behold. But, alas that I have to write it! fine feathers do not in this case make fine birds. The Portuguese are ugly—very. Of all the well-dressed crowd of under-sized, sallow-faced people, the queen stands out a brilliant exception, as she skilfully guides her four-in-hand through the throng, a tall commanding figure, acknowledging her subjects' salutes with dignified sweetness. She is not Portuguese. The king, with a straw hat on his nose, and a most enormous cigar protruding from under it—he has these specially made—drives a pair, with an aide-de-camp beside him; but his brother, Dom Affonso, tears along full pelt, driving four huge black mules in a high brake, with rope harness and many bells and red tassels. He stands up on the box flogging them mercilessly with a short-handled, long-lashed stock-whip, now and again rapping out weird swear-words at those who do not get out of his way fast enough. It is not one of the most edifying sights of Cascaes.

Just before seven o'clock all the carriages are pulled up close to the palace; their occupants get out, and everybody stands about in groups, gossiping and shaking hands, on a long terrace that overhangs the sea and catches the setting sun full. The king talks confidentially to his friends, and everybody who has the right kisses the queen's hand; and at seven all disperse to dress for dinner.

At nine o'clock the military band that plays during the royal dinner comes out into the big yard of the fort and plays there; and then anybody who likes—fishermen, townspeople, tourists, and all—are admitted over the drawbridge and

through the big gates, and crowd and jostle and perspire to their hearts' content, while the royal party looks down and grins at them from the breezy heights of the battlements. This is called *peccé frito*, or 'fried fish,' and it expresses the idea exactly.

The king loves sport of every kind, and may be seen by those who know when and where to look, now and then, unattended, and clad as a simple fisherman, blue jersey and bare-legged, spearing grey mullet, as they swiftly slip past in the clear water, from the rocky ledges that stretch towards Cape Roca. I once met him thus, without any idea of his identity; but this is neither here nor there.

Sometimes the young bloods elect to give an amateur bull-fight, and capital fun it is, without a trace of cruelty. A wooden ring is built—a small edition of a real stone bull-ring; and the show takes place exactly as a real one, with this exception: instead of fierce bulls, young heifers are used, their budding horns well covered at the points with big balls of leather and india-rubber. The gallant amateurs get tossed and knocked down freely, to the huge delight of their friends; but, beyond a few bruises, they are none the

worse, seemingly. The evening before the fight takes place the animals are driven from the farm out in the country where they have been collected, through the village to the pens at the bull-ring. They are hustled through at full speed by the *jeunesse dorée*, mounted on ponies and armed with blunt-ended lances, the king leading. As they tear down the streets women scream, children fall flat, and men laugh and shout, and everybody is happy, for bull-fighting is as dear to the Portuguese as to the Spaniards, although it lacks the ghastly horse and bull killing of the latter. The Portuguese dislike blood and cruelty, and their bull-fights are most interesting exhibitions of skill and agility.

The queen-mother, Maria Pia, lives in a splendid villa between Estoril and Cascaes; but she never joins in these high jinks. She does not approve of such relaxation of Court etiquette, and is never seen except driving in semi-state almost, with four horses, postillions, and outriders, all immaculately got up and correct to the smallest detail. She is universally popular, especially with the humbler classes, and she does much good in an unostentatious way. She is a sister of the King of Italy.

THE FALL OF SEBASTOPOL: THE 8TH OF SEPTEMBER 1855.

A SUBALTERN'S REMINISCENCE.

By Captain I. S. A. HERFORD, Author of *Stirring Times under Canvas*.



THE final attack on the Crimean stronghold had been decided upon, the allies were as ready as they could ever be, and the winter was coming on. So for a month, in preparation for the final blow, a *feu d'enfer*, as the French well expressed it, was kept up, the Russians in Sebastopol losing, it is understood, a thousand men a day. On their part the defenders knew that the attack could not be well delayed, and they could not be very doubtful of the issue, particularly as their strongest position had been seriously imperilled by the French having taken and occupied the Mamelon in front of it.

Originally, in the division of labour, to the French had been assigned the left attack. The English had all the right; but, considering the great extent of this right, with the small amount of English troops available, it had been decided that the French, having a much larger force, should occupy it also, and the English hold the centre, with the Great Redan facing them. Thus the Malakhoff, which was on the proper left of the Russians' position, fell to the French. It had been early recognised that this Malakhoff fort was the key of the position, and the seizers would

then have the glory of deciding the fate of Sebastopol; but our army could not possibly undertake more than it could perform.

It is not necessary to say much about the two armies. Not having had any fighting in Europe for some time, our superior officers were Peninsular veterans. Rather than be put in command of armies afresh, they should have been allowed to rest in their homes and wear their well-earned laurels. The regimental officers were very good, and the men under them were models of endurance and pluck. On the French side, Pélissier, 'The Butcher,' as his countrymen called him, who knew what he wanted, and did not hesitate to do it at whatever cost, commanded. His infantry of the line was not worth much, but the Zouaves were excellent. 'We will go into action together with any of your regiments with the utmost confidence,' they would observe to us; '*mais pour ces poltrons là*'—(pointing to the red-trousered gentry); we will only say that the words used were not complimentary.

My regiment, the 90th, formed part of the light division, and had its left on the Woronzoff road. I had only joined a few days before the end of the siege from the dépôt in Ireland. Thus I all but escaped the fatigues and worries

of trench-work. I had come in for one of the finest artillery duels ever known; the rapidity with which discharge followed discharge, and the crushing noise attendant on them, with the exploding of the shells, formed a very grand effect.

Numbers of accounts have been written anent the Crimean war, but hitherto no detailed description has appeared relative to service in 'the trenches.' Civilians, especially, imagined that, after Alma, Balaklava, and Inkermann, to have served only in the trenches was to have escaped all the fighting, whereas this service had the severest and hardest work during the war. In this the second and light divisions shared alike. I am speaking of the right attack, on which the brunt of the daily fighting fell.

During December 1854 to February 1855 the tour of duty of the guards of the trenches lasted twelve hours, and that of the pickets twenty-four, to say nothing of trudging between the camp and the trenches, often in the dark, in the earlier part of the winter, with the discomfort of rain above and mud beneath, to be followed later by snow and frost—occupying not infrequently two hours in the loathsome transit. The men who came off duty rarely had more than twelve hours' rest before they were again on duty and in the trenches, a service so wearing that numbers, if they did not actually succumb as they were returning to camp, were found dead in their tents, or sank lifeless when parading for further duty.

In the spring of 1855 the hours of duty in the trenches came up to twenty-four at a time, the tour of duty coming round every third day. Reinforcements having arrived from England, the trench-works were extended, and became more so daily, resulting in an increasingly large number of casualties, which, towards the end of the siege, rose to some eighty in number. Indeed, in June and up to 8th September parts of the trenches were veritable slaughter-yards.

The work of our men in the trenches involved four actions during the siege—repulse of attacks on our rifle-pits and trenches in March 1855; our capture of the Quarries on the 7th of June, the attack on the Redan on the 18th of June and again on the 8th of September. Of officers killed and wounded in these four operations there were eighteen, sixty, ninety, and one hundred and forty-seven respectively; while of the rank and file there were upwards of four thousand, taking them together, exclusive of daily siege casualties.

The daily guards of the trenches of the second and light divisions (right attack), after parading at dusk, marched down to the middle ravine which separated our twenty-one gun battery from the first parallel of the trenches occupied by the French, where regularly we would find long and deep open graves ready to be filled up, as they invariably were, with the bodies of those of our allies killed in the ensuing twenty-four hours.

These, and the numerous mounds on the side of the ravine, were regarded with gruesome interest by our troops going to and coming from the trenches, suggestive as they were of what might be their fate in a very short time.

Often during the siege, when, from information received through our spies, a general attack was expected, the guards of trenches were ordered to stand fast—that is, serve forty-eight hours instead of twenty-four. So it was also on the 7th of September, when our attack was being prepared, and in consequence the Russians might venture to be beforehand with us.

'You were certainly very lucky to have known so little of the days before the fall,' observed an old brother-officer to me the other day. He had been twice wounded as one of the stormers of the Redan. 'I can never forget the horrors of the trench-work and scenes. Like others, I had often pools of blood round me, limbs scattered about, &c.; and renewing the experience, too, every third day. One day, the 8th of June, in the Quarries, my servant Farrel, as he was taking my breakfast, which he had brought from camp, out of his haversack, was struck in the mouth with a bullet, which went down his throat and inside him. He fell down on me, deluging me with blood, and expired. I did not eat any breakfast on that day.'

Camp life at night could hardly be described as halcyon; during the last three months of the siege hardly any rest was attainable, for nearly every night, on hearing a continued rattle of musketry for more than a certain time—occasional volleys or gun-firing were not paid attention to—the alarm and 'assembly' would be sounded. This happened usually between midnight and 2 A.M., and we remained under arms until daylight. Those who came off duty at 8 P.M. had but a short night, for it was impossible to sleep in the daytime owing to the myriads of flies infesting the camp.

The evening of the 7th of September came. It was getting dark, when all the officers of the regiment were summoned to the mess-hut. By the light of a lantern the senior officer read a Division Order just issued. In it we were told that the labours of many months were to bear fruit; that it was only a question of hours; that the city was now ready for a final assault, which would be made the next day. The Left Brigade of the Light Division were to have the high honour of storming the Great Redan, while the French would attack the Malakhoff at the same time. The 90th and 97th were to furnish 'ladder,' 'storming,' and 'working' parties. Of the twenty officers present, the greater part were given by name to the storming and ladder parties in nearly equal proportions. The ladder party were to pick up the ladders, which they would find ready in the advanced trench, in order to carry them across the open space—a

little more than two hundred yards—then lower them down in the ditch, and then raise them on the other side of it, so as to allow the stormers to mount up and pass into the work, our artillery having battered down something of the salient angle. I breathlessly waited for my name to be called out. The ladder party and the stormers were now complete; there remained the working party. To it Captain Perryn was assigned in command, with Lieutenant Rous under him; then I was added.

I made some remark of disappointment. 'Oh ho! you are not satisfied?' called out some one to me. 'You would like one of the other parties? Have no fear, you will have your bellyful of shot and shell, youngster—more than the others perhaps, for the enemy will be fools if they do not try to stop your work sharp.' It may not be generally known that the working party is intended, when a position is seized, to throw up entrenchments, so as to hold it and keep the enemy out.

We then left the hut. My own captain (Preston) said, 'So we are not to be together after all; but I will see that you are all right;' for my baggage had not yet come up from Balaklava. 'Your tent is next to mine, and you will feed with me. Perhaps you will give me a few minutes to myself now.' He sent for a cousin of his, handed him his keys, and gave him minute directions in case of certain eventualities. All the evening he was most kind, but very grave and thoughtful; and I have no doubt that he did not expect to survive the morrow.

In the early morning all the men had been distributed. I do not remember the numbers; there was not one company which could show anything like half its usual strength. The hospital had been weeded, and only one officer was left behind to take charge of the camp, he being too sick for work. A good supper was to await our return, and we marched off laden with ammunition and water.

The ball had commenced. Our batteries were busy keeping down the fire of the enemy, who naturally did not view with equanimity the streams of troops descending to the trenches. Our progress was very slow, the route being designedly tortuous. Passing behind and around the front of the Sailors' Battery, a gun was fired just over my head. I was enveloped by the smoke, and reeled from the concussion, but I was able to get on. This explosion gave me something to remember Sebastopol by; for, two years afterwards, on having become deaf with the right ear, I consulted a surgeon. On poking about the ear he found something black. 'Hallo! why, this is gunpowder!' But I never recovered my hearing, even when my ear was cleared.

After many turns and twists my party arrived at the place where we had to await events, the

trench there having been widened. Here we had to huddle together. The noise was terrific. I looked around—'vit-vit-vit,' 'p-i-n-g,' sang the bullets; 'sh' came the grape; crash and smash went the shells, with the 'r-r-r-r' of their pieces flying about. My curiosity had to be moderated; unseen foes were striking down my companions.

All eyes were turned towards the French on our right. They were attacking the Malakhoff from the Mamelon—a mound which the Russians ought never to have allowed an enemy to seize and make use of. The Malakhoff was an enclosed work, and if taken, it could thus more easily be held against the Russians themselves. Everything had been done by them to make the approaches difficult, the ground being honeycombed with mines, which were fired under the advancing French, whole regiments of whom went up into the air, the dense columns of smoke continually being renewed. Péliissier sent on his men without intermission, and by force of numbers and assurance the defenders were overcome and the place was gained.

In our direct front was the Redan, an open work, the ground of which sloped towards the town, with a deep ravine protecting the left of it. In order to seize this most important position and take off some of the attention of the enemy, our men were despatched to take and occupy the Redan. The attack was nothing more nor less than a feint. How the stormers and their 'supports' succeeded in entering the Redan at the salient angle, driving back the Russians and holding the place for three-quarters of an hour, fighting for their own right hands, and no one to command or direct them, with, from some hitherto unexplained cause, no reserves to succour the gallant little band; how the Redan garrison, reinforced by the Russians, who found they could not retake the Malakhoff, at last drove out our men, who had to regain the trenches, I will not dwell upon. I will only mention what does not seem to be generally known, and what certainly was not provided for by our engineers at the time—if they were aware of it at all—namely, that the attacking party found themselves in face of a barrier eight or nine feet high running across the Redan, effectually hemming them in.

Our party had meanwhile been quiescent. We were now to be of use. In order to draw off the fire from our retreating men, the Engineer officers ordered out the working parties: 'Over, and continue the sap.' Now, sapping is a work usually done at night, when the enemy cannot see what is done in order to get nearer him, by digging a trench, and using the earth and stones displaced so as to raise a bank on the side of the enemy. To do this effectually and make a solid embankment, gabions—large baskets which are bottomless—are placed on end side by side

and filled with earth; then long bundles of twigs, called fascines, are laid horizontally on the gabions, while earth is thrown outside these so as to slope outwards. On our way we had to go along the advanced trench, which was crowded with the troops who had been driven in. Among these I recognised one of our captains. He was leaning against the bank. 'Good heavens, Close, you are badly hit!' 'Oh no, I am all right.' 'But your head!' His face was covered with brains, which seemed to be protruding from under his hair. It was another man's brains that I saw. Well, we set to work under the Engineers as if nothing had happened, filling our gabions and putting them in their places. This had the desired effect, and the enemy, thinking that we were adding insult to injury, turned their pieces in our direction, thus allowing the poor fellows who were obliged to lag behind to make more effort and regain friendly shelter. Many of our own men were hit. My captain and the senior subaltern had early been knocked over by grape-shot, so that I was in command of the party.

Presently the Engineers, not seeing any more necessity for our services, ordered us back into the trenches. The firing on each side now gradually ceased. Both sides were exhausted, and were giving their attention to the wounded and killed. Leaving a sufficient number of men to guard the works, we sadly and wearily made our way to camp, passing the surgeons in their shelters. They were busily plying their craft, and relieving their patients in various ways. On our way back we met the Highland Brigade, which was going down to the trenches to renew the attack next morning, the authorities not knowing what effect the taking of the Malakhoff would have on the Russians.

There were very few to eat the supper provided for us—not more than four or five, I think. We were now able to realise our losses—three officers killed, one missing, twelve wounded, and four not touched; and I was one of the four. When in my tent I slept like a top all night. The next morning my servant, a theatrical sort of a fellow, burst into the tent: 'Sir! sir! get up; the Russians have evacuated, and Sebastopol is in flames!' Yes, from all the south side of Sebastopol proper ascended large columns of smoke, with buildings blazing in all directions, and on the right one could descry the bridge of boats over which the Russians had all night been quietly passing their men to the north side of the harbour, under the shelter of their fortifications there, which were all intact; and now, their object being effected, they were breaking the bridge up and floating the pieces away.

While I was gazing at the scene a sergeant came up. 'I have orders, sir, for you to go to the Redan and bury the dead.' So, with a party armed with shovels, I started across

country; and what had taken more than half-an-hour the day before to gain we reached in ten minutes. A clergyman in his surplice read the burial-service from the top of the Redan. Then the bodies of the Russians and the English were brought together from all around and laid side by side in the ditch, any bodies of officers or non-commissioned officers being sent to their regiments, and the parapet was levelled upon friend and foe; but not before our soldiers had critically examined each Russian's boots. If these were good, in a trice they would be stripped off the Muscovite and changed wearers, for they were much better and more durable than those of our manufacture.

The going about the Russian works was attended with some danger; for, though our engineers had been busy cutting connections of mines with the voltaic batteries of the defenders—I now possess two bits of copper wire covered by gutta-percha which had been thus used—they might have overlooked some. Among loose powder the Russians had dropped about fougasses, which were small glass phials that, on being trodden upon and broken, liberated a certain acid and caused mines to explode. Indeed, all day and later, small explosions were going on, many men losing their lives thereby.

A cordon of soldiers was drawn around the burning town; but this did not stop the French, who penetrated everywhere, and looted right and left. That day or the next a Zouave appeared in our camp, which was the first he arrived at after leaving Sebastopol, with a reliquary which he had found. It was about the size of a glove-box; the top and sides were of malachite, heavily set and ornamented with gold, and inside were the relics of some saint. The man wanted three hundred francs for his find. It was well worth the money; but there was not one of us who had twelve golden sovereigns ready, so he went off to some other camp. If the Russians saw any officers or body of men exposed they would send a shell after them from the north side; otherwise all was very quiet.

Our captain was not accounted for until the second day after the fall of the place, when, penetrating into some low huts near the dockyard on hearing a noise, it was found that the place was full of dead and wounded Russians. These, thinking that we were going to kill them, tried to hide under their beds, and one man with a musket endeavoured to fire at us. At the end of the hut a bit of red was noted, and there was our missing captain, Herbert Vaughan. Poor fellow! he was delirious almost all the time, having been severely wounded, and without food and water; but in lucid intervals when in camp he told us his story. He had been bayoneted by a Russian, and had fallen into the ditch, breaking his leg; and when a soldier was going to shoot him as he lay, Vaughan, seeing an officer behind

the man, made him a masonic sign, which was understood. The man's musket was knocked up, and the astonished fellow, with another soldier, was made to lift up Vaughan and take him to a place of safety. Here a surgeon appeared. He would return, he said, in two hours, to take off the injured limb. But the Russians had too much to do, the doctor never came, and Vaughan was carried into the hut and forgotten, as were all his fellow-sufferers. He did not long survive his transfer to the camp, although there he received every attention. Of the three other officers that we lost, I am grieved to say that Captain Preston was one.

For many days I was continually going out with a party to read the burial-service over some one. When the deceased was a Roman Catholic I always took some soldier of the same faith to read the service over him. The constant

repetition of the 'Dead March in Saul' was found so depressing to the wounded that it was forbidden to be played. Gradually those of us who were injured were sent home, and the camp resumed its wonted look.

As we have said, the French having won what had long been known as the key of the position, Sebastopol had fallen. The British attack had not been a success—a result not unexpected. It had served its purpose, although it had been terribly mismanaged. It was not till ten days after the fall, on a mail coming in, that we learnt of a 'Hero of the Redan,' when the *Times* introduced us to him. There were many heroes that day no doubt, for without any head or any order, company officers and their men fought long, until they were driven out of the work. All honour to these undistinguished ones.

OUR WEIGHTS AND MEASURES: HOW THEY ARE KEPT ACCURATE.

By W. L. MANSON.



HE grocer who weighs out a pound of sugar, or the draper who reels off a yard of cotton, rarely asks himself how the pound-weight or the yard-stick are kept accurate; and still less does the purchaser of goods remember how all the standards, from the lowest to the highest, continue true from year to year and from decade to decade. The general public hardly ever wonder how it is that the local inspector of weights and measures can always tell if a pound of sugar is not a pound or a yard of cotton not a yard. His word is law, and the question, 'How do we know that the inspector's standards are right?' is never asked. We assume good-naturedly that his weights and measures always remain infallible—impervious to the action of the atmosphere and the knocks and rubs of everyday life. But it is evident that if each inspector were left to keep his standards as he pleased, they would—slowly maybe, but surely—become inaccurate; and a pound or a yard in one place would not then be a pound or a yard in another, neither would any pound or yard be the true weight or length. What, then, keeps the inspectors' standards right? and how do we know that our weights and measures are not all going to sixes and sevens, or becoming gradually lighter and shorter? This article is designed to answer these questions.

Each inspector is in duty bound to visit every shop within his jurisdiction at least once a year; and it is the duty of each trader, at the risk of incurring the pains and penalties of the law, to see that his weights and measures are kept in proper

order, and to send them to the inspector for adjustment whenever he has any doubt as to their accuracy. The inspector keeps in his office a set of standards, perhaps several sets; and by comparison with these he corrects the faulty measures he may discover, or that may be submitted to him. His standards are kept right by comparison—the measures of weight at least once in five years, and the measures of length at least once in ten years—with the Board of Trade standards in London. Sometimes, on the application of local authorities, the Board of Trade sends officers to a convenient centre; and these officers, after duly establishing a temporary Board of Trade office, proceed to deal with all local standards submitted to them. Such an office was set up in Glasgow at the beginning of September last; and the standards of a large number of Scottish cities, burghs, and counties were adjusted and verified. Those authorities whose standards were not due for adjustment did not require to send theirs in; but several, in order to avoid the expense and loss of time entailed by sending them to London, perhaps next year, took advantage of the opportunity to have all their standards adjusted and verified.

The Board of Trade standards regulate all the weights and measures of the home country, the colonies, and several foreign countries. These standards are themselves derived from one Imperial Yard-measure and one Imperial Pound-weight, which are preserved with a care that could hardly be excelled were the constitution of the Empire at stake. The yard and the pound weight—which are designated the 'Im-

perial Standards,' are kept at the Standards Office, Old Palace Yard, Westminster; and, in addition to the Imperial Standards, four 'Parliamentary Copies' of each have been provided for by legislative enactment. These are deposited as follows: one pair at the Royal Mint; one with the Royal Society of London; one in the Royal Observatory, Greenwich; and one pair have, for absolute safety, been built into the wall of the New Palace, Westminster, in a staircase off the lobby in which visitors to the House of Commons wait their turn to be admitted to the public gallery. It is not considered necessary to preserve the standard of capacity, which is a gallon measure in the keeping of the Board of Trade, with equal care, as it can be recovered at any time from the Standard Pound—ten pounds of distilled water at sixty-two degrees Fahrenheit, when the barometer stands at 30 inches, being exactly one gallon.

The Imperial Standard Yard is derived from a solid bar of gun-metal 38 inches long and 1 inch square. Near each end a round hole is sunk to the depth of half-an-inch, the distance between the two centres being 36 inches. In each hole a gold pin is inserted. This pin is one-tenth of an inch in diameter, and on its surface three fine lines are cut, separate about one-hundredth part of an inch, and transverse to the bar. Two similar lines are cut across the pin, and parallel to the bar, and the measure of the Imperial Yard is the distance between the middle transverse line on one pin and the middle transverse line on the other, the part of each line chosen being the point midway between the longitudinal lines—that is, the exact centre of the gold pin. The composition of this yard-measure is: copper, 16 oz.; tin, 2½ oz.; zinc, 1 oz. It was cast in 1845 by Messrs Troughton & Simms, London; and it is absolutely accurate at a temperature of sixty-two degrees Fahrenheit. The Imperial Pound is of iridio-platinum, cylindrical in shape, nearly 1·35 inch in height and 1·15 inch in diameter, with a groove round it, about .34 inch from the top. This groove is intended to afford a hold to the ivory fork with which the Imperial Standard Pound is always lifted. The Parliamentary Copies are exactly similar to the Imperial Standards, except that there are marks to distinguish the different sets. The standards used at Glasgow last September were duplicates of the Imperial Standards, so that the weights and measures actually used by traders are only three removed from the bits of metal which regulate all the weights and measures of the Empire. There is, first, the Imperial Standards; second, the duplicates and the working duplicates, which for all practical purposes are the same, as they are compared every time the officers leave Westminster or begin the work of verification; third, the inspectors' standards; and then, of course, the measures used in shops. In the case of the working-man's pint of beer,

the retail measure is only two removed, as the officers' working standards are compared direct with the Imperial Gallon.

We have now traced the accuracy of the measures used in everyday work right up to the Imperial Standard Yard-measure and Pound-weight. But is there not a danger of the Imperial Standards themselves getting lost or becoming gradually shorter and lighter? There is; but the precautions taken are such that this danger is practically non-existent. The present Imperial Standards and Parliamentary Copies were constructed in 1844-45, the previous Standards having been destroyed by fire on 16th October 1834. These previous Standards were constructed in 1758-60, and in July 1891 eight of them—four measures of length and four of weight—were found by workmen in the House of Commons. They were so much injured that they were useless as standards; but they had been recognised by Parliament so late as 1824; and although the newer Standards had replaced them, and, theoretically, they had no existence (the law had stated they were lost, and before their recovery could be admitted an Act of Parliament would have had to be repealed), there was room for much quibbling had any one been so inclined. However, it was decided, after serious consideration, that they were of no legal authority, and the new measures continued to be the Imperial Standards, and to be preserved as such. The Standards, Imperial and Parliamentary Copies, are never touched by the naked hand—the perspiration or heat might create a chemical action which would render them inaccurate—and all repose in specially prepared boxes, the keys of which are kept by the most responsible officials. Once in ten years the Parliamentary Copies of the yard, and once in five years those of the pound, excepting those immured at Westminster, are brought together at the Board of Trade Offices, and compared, literally with microscopic care, with the Imperial Standards; and once in twenty years the Copies are compared with the Imperial Standards, and the Imperial Standards with the Copies immured at Westminster. It is in this once-in-twenty-years comparison that the utility of the Copies buried in the wall comes in.

The length of time which elapses between comparisons, and the many important issues which depend on the ceremony, invest it with a dignity and interest of no ordinary kind. On the appointed day the several officers interested meet on the staircase where the remaining set of Copies is immured. The Warden of the Standards is there with the Imperial Standards in his custody; and, after due formalities, a workman is called in, who breaks open the wall, and discloses a cavity, inside of which is found a rough wooden box. Inside this there is another box, this time of metal, soldered air-and-water-tight. The metal box is broken open, and one of mahogany is found. The lid of this

is fixed with keyed screws, and sealed above each screw. This mahogany box contains the Yard-measure carefully wrapped in chemically prepared paper, and a silver-gilt box containing the Pound-weight, also wrapped in specially prepared paper. The yard rests on rollers, placed under it in such a way as to prevent flexure of the bar, and facilitate its free expansion and contraction in variations of temperature. Every standard yard, at least when being compared, rests on similar rollers.

The comparisons are made on a table erected on the stair, the Yard-measure being verified by means of a special arrangement of microscopes. The Standard Pound is verified by being placed opposite the Parliamentary Copy on a specially constructed and very delicate balance. This balance is enclosed in a copper case, with a small door opposite each scale, and a small window opposite the dial which registers the difference between the weights. The copper case prevents anything outside from affecting the accuracy of the balance. The heat from a man's body, for instance, might expand one arm of the balance more than another and so render it inaccurate; but the copper, by distributing equally throughout the balance any atmospherical change that may take place, renders this impossible. When all is ready—the balance being 'out of gear'—the doors are opened, the weights lifted with ivory forks and placed on the scales, the doors shut, the balance put 'into gear,' and the difference, as registered on the dial, carefully noted. The work over, the Standards are replaced in their wrappings and boxes, screwed up and sealed, the wall rebuilt, to stand for another twenty years, and the result of the comparison is reported to Parliament. And, curiously enough, if any inaccuracy is found it is not rectified. Owing to its construction, the length of the Standard Yard could not be altered either way; but, in any case, neither the Imperial Standards nor the Parliamentary Copies are ever adjusted or corrected. Instead, the amount of the inaccuracy is noted and taken into account whenever a comparison is made from them. The last comparison with the immured copies was made in 1892, those present being Mr Chaney, Warden of the Standards, and his assistants; Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, President of the Board of Trade; Lady Lucy Hicks-Beach; Lord Peel, Speaker of the House of Commons, and Miss Peel; Sir H. G. Calcraft, Secretary of the Board of Trade; The Right Hon. D. Plunket, First Commissioner of Her Majesty's Works; Colonel W. Carrington, representing the Lord Great Chamberlain; and Mr Chisholm, late Warden of the Standards, who has been present at three such comparisons. It was found that the immured copies were not in any way destroyed, defaced, or injured, but were, to all intents and purposes, in the same condition as when they were reimmured in 1872, the date of the previous comparison. No

measurable change was found in the length of the Standard Yard; but the Standard Pound appeared to have lost 0·00230 grain since 1855, and the Board of Trade recommended that a new weight should be verified and legalised. As indicating the extremely exact nature of the operations, it may be mentioned that any difference approaching to one fourteen-millionth part of a pound or one twelve-thousandth part of a yard can be ascertained.

It is unnecessary to pursue the subject further. If by any possibility the Imperial Standards were lost or spoiled, they could be replaced by the verification and legalising of any pair of the Parliamentary Copies. But if—and this is a wild flight of the imagination indeed—our civilisation so far collapsed or our precautionary measures so far failed to serve their purpose that all our Standards were lost, they could not, technically speaking, be replaced. Learned men can, with the help of a pendulum and a watch, and by other means, construct a yard-measure that is as absolutely accurate as is necessary; but if the Standard did not exist they would have no means of proving that the two were the same length. However, circumstances that would make such an expedient necessary are fit material for the romancist of the wildly improbable rather than for the sober descriptive writer.

REMEMBERED BEST OF ALL.

WHEN I'm looking back across the time-worn pages

Of the book of years one face I always see,

Just one gentle face that alters not nor ages,

But seems now and evermore the same to me.

I can feel a loving hand in mine entwining,

When my faltering childish steps were fain to fall,

With its watchful eyes like stars upon me shining—

'Tis the face that I remember best of all!

When I look around, and memory is bringing

Back again the echoed songs of long ago,

Songs that ever down the halls of Time are ringing.

Songs that set my listening youthful heart aglow—

All the visions bright of years gone by they bring me,

And they seem to hold my spirit in their thrall,

But the simple air a dear voice used to sing me

Is the song that I remember best of all!

When I dream of all the gladness that has blest me,

And the sunshine that has made life's pathway bright,

When I long from all the toil of earth to rest me,

Till the dawning of the day that knows no night,

I remember all the love the years have taught me,

And the happiness that filled them I recall;

But a mother's love and all the joy it brought me

Is the love that I remember best of all!

CLIFTON BINGHAM.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

LORD ROSEBERY AS LITERARY CRITIC.

By J. F. HOGAN, M.P.

SOMEbody wrote a magazine article not long ago under the title of 'The Four Lord Roseberys;' and I have read a book about Lord Rosebery in which he was considered and discussed under six aspects: 'The Man,' 'The Radical,' 'The Municipalist,' 'The Home Ruler,' 'The Imperial Federationist,' and 'The Foreign Minister and Premier.' This enumeration would seem to exhaust all the possible standpoints from which Lord Rosebery might be regarded; yet there is another and a non-political rôle he has played which is certainly not the least interesting in his attractive and versatile career. As a writer of graceful, scholarly, and luminous prefaces, Lord Rosebery has no rival in these islands; but this is a character in which he appeals rather to the cultured few than the public in general, and consequently it is the one that is least familiar to the great body of his admirers.

Lord Rosebery's first preface is dated 'Government House, Melbourne, January 16, 1884.' It forms the introduction to the *Marcus Clarke Memorial Volume*. It was written when Lord Rosebery was industriously completing his education by that grand tour of the Empire which he has since declared should be an indispensable preliminary to the attainment of front-bench honours by any public man in this country. Lord Rosebery was for the time being the guest of the Governor of Victoria in the baronial pile that dominates Melbourne from the southern bank of the Yarra. During his stay in that city he sought out and substantially befriended the widow and children of perhaps the greatest of colonial novelists, Marcus Clarke, author of that most lurid and thrilling of romances of the transportation era: *For the Term of his Natural Life*.

Born in Kensington, the son of a London barrister and *littérateur* of some distinction, Marcus Clarke found his way to Australia in his seventeenth year, and spent two years on an up-

country sheep-station, where he closely observed the various types of bush character and collected the materials for the numerous and admirable short stories and sketches that subsequently flowed in quick succession from his facile pen. Migrating from the solitudes of the bush to the life and bustle of the city of Melbourne, he wrote largely in the local journals and magazines, besides acting as Australian correspondent of the London *Daily Telegraph*. His work in this latter capacity so strongly impressed the proprietors of that journal that Sir Edward Lawson wrote: 'It has occurred to me that you possess most of the qualifications for journalism of the highest order. Would it suit your views to come to England? If the idea should have entered your mind, tell me what income you would require to entice you to come to London.' This was a brilliant offer to a young man in the early twenties at the other end of the earth; and what motive influenced Marcus Clarke in declining it is a mystery. It was the colossal mistake of his life. He also refused that snug sinecure, the Parliamentary librarianship in Melbourne, which would have assured him a handsome permanent income and left him ample leisure for the fulfilment of his literary projects and aspirations. He was a veritable latter-day Oliver Goldsmith in his utter inability to recognise what was best for his material interests. He married at twenty-one; and, after the ceremony, went out to look for lodgings for his bride, having quite overlooked that essential preliminary. Through the kind offices of his friend and patron, Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, he eventually became sub-librarian of the Melbourne Public Library. But his Bohemian mode of life had seriously impaired his constitution, and the money-lenders of Melbourne, in whose toils he had become involved, helped to worry him into a premature grave at the early age of thirty-four. The whole of his literary activity was comprised between the years 1866 and 1881, and during that period he wrote three complete novels and one unfinished; up-

wards of fifty short stories and sketches; a dozen plays and pantomimes; and a vast quantity of leading articles, dramatic criticisms, and occasional contributions to journals and magazines. He was about to start on a cruise amongst the South Sea Islands as the special correspondent of the London *Daily Telegraph* when he was seized with his fatal illness.

Marcus Clarke's *magnum opus*, *For the Term of his Natural Life*, which forms the theme of Lord Rosebery's preface, was the result of a commission from the proprietors of the *Australian Journal*, a monthly magazine that is still published in Melbourne. The present self-governing colony of Tasmania was during the first half of this century a penal settlement to which the criminals of Great Britain and Ireland were despatched in convict-ships. This 'transportation system,' as it was called, became associated with a variety of cruelties and horrors that are now embedded in blue-books or locked up in the secret manuscript archives of the Tasmanian Government. Marcus Clarke diligently mastered and assimilated all this melodramatic material, and weaved it into a romance that will never be eclipsed as a living picture of the transportation times. It is, of course, not to be taken as an accurate presentation of the facts and incidents of that era. What Marcus Clarke did was to collect, with an eye to thrilling dramatic effect, all the horrors and cruelties practised on scores of prisoners for half a century, and pile them all upon the back of his unfortunate, innocently convicted hero, Rufus Dawes. The result is a masterpiece of terrible fiction; but it should never be forgotten that Rufus Dawes was far from being the typical transported convict. Human tigers, as a certain proportion of these exiles were, had to be kept in subjection by harsh and even brutal methods; but the average sensible transported convict who behaved himself became an 'emancipist' in time, was allowed to take up land, married, amassed wealth, and founded a respectable family.

Lord Rosebery's preface to the *Marcus Clarke Memorial Volume*—a selection from the author's writings published by subscription for the benefit of the widow and children—is in the main a glowing eulogy of *His Natural Life*. He says his visit to Australia, always a floating dream of his, lost one great attraction by the absence of its author. 'Long ago,' he adds, 'I fell upon *His Natural Life* by accident, and read it not once or twice, but many times, at different periods. Since then I have frequently given away copies to men whose opinions I valued, and have always received from them the same opinion as to the extraordinary power of the book. There can, indeed, I think, be no two opinions as to the horrible fascination of the book. The reader who takes it up and gets beyond the prologue, though he cannot but be harrowed by the long agony of the story and the human anguish of every page,

is unable to lay it down; almost in spite of himself he has to read and to suffer to the bitter end. To me, I confess, it is the most terrible of all novels, more terrible than *Oliver Twist* or Victor Hugo's most startling effects, for the simple reason that it is more real. It has all the solemn ghastliness of truth.'

Lord Rosebery says he employed some of his leisure in Australia in studying the blue-books on which the novel was based; and while in Tasmania he made personal inquiries on the subject. The result was to carry conviction to his mind that the case had not been one whit overstated; nay, that the fact in some particulars was more frightful than the fiction. Alluding to the fact that the most appalling chapter in the book—the one that describes the escape and cannibalism of Gabbett—is a paraphrase of an appendix to the report of the House of Commons Committee on Transportation in 1837-8, Lord Rosebery uses this striking and suggestive sentence: 'The materials for great works of imagination lie all around us; but it is genius that selects and transposes them.'

Lord Rosebery concludes by expressing his regret that the works of Marcus Clarke were not sufficiently appreciated either in Australia or Great Britain; a reproach that has since been removed to a considerable extent. 'It is rare,' he adds, 'that so young a country has produced so great a literary force. I cannot believe but that the time must soon come when Australians will feel a melancholy pride in this true son of genius, and Australian genius. And in England, like another power in the world of letters, not dissimilar in genius—I mean Emily Brontë—he may have made up to him in posthumous honour what was lacking in his lifetime.'

Lord Rosebery's second preface is of topical interest just now, when in his character of progressive Imperialist, he is being regarded with peculiar interest both within and without the ranks of the Liberal party. He was the last President of the Imperial Federation League. An eloquent member of that vanished organisation, Mr G. R. Parkin, now the head of a Canadian college, made a speaking tour of the British dominions, and subsequently published a bright and instructive volume under the title of *Round the Empire*. In a clear and concise preface, dated London, February 1892, Lord Rosebery introduced it to the reading world, or rather the schools of the nation: 'I have been asked to write a line of introduction to this book, and gladly comply, as its primary purpose is to remind our children that they inhabit not an island, but an Empire. There are few political facts, perhaps none, that should exercise so great an influence on their future lives.' Proceeding to develop this thesis, Lord Rosebery argues that a collection of States spread over every region of the earth, but owning one head and one flag, is even more important as

an influence than as an Empire. From either point of view it is a world-wide fact of supreme significance; but in the one capacity it affects only its own subjects, and in the other all mankind. With the Empire statesmen are mainly concerned; in the influence every individual can and must have a part. Influence is based on character, and it is on the character of each child that grows into manhood within British limits that the future of the Empire rests. 'If we and they are narrow and selfish, averse to labour, impatient of necessary burdens, factious and self-indulgent; if we see in public affairs not our Empire but our country, not our country but our parish, and in our parish our house, the Empire is doomed. For its maintenance requires work and sacrifice and intelligence. If, on the other hand, we aim at the diffusion of the blessings of industry undisturbed by war, if we aim at peace, secured not by humiliation but preponderance, we need to preserve our Empire not for ourselves only but for mankind. And this is said not pharisaically, not to the exclusion of other countries, but because ours is the most widely spread and the most penetrating of nationalities. The time, indeed, cannot be far remote when the British Empire must, if it remain united, by the growth of its population and its ubiquitous dominion, exercise a controlling authority in the world. To that trust our sons are born.' On these grounds Lord Rosebery hopes that the youth of the race will learn how great is their inheritance and their responsibility; that those outside the British Isles may learn the splendour of their source and their home; and that English, Scottish, and Irish children may learn not to be shut in their shires, but that they are the heirs of great responsibilities and a vast inheritance. And he concludes with a serious warning to the Little Englanders: 'History has marked those that made this Empire, and will mark with equal certainty, but in a different spirit, those who unmake it or allow it to dissolve. In this book there is put forward no theory, no constitution, and no plan. Mr Parkin probably believes, as most of us do, that the security for national union lies not so much in parliamentary projects as in the just appreciation of imperial responsibility.'

A third exceedingly interesting preface by Lord Rosebery ushers in the eighth volume of the publications of the Scottish Historical Society. This volume is a contemporary list of persons concerned in what Lord Rosebery calls 'our last historical romance'—the Stuart rebellion of 1745—and it is printed from a manuscript in his possession. The twelve pages from Lord Rosebery's pen by which it is preceded are styled a preface, but they really constitute a succinct, graphic, and judicious essay on the final effort of the House of Stuart to regain the throne of

Great Britain and Ireland. Next to his *Life of Pitt*, this is Lord Rosebery's most considerable and important literary performance up to date. As a Meissonier-like war-picture in words, this opening passage of Lord Rosebery's essay on Bonnie Prince Charlie would be difficult to surpass: 'A hundred and forty-five years ago a French-born [rather Roman-born] prince of British origin leaves Belleisle and lands in the Western Highlands. He is alone with seven followers and a handful of *louis d'ors*; but his name, with its traditions, and his own gallant bearing, rally round him a few chiefs and their followers. He presses forward, followed by a ragged but terrible tail, disperses in five minutes regular troops, to whom his army are as Mohawks, and seizes Edinburgh. There he holds court in low-lying Holyrood, commanded by the Castle, which is garrisoned by his foes, and defeats in another burst another regular army. Thence, little stronger, he dashes into England as far as Derby. He spreads consternation throughout the kingdom, and strikes the very heart of the Empire. In London there is Black Friday; the realm seems at the mercy of a raid, and it seems the toss of a die whether England shall be Guelph or Stuart. Then the wild foe is mysteriously paralysed. The confused advance is followed by a precipitate retreat. The Highlanders hurry back with a dismal haste, downcast and draggled; farther and farther, past Glasgow, past Falkirk, till they are lost in the mists of the north, whence at last comes news that they have been crushed and harried and slaughtered, and that their leader has disappeared. Then ensues that famous flight of the romantic youth through the vague unknown country, pressed and pursued, in caves, in huts, in women's clothing; passing through penniless Highlanders with a reward on his head that meant wealth for a clan; but, faithfully served, escaping back to the Continent and to a long ignominy. He disappears for a decade, and emerges a changed man—bloated, drunken, half-imbecile, half-brute, and so he ends his life. Then, again, by a magic unconscious touch of history, he is transmuted for ever into a paladin, with a tradition and a worship which have always hallowed his smallest relics as of a hero or a saint.'

The fascination that clings to Prince Charlie is attributed by Lord Rosebery to the recklessness which, while being one of the most engaging qualities of private life, loses no part of its grace on a larger stage. Charles came alone, relying on his ancestral rights and his charm of manner. The throne he claimed for his father was occupied by an elderly German for whom no one felt enthusiasm or even liking or respect. Doubtless many who held aloof would not have grieved in their hearts had the spirited adventurer been successful. Lord Rosebery adds his belief that, in all probability, had Charles not retreated from

Derby, ten thousand Frenchmen would have attempted a descent upon southern England and changed the face of history. Moreover, a Jacobite army at the gates of London might have roused all those forces of disorder which afterwards showed themselves so potent. If Lord George Gordon could make the Metropolis tremble, the roughs that he afterwards utilised might have made Charles Edward a regent or a king. Lord Rosebery's conclusion is that the instinct of Charles was right to press onward from Derby, and that the rebellion represented a much more

serious danger than people sitting in their nineteenth-century arm-chairs and counting noses are apt to reckon.

The dark shadow of destiny, the long historical tragedy, give fascination to the Stuart story. 'It is the cause,' says Lord Rosebery, 'for which many thousands of brave men willingly faced exile and ruin and death, for which they were attainted and hanged and massacred; round which the sweetest poetry of Scotland has wound itself, and which the legends of the people embalm.'

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IT was a curious sight that met Browne's gaze when he entered the snug little cabin in which he and his friends had spent so many happy hours together. The skipper was standing near the door, McCartney was next to him, the second engineer in the corner opposite, and half-seated, half-forced down on the cushioned locker under the starboard port-hole was Maas, with MacAndrew, revolver in hand, leaning over him. Browne glanced from one to another of the group, but failed to take in the situation.

'What does this mean?' he cried, and as he did so he looked at Jimmy Foote, as if for explanation.

'It's a bad business, Browne, old chap,' Jimmy replied; 'a very bad business. I wish to goodness I had not to say anything to you about it. But it must be done, and there is very little time in which to do it. While you were away on shore a small incident occurred which aroused my suspicions. I determined to watch, and did so, with the result that they were confirmed. I saw that our friend Maas was a good deal more familiar with your officers and crew than I thought was good either for them or for himself. I did not know he was the traitorous cur he is.'

By this time Maas's usual sallow face was ashen pale. His lips seemed to be framing words which were never spoken.

'For Heaven's sake, Foote,' cried Browne, in an agony of impatience, 'get on with what you have to say! What have you discovered?'

Jimmy turned to the second engineer, who was almost as pale as Maas. 'Tell him everything,' he said; 'and see that you speak the truth.'

'I scarcely know how to tell you, sir,' the young fellow replied. 'I only wish I'd never lived to see this day. What made me do it I don't know; but he, Mr Maas there, got round me, sir, and—well, the long and short of it is, I gave in to him, and did what you know.'

'You mean, I suppose, that you and he between

you are responsible for this break-down in the engine-room this morning? Is this so?'

'Yes, sir,' the man replied.

'And, pray, what reason did Mr Maas give you for desiring you to do this?'

'He told me, sir,' the young man replied, 'that he had your interests at heart. He said he happened to know that if you had started for Japan at once, as you proposed, you would be running the yacht into a certain trap. He said that, though he had pleaded and argued with you in vain, you would not listen to him. You were bent on going on. The only way, he said, that he could stop you was for me to do what I did.'

'Surely, my dear Browne,' said Maas, speaking for the first time, 'you are not going to believe this cock-and-bull story, which is quite without corroboration. Your own common-sense should show you how absurd it is. What can have induced this man to trump-up this charge against me I cannot say. Our friendship, however, should be proof against it. Knowing the amount of worry you have upon your shoulders at the present time, I have no desire to add to it; at the same time, I cannot permit your servant here to insult me before your face.'

Browne took no notice of what he said. Turning to the engineer, he continued:

'How much did Mr Maas offer you, or what inducement did he bring to bear, to get you to do what you did?'

'He offered me five hundred pounds, sir,' the other returned. 'I told him, however, that I wouldn't take his money. You have been very good to me, sir, and I did not want to be paid for doing what I thought was a kindness to you. It wasn't until Mr McCartney told me about that cruiser having put in an appearance that I saw what I had been led into doing. Then I went straight to him and made a clean breast of everything.'

'It was the best course you could have pursued,' said Browne, 'and I shall remember it when I

come to deal with your case later on. In the meantime, gentlemen, what are we to do?’

As he spoke the second officer descended from the bridge and made his appearance at the cabin door.

‘The cruiser, sir, has signalled that she intends sending a boat,’ he reported, touching his cap.

‘Very good,’ said Browne; and when the officer had taken his departure he turned to Maas.

‘So it is as we suspected,’ he said, very slowly and deliberately. ‘While we have been trusting you with our secret, you have been playing the traitor all round. Maas, I can scarcely believe it. I did not think a man could fall so low. However, there is no time to talk of that now. Come, gentlemen, what are we to do?’

Ever since the second officer had announced that the man-o'-war was about to send a boat Maas had undergone a complete change. Though he had been found out, he still felt himself to be master of the situation; and with every minute's grace his pluck returned to him. Springing to his feet, he cried:

‘You ask what you should do, do you? Then I will tell you. You can do nothing at all. You are in my power, one and all. Remember that I represent the Russian Government, and if you attempt anything against my safety I shall place myself in the hands of the commander of the cruiser you can see over there. You must surely see that the game is hopeless, and that further resistance would be as foolish as it would be futile.’

‘Well, if anybody had told me’—— Browne heard Jimmy remark; then MacAndrew struck in:

‘I think I take in the position,’ he said. ‘I have met with a similar case once before. Perhaps you would not mind leaving it in my hands, Mr Browne?’

‘What do you mean to do?’ inquired Browne.

‘I will very soon show you,’ said MacAndrew. ‘Perhaps Mr Foote will assist us?’

‘I will do anything you like to be even with him,’ said Jimmy vindictively.

‘That’s the sort of talk,’ said MacAndrew. ‘Now let us make our way to his cabin. Mr Maas, I shall have to trouble you to accompany us.’

‘I’ll do nothing of the sort,’ said Maas. ‘I decline to be left alone with you.’

‘I’m very much afraid you’ve no option,’ said MacAndrew calmly; and as he spoke he gave a little significant twist to the revolver he held in his hand. ‘Come, sir,’ he said, more sternly than he had yet spoken. ‘On to your feet, if you please. Remember you are playing with desperate men. If by hesitating you get into trouble, you will have only yourself to thank. Your friend, the cruiser, is still a couple of miles away, as you must be aware, and a revolver-shot would scarcely be heard as far.’

Seeing that there was nothing for it but to obey, Maas rose to his feet and passed out of the smoking-room, along the deck, and down the saloon companion-ladder to his own cabin. Once there, MacAndrew handed his revolver to Jimmy, with the request that he would be good enough to watch the prisoner during his absence, and to put a bullet through his skull if he should attempt to escape or give the alarm.

‘For my part,’ said MacAndrew, ‘I’m going to test the resources of Mr Browne’s medicine-chest.’

Five minutes later he returned with an ounce or so of some dark fluid in a graduating-glass.

‘Good heavens! You’re surely not going to poison him,’ said Browne; while Maas stared at the glass with frightened eyes.

‘Poison him?’ said MacAndrew coolly. ‘My dear fellow, is it likely I should do anything so absurd? No; I am simply going to place him in a position of safety, so that he cannot harm us during the time the warship is in sight. Now, Mr Maas, I shall have to trouble you to swallow this.’

‘I’ll do nothing of the kind,’ said Maas sturdily. ‘You shall not persuade me to put my lips to it.’

‘In that case, I’m afraid there will very probably be trouble,’ said MacAndrew. ‘If I were you, sir, I should make up my mind to the inevitable. Remember there are unpleasant arguments we could bring to bear should you still remain obdurate.’

Maas gasped for breath. He looked right and left, as if for some loophole of escape, but could find none. He was surrounded on every side by inexorable faces, which gazed upon him without pity or remorse, while on the table before him stood the small glass half-full of the dark-coloured liquid.

‘Come, sir,’ said MacAndrew, ‘I shall be glad if you would toast us. Let me remind you that there is no time to lose. It always pains me, in cases like the present, to have to apply physical argument when moral might produce the same result. In the event of your not drinking, as I request, perhaps Mr Browne will be kind enough to permit us the use of his galley fire. The method, I admit, is barbarous; nevertheless it is occasionally effective.’

The perspiration rolled down Maas’s cheeks. Bantering as MacAndrew’s tones were, he could still see that he was in deadly earnest.

Browne glanced out of the port-hole, and noticed that the man-o'-war’s boat had left its own vessel. In less than a quarter of an hour it would be alongside, and then—— But he did not like to think of what would happen then.

‘I will give you one more minute in which to drink it,’ said MacAndrew, taking his watch from his pocket. ‘If you do not do so you must be prepared to take the consequences.’

Silence fell upon the group for a space, during which a man might perhaps have counted twenty.

'Half a minute,' said MacAndrew, and Browne's heart beat so violently that it almost choked him.

'Three-quarters of a minute,' continued MacAndrew. 'Mr Foote, would you mind giving me the revolver and standing by that door? I am afraid that we shall be driven into a tussle.'

Jimmy did as he was requested, and another pause ensued.

'Time's up,' said MacAndrew, shutting his watch with a click. 'Now we must act. Mr Browne, take his legs if you please.'

They moved towards their victim, who shrank into a corner.

'I give in!' he cried at last, affecting a calmness he was far from feeling. 'Since there is no other way out of it, I will do as you desire, provided you will give me your assurance that the stuff is harmless.'

'It is quite harmless,' said MacAndrew; and then, with an air of braggadocio that could be easily seen was assumed, Maas tossed off the decoction, and, having done so, seated himself on the settee. A quarter of an hour later he was in his bunk, fast asleep, and Jimmy was sitting by his side in the capacity of sick-nurse.

'You had better bear in mind the fact that he has been ill for the past week,' said MacAndrew before he left the cabin. 'He caught a chill through falling asleep on deck, and pneumonia has set in. Now I shall retire to join my friend in the tunnel, and leave you to your own devices. Don't forget to let me know, Mr Browne, as soon as the Russian has bidden you farewell.'

'You may depend on me,' Browne replied; and as he spoke the captain hailed him from the deck above, to inform him that the boat was coming alongside.

OCEAN GAMBLING.

By T. L.



NOT many years ago gambling was carried on to such an extent on board Atlantic liners as to call for prohibitive action on the part of the various companies concerned.

Card-playing, not only in the smoking-rooms, but also in private cabins, was indulged in to a simply ruinous extent. Organised gangs of sharpers continually travelled back and forth between New York and Queens-town, and doubtless made a handsome living out of their profession, for profession it was, needing an expert handling of the cards, only to be gained by long and constant practice, a cool head, and quickness of perception in reading character. In consequence of the concerted action of the companies, high gambling apparently disappeared; the only practical results obtained, however, being surface ones, as passengers now, instead of openly throwing gold coins or notes on the table, use only silver or copper coins, these acting simply as counters, representing whatever value the players assume to them at the beginning of the game. 'Nap' and 'poker' are the two favourite games—the former for the younger men as a rule, the latter for the more seasoned heads; and play still goes on merrily, even though some one lands penniless in New York in consequence. An incident of which the writer was a witness may serve to explain the points of view of both sides of a gambling deal.

A young Englishman, on his first trip across the Atlantic, found himself gradually drawn into a game of 'poker' with three or four professional sharpers. The latter were most presentable in

their manners and dress, and older men than their victim might have been excused for playing with them. At first the young man won, as is usually the case; but gradually, as the steamer approached New York, he began to lose—winning at times, but losing on the day's play. When he lost it was usually by only one point. Tempted by what he called 'luck,' he plunged a bit; and one afternoon, only twelve hours from New York, he found himself penniless. He had only a few shillings left—barely enough for his tips—out of over one hundred pounds, his total capital! Slowly awakening to his losses, the poor young fool felt desperate. His father had with great difficulty given him this sum, together with an introduction to an old friend in the West. There he was, staring down at the littered card-table, ruined, disgraced, and penniless—a poor condition for a young man just starting out in the world. A quiet-looking man, who usually sat reading in a corner of the smoking-room, had tried once to give the young fellow a friendly hint to go slow. His advice was promptly and haughtily resented—as advice usually is when unasked for—and the quiet man said no more; but this afternoon, after watching the young man sitting alone, the picture of despair, he sat down beside him, and gradually, in a kindly, fatherly way, drew the whole story out. Telling him not to be too despondent, he went out on deck and joined a party of elderly men, who were leaning over the side watching the porpoises playing round the ship. Telling them in a few words the situation, he asked one—a Westerner—to act as spokesman, and the whole party then moved

across the deck to the other side, where the sharpers were still laughing amongst themselves at the complete success they had had in 'cleaning out' the Britisher. The Western man, who did not believe in preliminaries, burst out with: 'You men have cleaned out that young man of every cent he has. I don't *say* you've swindled him, but I have my own opinion; and I think, and so do we all, that you ought to refund.' Naturally this was met by a storm of vituperative rejoinder, to the effect that the game was a square one, and if the other fellow had lost, all the worse for him. Then the quiet man stepped forward, and, looking hard at the leader of the gang, said, 'Joe, pay up;' and that was all he did say at the moment. The effect was magical. The sharper glared at him, then turned pale, and muttered, 'It's you, is it? Didn't know you.' 'No, didn't suppose you did. I've grown a beard since I saw you last. Now, pay up quietly, or'— 'All right,' was the quick response; 'I'll do what is fair.' With that he handed over a roll of notes with some gold to his evil genius, saying, 'There's ninety pounds. We got a hundred, but we've spent over ten on drinks and cards.' Needless to say, the young Englishman was delighted to get back so much of his money, vowing he would never touch a card again. It is to be hoped he kept his vow. The quiet-looking man was simply a good-natured, kindly detective, who knew the gang and its leader well, and they equally well knew him and feared him.

A certain portion of the steamer-sharks, who were also expert thieves and confidence-men, were outfitted and financed by a well-known person in Chicago called Canada Bill, who had a most presentable manner and appearance—his general tone that of a prosperous business man, which he certainly was. Not a railroad entering Chicago but had its appointed gangs for each train, with orders to fleece or steal all they could, whether by three-card monté, the box trick, poker, or any other method that was practical. They regularly reported to the 'Boss,' handing over all the plunder they had secured, for which they were promptly paid at the Boss's valuation. Cash was divided equally. Canada Bill in return looked after his men carefully. If ill or unable to work, they were attended to and supported. If arrested, his peculiar and intimate acquaintance with all the tricks of Chicago law, aided by a liberal expenditure in the way of bribery both of witnesses and police, usually succeeded in getting his man free. It may here be said that this man had a method of his own of checking his men's honesty (?) in reporting to him faithfully as to their takings. The men were afraid of him; again and again had he caught them making false declarations. How he found them out he only knew. The punishment was always the invariable one—

dismissal. Oddly as it may sound, this was considered by his employés a disgrace. There was an *esprit de corps* amongst them; they were proud to be under the Boss. Ostensibly a mining agent, he had his office neatly fitted up with the usual appliances for assay work, including a small furnace, generally alight, blowpipes, acids, crucibles, and so on. The stones were rapidly removed from all jewellery—for the man was an expert—and the gold thrown into the melting-pot, then cast into neat little ingots, which were sold to the branch Treasury Office close by. By Canada Bill personally, he representing them as a fresh consignment from his Western mines.

On one occasion, recognising that certain rivals were disputing his territorial rights, he called on the superintendent of one of the leading roads entering Chicago, calmly offering him ten thousand dollars yearly if he (the superintendent) would give over the monopoly of 'working' all trains on the system operated by the railroad company. The cool assurance of the man rather upset the nerves of the superintendent, who, feeling unable to do justice to the subject, curtly declined the offer. As his visitor reluctantly moved to the door, he capped his first offer by adding, 'I will go one better: I will instruct my men to play against *ministers* only, and I agree to forfeit any reasonable sum if they break the contract.' Now, the superintendent was a religious man in his way—that is, so far as his duties permitted him; and, in amazement, he asked Canada Bill what he meant. The reply he received left him deeply thinking of a rather stiff donation his wife had insisted on his handing over to their own pastor a few days previously for the latter's summer holiday. 'When a minister gets on a train he always has a pocketful of money given him by his church for his summer holiday. Over ninety per cent. of them, according to our experience, are anxious to increase their capital; and when they see two or three innocent-looking old jays of farmers having a quiet little game, they *always* want to join in. A minister, mister, is always a dead-sure thing to us, every time.' Sore at his failure to secure a monopoly, he revenged himself on the superintendent by instructing some of his best men to keep on his track; and within a month they succeeded in abstracting his watch, chain, and well-lined pocket-book. The watch was a presentation one, and valuable. Canada Bill could not resist the temptation, so he forwarded the watch and chain to the owner, to the latter's great surprise and joy, together with a card on which was neatly written, 'With C. B.'s compliments.' As all good things come to an end, so did Canada Bill; he died full of years and cash. The police, during one of their spasmodic attempts at enforcing the law, arrested and convicted several members of the gang, who had no longer a

friend at court to protect them. Train-men had strict orders to stop all gambling they saw, and so the game no longer paid for the risk. I may add that the box-trick was an exceedingly clever one, requiring an expert proficiency in sleight-of-hand to be successful. An elaborately-carved wooden match-box, together with an apparently identical one (save that the latter was simply a solid block of wood), was the stock in hand. A confederate politely asked the match-box man for a light; the latter, after relighting his cigar,

handed the box closed to the applicant, who, after vainly attempting to open it, handed it back to the owner, laughingly saying, 'I suppose there is a secret spring. I certainly cannot open it.' 'Oh no!—it's simplicity itself;' again opening the box and striking a match, then again handing back the box—in reality, the solid block. This little pastime was, of course, only indulged in before a suitable assemblage of onlookers. Bets were made, excitement spread rapidly, and the box-trick flourished exceedingly.

THE TAPU OF BANDERAH:

A TALE OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

CHAPTER II.—A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION.



FEW hours later De Vere was on very friendly terms with Mr and Mrs Deighton, who had carried him off to the mission-house after the boat had returned to the schooner. Before he accompanied them, however, he told Burrowes and Schwartzkoff, as he shook hands, that he would not fail to visit them later on in the day at their respective houses; and both Peter and the American, who on any other occasion would have been highly indignant at any white visitor, not a missionary himself, foregoing even for a short time the pleasure of their society for that of a 'parson,' gave De Vere vigorous hand-grasps, and said that they would be proud to see him. Then they hurried off homewards.

Peter's house and trading-station lay midway between those of Charlie Blount's and the American's; but instead of making for his own place, Peter, to the surprise of Blount, who was standing at his door watching them, went inside Burrowes's house with its owner.

'That's curious, now,' said Blount in English to one of his half-caste daughters, a girl of eighteen. 'Those two fellows hate each other like poison, and I've never known the Dutchman go into the Yankee's house, or the Yankee into his, for the past two years, and they are now as thick as thieves. I wonder what infernal roguery they are up to.'

Charlie Blount's amazement was perfectly natural. The German and the American did dislike each other most intensely. Neither of them had lived so long on Mayou as Blount, but each was trying hard to work the other off the island by mutual accusations of cheating to the natives. As a matter of fact, they both cheated, and were both dangerous men, who would stick at nothing. Banderah, the head-chief of Mayou, who liked white men, managed to keep a hollow peace between the two men themselves, and between them and his own people, who disliked

them equally. He was perfectly well aware that the white men cheated his people and himself, but as long as their cheating was practised only moderately he did not mind. They were useful to him in many ways, especially in supplying him with arms and ammunition, which he loved dearly, and on this account alone he would have tolerated their presence on the island.

With Blount, however, he was on terms of absolute friendship, and his confidence in and good feeling towards him was shared with the savage chief by every one of his people.

Perhaps, had Blount been a witness of what occurred when the boat had landed, his previous suspicions of the character of his two fellow-traders would have been considerably augmented; for, while the missionary and De Vere were bandying compliments, the German and American were exchanging signs with the officer in charge of the boat, whom De Vere addressed as 'Captain Sykes.' The American, indeed, had started down the beach to speak to him, when De Vere called to the sailor to return to the ship; and Captain Sykes, with a gesture signifying that he would see Burrowes later on, swung round the boat's head, and gave the word to his Kanaka crew to give way. As if quite satisfied with this dumb promise, the American returned to the group he had just left; and the moment the missionary, Mrs Deighton, and De Vere had gone, he and the German walked off together.

As soon as the pair entered the American's house Burrowes sat down on the table, and the German on a gin-case.

'Wal, Dutchy,' said Burrowes, looking keenly at his companion, 'I reckon you know who the almighty swell in the brass-bound suit is, hey?'

'Yaw,' replied Schwartzkoff; 'und I vas thought he vas in brison put for ten years mit.'

'Wal, he did get ten years; that's true enough. But thet was six years ago, an' I reckon they've let him out. Public feelin' agin nigger-catchin' ain't as strong now as it was then.

It's necessary—so the governments of Fiji and Queensland sez—ter accept the provision made by Providence to hev the soil tilled, and niggers was meant ter till it for thirty dollars a year to the toon of "Rool Britannyer."

'Dot is so,' assented the German; then he leaned forward—'but vat vas Pilker doing here in dis fine, svell schooner mit?'

The American placed his long, dirty forefinger on the German's shoulder.

'That is jest what you an' me is agoin' ter diskiver. An' I guess thet you an' me is agoin' to find out darned easy. Bilker ain't agoin' to fool me; an' if he's on to anything good, I guess I'm goin' to have a cut in.'

'Vell, ve see py-und-py, ven he comes ashore. But there vas von ding I tells you—dot fine shentlemans don't know somedings vat you und me knows about Captain Pilker.'

The American gave an affirmative wink, and then, going to a rude cupboard, he took out a bottle of gin and a couple of tin mugs.

'Look hyar, Peter, I guess you an' me's goin' to do some business over this schooner, so let's be friends.'

'I vas agreeable,' said the German, with alacrity, rising from his seat; and accepting the peace-offering in the tin mug, he nodded to the American and tossed it off.

By lunch-time Mr Morecombe-Lycett had been brought ashore, and had accepted Mr Deighton's invitation to remain for the night. He was a well-dressed, good-looking man of thirty-five, and was—so the missionary sympathetically announced to his wife—suffering from a touch of malarial fever, which a little quinine and nursing would soon put right. Mr Deighton was suffering from the same complaint himself, but made little of it as he sat and talked to his visitors.

At noon, as Charlie Blount was walking past Burrowes's house, he was surprised to see the German still there. He was about to pass on—for, although not on unfriendly terms with the two men, he did not care for either of them sufficiently well to enter their houses very often, although they did his—when the American came to the door and asked him to come in and take a drink.

'Are you going on board the schooner?' asked Burrowes as Blount came in and sat down.

'No. I'm going to Lak-a-lak. I've got some natives cutting timber for me there, and thought I would just walk along the beach and see how they are getting on. Besides that, my little girl Nellie is there with my wife's brother.'

'Why,' said Burrowes, with genuine surprise, 'won't you go aboard and see if they have any provisions to sell? I heerd you say the other day that you had jest run out of coffee an' tinned meats.'

'So I have; but I don't care about going on

board for all that.' Then, looking the two men straight in their faces, he drank off the gin, set the mug down on the table, and resumed: 'I saw by my glass that that scoundrelly cut-throat and blackbirder, Bilker, is on board. That's enough for me. I heard that the infernal ruffian got ten years in Sydney jail. Sorry he wasn't hanged.'

'Vy,' said the German, whose face was considerably flushed by the liquor he had drunk, 'you vas in der plackpird drade yourselves von dime.'

'So I was, Peter,' said Blount quietly, 'but in ships which did the thing honestly, fairly and squarely. I, and those with me when I was in the labour-trade, never stole a nigger nor shot one. This fellow Bilker was a disgrace to every white man in the trade. He is a notorious, cold-blooded murderer.'

The conversation fell a bit flat after this, for Messrs Burrowes and Schwartzkoff began to feel uncomfortable. Six or seven years before, although then unknown to each other, and living on different islands in the New Hebrides group, they each had had business relations with Captain Bilker in the matter of supplying him with 'cargo' during his cruises for 'blackbirds'; and each of them had so carried on the 'trade' that both were ultimately compelled to leave the scenes of their operations with great haste, and take up their residence elsewhere, particularly as the commander of the cruiser which captured Captain Bilker had expressed a strong desire to make their acquaintance, and let them keep that worthy company to the gallows.

'Wal,' resumed the American, 'I guess every man has his own opinions on sich things. I have mine. Why, here's Mr Doo Veer.—Walk right in, sir, an' set daown.—And Mister Deighton too.—Howdy, parson? I'm glad to see you.'

The moment the visitors entered Blount rose to go, but the missionary, with good-natured, blundering persistency, pressed him back, holding his hand the while.

'Mr De Vere, this is Mr Blount, my very good and esteemed friend, and our countryman as well.'

'How do you do?' said the trader, taking the visitor's hand, but quickly dropping it. There was something in De Vere's set smile and cold, watery-blue eyes that he positively resented, although he knew not why. Blount, too, objected to the new-comer's habit of continually displaying his white, shapely hands, of which he seemed exceedingly proud.

However, as the dull-minded but good-hearted Deighton seemed very anxious that Blount should stay and help to entertain his guest, the trader resumed his seat, but did so with restraint and impatience showing strongly in his sunburnt and resolute face. For some ten minutes or so he remained, speaking only when he was spoken to; then he rose, and nodding a cool 'Good-day' to

the handsome Mr De Vere and the two traders, he strode to the door and walked out.

Before he was half-way from Burrowes's house to the mission-station he was overtaken by Mr Deighton.

'Mr De Vere has gone on board again,' he said in his slow, solemn way—'gone on board to get some English newspapers for me. What a very estimable and kind gentleman, Mr Blount! An aristocrat to the backbone, and a gentleman—a gentleman above all, Mr Blount—a gentleman above all. His visit has given me the most unalloyed'—

'He may be "very kind," as you say,' said Blount curtly, 'but my judgment has gone very much astray if he is what he represents himself to be. I believe the fellow is a fraud.'

'Mr Blount!' and the missionary looked genuinely shocked. 'How can you say that? You are very unjust as well as very much in error. Mr De Vere is a scion of one of the noblest of our many noble English families. He told me so himself.'

'Ah, did he? That just confirms me in my opinion of the fellow. Now, look here, Mr Deighton'—and his tone became slightly irritated—'I'm not surprised that this Mr De Vere—who, whatever he is, is *not* a scion of any noble English family—should impose upon ignorant men like Burrowes and the German, but that he should impose on you does surprise me. And yet I don't know. It is very often the case that those whose education and intelligence should be

a safeguard to them against the most palpable imposture are as easily imposed upon as the ignorant and uncultured.'

'Imposture, Mr Blount! Do you mean to say'—

'I mean to say that this man De Vere, with his flashy get-up and imposing name, is *not* an English gentleman. He may deceive you—for you are a trusting man—and the men we have left, but he doesn't deceive me. I lived in England a long time ago, Mr Deighton, and once mixed with the class of people to which Mr De Vere professes to belong.' He turned his face away and added dreamily, 'A long time, a very long time ago; and then, with savage emphasis: 'And I no more believe that Mr "De Vere" comes from a good English family than I do that Nathaniel Burrowes, a low, broken-down New Orleans levée loafer, comes from one of the "first families in Virginia" that American newspapers are always blethering about.'

'What do you think, then, is wrong with Mr De Vere?'

'Nothing, perhaps, from your point of view; everything from mine. And so far as I am concerned, I mean to have nothing to do with these two "English gentlemen" and the yacht *Island Maid*. Well, here we are at the mission-gate, so good-day, Mr Deighton; I'm going as far as Lak-a-lak to see how my timber-getters are doing;' and shaking hands with the troubled missionary, the big, dark-faced trader strode along the beach alone.

PARASITES AND THEIR PECULIARITIES.

By PERCY H. GRIMSHAW, F.E.S.



IN common language, a parasite is a creature which lives at the expense of its neighbour; but, scientifically, this definition is not quite exact enough. No one can deny, for instance, that a tiger lives at the expense of those weaker animals which are unfortunate enough to dwell in his vicinity; but we can hardly apply the name of parasite to this familiar beast. To speak more accurately, therefore, we should define a parasite as a being which derives its nutriment from some other creature, to which it is either temporarily or permanently attached, without endangering the life of its host. We often find one animal attached to another without actually feeding upon it, as in the case of sea-anemones. These creatures are sometimes found adhering to crabs or other slow-moving inhabitants of the sea; but they are in no sense parasitic, only becoming attached for the purpose of obtaining more rapidly a change of residence and surroundings.

Parasites do not belong to any special class of

their own, but are to be met with in nearly all the lower groups of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. Thus we have parasitic insects, parasitic worms and shell-fish, parasitic fungi and flowering plants. But it is a curious and noteworthy fact that nearly all beings which have adopted this mode of living are very abnormal in their organisation, so much so that naturalists are often much exercised in their minds as to their real relationships. As a result of what we might call their degraded ways of life, the organs of parasites lose their functions and become modified and degraded also. In those groups of animals which pass through different stages in reaching the adult state, the parasitic representatives usually skip one or more of these stages, and, indeed, do not undergo much change at any period of their life.

As may be gathered from what we have already said, parasites are to be found in both the animal and vegetable kingdoms; but in the present paper we shall confine our attention to the former. It is among animals that we shall find the most interesting cases in illustration of their peculiar

structure and habits. Although they cannot be referred to any special class in the animal kingdom, yet, for purposes of convenience, we may roughly group them into sections according to their degree of dependence upon their host. Thus we have, to begin with, those parasites which are free during their whole life, only becoming attached to their victim for the purpose of feeding. Such are leeches, gnats, gadflies, lice, fleas, and a host of others. Then, some are free when young, passing the later periods of their life attached to or within the body of their host. Examples of these are the ticks, many crustaceans or shell-fish, and some of the worms. Others, again, reverse these conditions, commencing life as parasites and afterwards living a free and independent existence—for example, botflies and many other parasitic insects. Lastly, many animals are entirely dependent upon and attached to other animals throughout their existence—many of these, strange to say, changing their host either once only or more than once. The liver-fluke is perhaps the most familiar example of this latter class.

It is quite impossible, within the limits of a single article, to treat adequately of these various grades of parasitism. Whole volumes have been, and may still be, written showing the peculiar relations of host and guest in the various cases known; and our present purpose will best be served by taking one or two examples of each class, and describing briefly the most interesting facts in connection with them.

Of all parasites, surely the flea is the best known. It is an example of the first class, being quite free from its host in all stages of its life, and only attaching itself to feed. It is also an example of the difficulty experienced by zoologists as to the real affinities of parasites; for though now generally regarded as a degraded form of two-winged fly, yet in past time it has been variously located, and even now is often considered the type of a distinct order of insects. Fleas pass through the usual stages of an insect's life—namely, the egg, grub, pupa, and adult. The eggs are laid in dark, out-of-the-way places, such as chinks and cracks, or on rugs and carpets; and from them are hatched the grubs, which feed on dust, particles of feathers, or other animal substances. After about twelve days the grub changes into a quiescent pupa, and this in another fortnight or so to the perfect insect. It is only in this latter state that the flea sucks blood, all the other stages being inoffensive. It is curious that large swarms of fleas are sometimes found in situations where blood is only very rarely accessible, and in these cases some other means of subsistence must be resorted to.

The well-known and justly-dreaded leeches are also to be placed in the same category with the fleas, for they too limit their unwelcome attentions to such times as they are feeding. They are both aquatic and terrestrial in their habits, and attack

not only human beings, but also horses, cattle, fish, frogs, snails, and even insects. In Ceylon and other parts of the East the traveller encounters perhaps the most formidable of these ever-hungry parasites in the form of land-leeches, whose repulsive appearance and method of approach are sufficient of themselves to inspire both man and beast with a feeling of disgust and dread. They are worm-like creatures, broad at the hinder extremity and tapering to a point in front. At the broad end is a powerful sucker by which the leech adheres during its operations, while at the narrow end we find a sucker-like mouth armed with three jaws. Each of these jaws is in the form of a finely-toothed plate, and these veritable saws by their united action are capable of inflicting a deep and freely-bleeding wound. Their method of moving over the ground is very peculiar. By fixing down first one end and then the other, and alternately raising them again, these creatures advance by a characteristic looping gait, and on the approach of the unwary traveller a large number of them assemble with remarkable rapidity, and place themselves in a semi-erect position ready for attack. Upon seeing their victim they march rapidly upon him, and almost before he is aware of the fact have climbed his person and immediately proceed to thrust their hungry jaws into his flesh. Their bite is so deep that blood trickles rapidly out and runs freely down the body and legs of the disgusted and terrified traveller, who suffers no serious harm, however, so long as the wounds are not rubbed or irritated. Nevertheless, ulcers are sometimes the result, and these may even become dangerous, as was the case with some Madras sepoys during a rebellion which occurred in 1818, when numbers of them perished through this cause. When the leech is gorged with the life-fluid of its victim it drops off, falling heavily to the ground, and remaining in a quiet and harmless state until its heavy meal is digested, this process occupying weeks or even months. It is well, indeed, that the alimentary functions of such a glutton are not more active, and that it can only indulge its appetite once in a while, else such blood-letting would prove a serious obstacle to Eastern travel.

Of parasites which are free while young and only parasitic at a later stage, we may shortly describe two types—namely, the ticks and the *Filaria* or guinea-worm. The first of these are found when young upon plants. Though often called insects, they cannot bear this name in a scientific sense, for they are in reality members of the spider class, possessing when fully developed four pairs of legs, and having the head fused with the middle portion of the body. Nevertheless, when young they have only six legs, a character which is quite exceptional in the class to which they belong. In tropical countries ticks are exceedingly troublesome, and attain a considerable size. Like gnats and some other insects, the females alone

are the blood-suckers. They live amongst bushes and herbage, and rest quietly with their hook-tipped legs stretched out ready to catch upon the skin or hair of any two-footed or four-footed passer-by. When attached they plunge in their serrated proboscis and suck steadily until they become distended to fifty or a hundred times their original size. The proboscis cannot be withdrawn without the aid of the tick itself, and the creature is so pertinacious that it will often allow itself to be torn to pieces rather than let go. The common dog-tick, though very minute at first, becomes, when distended with blood, similar both in size and appearance to a Windsor bean.

The other example of the second class of parasites that we have selected is also a terror to the traveller, and is found principally on the west coast of Africa. The life-history of the guinea-worm, as it is called, is most curious. It has been shown that the young worms, which are found in water, make their way first of all into the body of a small aquatic crustacean, and that it is by the swallowing of this with drinking-water that the creature is introduced into the human body. It then forces itself into the muscles and tissues just beneath the skin, and there forms an abscess. Upon the bursting of this abscess the young which have been formed in it escape to the exterior, and so the round of life again commences. As the guinea-worm may attain a length of two feet, it is not difficult to understand the serious nature of the illness induced by its presence.

Of parasites whose dependence upon their host is limited to the earlier stages of their existence, we have only space to consider a single example—namely, the red-bearded botfly, which attacks deer. This insect was only discovered to be an inhabitant of this country some two years ago, having been captured in the Ross-shire deer-forests and afterwards in the Cairngorms. It furnishes us with a good illustration of a peculiarity of parasites which we have already mentioned—namely, the shortening of their life-history by the skipping of one or more of the progressive stages through which other members of their class usually pass. Thus the female of this botfly does not lay eggs as other flies do, but gives birth to living maggots in the following curious fashion: Flying round and round the head of the poor quadruped selected as the victim, the insect suddenly darts down at the animal's nostril, and squirts therein a drop of fluid, which, if examined, will be found to contain a number of tiny maggots. These commence feeding upon the mucus and fluids in the nasal passages, and, by a curious wriggling movement, work themselves backwards until they reach the throat, where they attain their full growth. By their great irritation ulcers are formed, and the deer becomes subject to fits of sneezing and coughing. During one of these

attacks the full-grown maggot becomes ejected from the mouth and falls to the ground, where it lies dormant for some time and becomes a pupa. In the following spring the winged fly emerges to enjoy a free existence. If a female, it soon proceeds to follow the example of its parent, and in a similar manner initiates a new generation of these irritating and even dangerous parasitic grubs.

Lastly, we must say something of those parasites which have no free and separate existence at all, but which spend the whole of their degraded lives attached to or within the body of other animals. Many of these migrate, so to speak, at various periods of their existence from one kind of animal to another, and their life-history is consequently of considerable interest, not to say importance. We shall take just a couple of examples of this last group, and these must close our brief sketch of the peculiarities of parasites, those strange dependent creatures which infest all kinds and conditions of life from man himself down to the tiniest insect, or even lower still—the host, indeed, in some cases, being hardly bigger than the parasite it carries.

Every one has heard something, at least, of tapeworms, for they are only too common. They are found all over the world—everywhere, in fact, where domestic animals have accompanied man in his wanderings. The species known as *Tænia solium*, or the 'pork' tapeworm, is one of the commonest and best known, and will therefore serve well as a type of these repulsive and troublesome creatures. Roughly speaking, it consists of a head armed with suckers and hooks, and a vast number of segments, each of the hinder ones of which is capable of producing a new individual. There is no digestive apparatus whatever, and the necessary nourishment is simply absorbed through the skin. The head of the worm is securely hooked to the wall of the intestine of its host, while the remainder of the body seems to be adapted for nothing else but the production of new individuals. Hence the rapidity with which these creatures increase. The segments of the body become more individualised and independent as they recede from the head, and when the terminal ones become old enough and sufficiently ripe they simply break off, and are expelled from the body. These ripe segments are chiefly a mass of eggs, and, being now set free, are soon swallowed by that reverse-of-dainty animal, the pig. Within the pig's body the eggs are hatched and become little bladdery worms, which give rise to the condition known as 'measly' pork. When the diseased pork is afterwards eaten by a human subject, the young bladder-worm quickly develops into a mature tapeworm, budding off from its head an interminable number of joints, so that the whole creature may be ten feet in length, and consist of upwards of eight hundred separate joints! The bladder-worms may develop in

almost any part of the body; and when they reach the heart, brain, or other vital organ, quickly prove fatal. Such cases, happily, are rare, and the most usual situation infested by these 'cysticerci,' as they are called, is the tissue immediately beneath the skin.

The well-known 'liver-fluke' is another curious example of parasitic worms with a varied life-history. This creature, the cause of the dire disease known as liver-rot, so fatal in certain seasons to our sheep, is found all over Europe, North Asia, and the north of Africa. Strange to relate, the young stages of this destructive pest are spent within the body of a snail which lives in water. After a time the young flukes leave the body of the mollusc and settle upon blades of grass. Naturally enough they are then eaten by some unsuspecting sheep, who is doomed to suffer for its ignorance. After about a month the poor animal becomes languid, the whites of its eyes turn yellow, the wool falls off, and fever ensues. A couple of months later, if the sheep has not already succumbed, other symptoms become prevalent; swellings in different parts of the body become noticeable, especially a large one under the jaw. By this time the fluke has reached the liver, where it may remain for some time. It

usually, however, forces its way out through the bile-duct into the intestine, whence it escapes to the exterior. Few sheep recover from this terrible disease, and most of those attacked die in the early stages. The fluke is not confined to the sheep, but sometimes occurs in the horse, in deer, goats, and many other animals. It has even attacked man himself, but this is a rare case, and most fortunately so.

We thus see that the life-phenomena of parasites are extremely interesting and varied in their nature, and there are scores—nay, hundreds of others that we have not even hinted at, whose habits are equally worthy of our consideration. Moreover, we have said little or nothing of their internal structure, and here we should find still more interesting facts for study. We should see the curious economy of Nature on every hand, as evinced in the total suppression of organs where they are not needed. We should see the development of others adapted for purposes peculiar to parasitic life, and a host of other anatomical details most wonderful and suggestive, leading us, indeed, to forget the horrible ideas we usually associate with parasites, and teaching us that in whatever obscure corner of Nature's world we look we shall find something to marvel at and admire.

THE BROTHERS OF THE WOLF.

By WILLIAM LE QUEUX, Author of *If Sinners Entice Thee, The Bond of Black, Whoso Findeth a Wife, The Day of Temptation, &c.*



T was certainly a very odd experience.

The half-legendary village of Monte Lupo, the Misty Mountain of the Wolf, had for years possessed an attraction for me as a place to visit, for its people had a decidedly bad reputation.

Ask any man in Tuscany, or in Italy for the matter of that, whether he has heard of Monte Lupo, and he will raise his shoulders to his ears, exhibit his palms, and pull a very wry face. It is a place that the Tuscan does not care to mention.

I confess to be fond of poking about in the quaint out-of-the-way corners of Italy; therefore, for the purpose of a book I was engaged upon last summer, I one day determined to set forth and see this mysterious place for myself. Perhaps the real reason of my journey was because my friend Carpena, of the Carbineers, had told me that for many years there had been sinister rumours regarding the inhabitants of that almost inaccessible little village high up in the very heart of the blue, towering Apennines, and had added: 'The fact is, in that place they're all thieves and murderers. But our Government are so slow to act.'

The popular idea, of course, is that brigandage

has been stamped out in Italy; but within thirty miles of where I live, down in the Maremma—that wide fever-marsh stretching from Pisa towards Rome—the country is even to-day scoured by the fearless outlaws who will attack and rob the traveller, and slit his throat if he resists. Those unsafe roads are daily and nightly patrolled by mounted Carbineers in pairs, smart in their cocked hats, white gloves, and immaculate uniforms; but very often in broad daylight there is a sharp crack of a hidden rifle, and one or other of the unfortunate guards falls from his saddle with a bullet through his heart.

I told nobody of my intention of visiting Monte Lupo, supposed to be the headquarters of the Maremma outlaws; but, putting my revolver in my pocket, I one day travelled by train up to Lucca, driving thence in five hours into the mountains, where I slept the night at Ponte e Serraglio, a quiet, peaceful little village embowered in limes and chestnuts in the midst of wild and magnificent scenery. Next day at dawn I pushed farther on into the mountains, until, about two o'clock, we reached a tiny unnamed hamlet, where I ordered my wondering driver to remain until my return.

In August, the 'Month of the Lion,' as it is called in Tuscany, the days are long; therefore I

set out alone for Monte Lupo, and, directed by an old herdsman I met upon the road, traversed one of the wildest and loneliest valleys I have ever entered. Its perfect silence, even in the sunlight, was most depressing. An eagle soaring far above was the only living thing I saw. At last, however, I came to a broken moss-grown bridge over a mountain torrent, a relic of medieval times, and high up rose towering towards the sky a sheer wall of bare gray rock. In vain I looked for the village, but could see nothing. So cunningly was the place constructed back in the Middle Ages that from the road it was not visible. In that solid wall of rock, I afterwards discovered, were loopholes overlooking the whole country for many miles. Only on one side—the side unapproachable—was this nest of thieves visible at all, the only way to the ancient stronghold being by the steep, narrow path by which I was ascending.

The long climb was very tedious in the blazing sun, until, at a sharp bend in the path, I passed through an ancient gateway in which a rusty portcullis still remained, and a few moments later found myself in the small, evil-smelling mountain village, the home of the daring Brothers of the Wolf.

The place, white beneath the sun-glare, was deserted, the only sign of life being a few strutting hens and a mangy cat stretched lazily on the hot stones. It was very interesting as a well-preserved mountain stronghold—exactly the same that day as ages ago, when the immortal Dante lived in Florence, and the Guelphs and Ghibellines fought so fiercely in the valley through which I had passed. The world had much changed in the past six hundred years; but Monte Lupo had remained there ever the same, watching that silent valley, its people robbers through every generation.

Among the old, tumble-down houses I wandered until I came to one with a national coat-of-arms upon it, and, having knocked, I was admitted into a large, cool room with stone floor, a big table in the centre, and benches around, reminding me of a public-house taproom in England. It was the Syndic's drawing-room.

Presently that functionary appeared, a thin-faced, small-eyed man of fifty, a well-to-do *contadino*. He had evidently watched my approach with all the village, for in order to receive me he had put on his *vesta* clothes. In response to my respectful salutations he became the essence of Italian politeness, and requested me to be seated.

When we had chatted for a few minutes he suddenly exclaimed:

'The signore is English?'

'Yes,' I answered, smiling. 'But how did you know I was not German?'

'The English always have the same accent. They cannot roll our Italian *r's*;' and, laughing, he rose and took from a cupboard a big flask of red wine and a couple of glasses. 'This is the

best I can offer you,' he said. 'It isn't exactly Château Lafitte, you know.'

I tasted it—an excellent Rufina, but a trifle acid. Then we fell to chatting about the prospects of the wine season, the eternal subject of conversation with the Tuscan *contadini*.

In reply to his inquiry, I told him that I lived in the city away by the sea, whereupon he regarded me curiously, and said in a voice of interrogation:

'Then the signore is the Englishman who writes books?'

I nodded. Strange, I thought, that I should be known in that out-of-the-world place. I reflected, however, how I had heard that the outlaws of the Maremma had spies in every town. Truly I was in queer company. Still, as guest of the Syndic, I was perfectly safe.

He handed me a long Tuscan Virginia, one of those thin, rank cigars which diffuse a choking odour of burnt paper; and, fearing to offend him, I lit it and tried to appear as though I enjoyed his rough hospitality. Truth to tell, however, there was a look in his small, keen eyes that I did not at all like. It had occurred to me that I was in a den of the very worst thieves in the whole of a thieving country; and that, if they suspected me of spying, a quick cut from a ready knife might end my career.

Gradually, however, all fear left me. I began to feel really pleased that I had come there. A curious sensation of elation crept over me, as though the wine had been a trifle too heavy. Perhaps, however, it was that horrible stinking arrangement of cabbage-leaves. At any rate, my head was reeling. I was a fool to have ventured there.

I tried to rise, but my legs refused to support me. I heard my host speaking in a strange, far-off voice, and a few seconds later a sudden darkness fell upon me, blotting out all consciousness.

How long I remained in that helpless condition I have no idea. When, however, I opened my eyes, I found myself in a dark, damp, cellar-like place, with a chilling drip, drip of water sounding in my ears. I was propped up against the wall, but the place was in pitch darkness. I groped about, and discovered that the chamber was a narrow underground place, probably one of the old subterranean cells of the ruined medieval castle around which the village was built. The ponderous door was locked. I shouted and pounded upon it, but there was no sound. I seemed entombed. Through several anxious hours I paced the noisome place, reproaching myself that I had ventured there, until at length the door was unbarred by two men—dark-faced, evil-looking scoundrels, who carried lanterns. Both wished me a polite good-morning. I reflected that if it were morning I must have remained unconscious for many hours.

Then, in reply to my inquiry as to the reason I was held a prisoner, one man, who spoke in a tone of authority, although with most ineffable politeness, said:

'All those who visit Monte Lupo must pay toll.'

'You want money?' I said, feeling like a rat in a hole. 'You shall have all that I have upon me;' and I placed my hand in my pocket, drawing forth thirty-three francs in paper money.

The fellow smiled, excused himself, but politely informed me that such an amount was absolutely useless. His appearance coincided exactly with the description I had had of the fearless Conti, chief of the Brothers of the Wolf.

'Well,' I said furiously, 'yesterday I called upon the Syndic of this village, who, I presume, drugged the wine he gave me and handed me over to you. Remember I'm an Englishman, and the Ministry down at Rome will hear of this.'

'It is quite needless for the signore to express anger,' answered the imperturbable outlaw, with a grim smile. 'A little draft for five thousand francs upon the signore's banker will settle matters. Our good Tonio, here, will take it down to Livorno, and the day after to-morrow he will return with the money. When he comes back the signore will, if he wishes, be at liberty to withdraw himself from our hospitality.'

'I'll write nothing of the sort,' I answered.

There was a dead silence.

'That is your decision?' he asked after a pause. 'Certainly.'

He smiled grimly. Then, crossing the chamber, he placed a key in a low door in the opposite wall and opened it.

'The signore has come to see the sights of Monte Lupo. It is good. He shall see them all;' and he waved his hand in the direction of the inner chamber.

I looked in. The gruesome sight I witnessed there caused me to start back horrified. A cold perspiration broke out upon me. The place, lit by a feeble lamp, smelt of chloride of lime, and in the floor was an open grave. Beside it was an open coffin, containing the body of a man.

At this spot the Brothers of the Wolf got rid of the evidences of their crimes. There was truth, then, in the rumour that the bodies of those they murdered they buried in quicklime.

'The signore you see there,' he explained, indicating the body, 'was, like yourself, disinclined to make us any little present, so we are presenting him with a snug bed instead;' and his harsh laugh was echoed by his grinning companion.

The situation was desperate. This band of outlaws was feared from end to end of Tuscany. Those who fell into their hands and would not pay they murdered, fearing lest they should complain to the authorities. Those who paid were released only on a vow of secrecy. The victims, for the most part landowners, knew too well the terrible

vengeance which this band would wreak upon them and their families if they informed.

'Now,' said the man persuasively, 'if the signore is willing to write us an order for the money, we are quite ready. The signore is English, therefore rich. Five thousand francs is surely not much?'

In English money it was two hundred pounds. 'I'm poor,' I declared. 'I can't give you so much.'

'We never bargain with a gentleman for his life,' the fellow answered, with an air of superior *nonchalance*, closing the door of the inner chamber. He spoke almost perfect Italian, without that curious aspirate which marks the Tuscan tongue. According to popular belief this suave bandit belonged to one of the first families in Rome, but had killed a rival to the hand of the woman who was now the notorious Princess Palladio, and had ever since hidden in the mountains, becoming chief of the dreaded Brothers.

I knew he was not a man to be trifled with. Suddenly a brilliant idea came to me; so I said with apparent ill-grace:

'Bring me a pen and paper, then.'

They brought it, and upon it I wrote the following order upon French's, the English bank in Florence, scribbling badly, so that the outlaws would be unable to read it:

'Please pay bearer £200. Tell Consul-General I am held prisoner at the Mountain of the Wolf.' Then, having signed it, I handed it to Conti.

He carefully examined it, and smiled in satisfaction.

'Good,' he responded. 'Tonio will ride a fast horse into Firenze, and return to-morrow. Until then, I regret that the signore should be inconvenienced and rendered so uncomfortable.'

But I declared that it was a mere trifle, congratulating myself, nevertheless, upon outwitting these scoundrels. In the course of a few hours the Carbineers would swoop down upon this colony of outlaws, and the encounter was certain to be a very sharp and lively one.

The head of the fearless brotherhood thoughtfully left me his lamp; and patiently I waited in that gloomy cell through several hours.

Again the door was suddenly thrown open, and Conti appeared, his face pale and distorted by fierce anger.

'So you would give us up to the guards—eh?' he snarled, waving the paper in my face. 'You thought us such fools that we could not read English? But we are not to be entrapped like that. We never take money from those who cannot keep a still tongue. Only the silent go forth from here.'

My position was indeed desperate. I had heard sufficient of their inhuman treatment of those who refused to pay ransom to know that I, having failed to outwit them, might now be

murdered without the slightest compunction. By that ill-advised note I had foolishly shown myself their enemy.

'You have seen that open grave beyond,' the notorious outlaw said in a hard voice. 'It is prepared for you! You will pay, or you will not leave this place alive!'

'Enough!' I cried, springing suddenly upon him. 'Take that!' and drawing my revolver, which still remained in my pocket, apparently overlooked by them when I was unconscious, I fired point-blank in his face. 'And that!'

He sprang back with a startled cry, evidently amazed that I had a weapon. A third shot I directed at his companion; and ere the flash had died away I had dashed through the door and up a short flight of broken steps into the light of day.

I emerged amid the ruins of the great old castle; but, running to the rampart, I sprang over it, and found myself outside the village, with the path by which I had ascended deep down before me.

Away I dashed for life. Behind me sounded wild shouts and vehement curses; and as I ran rifles cracked behind me, and several bullets whistled unpleasantly about my ears. The hasty footsteps of my pursuers gradually gained upon me, and I knew that it would be useless to make any stand against them. Therefore, heedless of where I went, and urged to take terrible leaps by a courage begotten of a strong desire for life, I sped on; down, down the mountain-side, until I reached the broken bridge and the high-road, where I found that, having successfully leaped several places where my pursuers feared to follow, I had once more gained considerably upon them. Those wild leaps saved me.

Again my pursuers fired at me, but their bullets went wide.

The *Ave Maria* was ringing when, having joined my anxious driver, who was waiting for me at the hamlet, I drove into Ponte e Serraglio; and it was past midnight when our wheels rattled over the uneven pebbles of gray old Lucca.

Next morning I told my story to the *Questore*, or chief of police, and then went my way, full of vivid recollections of my exciting adventure.

Since then, during the past year, the daring robberies and outrages committed by the Brothers of the Wolf have been innumerable. A paragraph which I, however, read some six weeks ago in the *Tribuna* caused me considerable satisfaction. The cutting, now before me as I write, translated, states that a strong force of Carbineers secretly ascended to the village of Monte Lupo by night, and succeeded in surprising the outlaws. A fierce encounter ensued, during which the guards succeeded in shooting the ringleader Conti and four of his companions. Some twenty prisoners were taken, all of whom were recognised as

desperate thieves, including the Syndic, who was alleged to have profited considerably by the depredations of the villagers, and to have given them his countenance and protection. The Minister of the Interior had, on hearing of this, issued an order that the village should be destroyed by explosives, and this had been done after the household effects of the whole place had been heaped up and burned.

'The Carbineers discovered a large quantity of stolen property hidden in the ancient fortress,' the paragraph continues; 'but what was strangest of all was a chamber wherein was an open grave. In this horrible place, one of the ancient dungeons of the castle, was a coffin containing the body of a victim apparently awaiting burial in quicklime. At first the guards were horrified; but their horror was turned to laughter when they found that the supposed body was in reality only a wax-faced dummy, and that the whole scene was cunningly arranged to terrify the victims from whom the thieves endeavoured to extort money.'

The explanation of the open grave was humorous enough; but there is at this moment when I write a terrible picture posted on the notice-board of the Communal Palace of Lucca: it is a gruesome picture of the notorious brigand Conti and his four companions, whose bodies were, after death, stuck up against a wall and photographed, by order of the Italian Government, so that the public should know that the scoundrels were really dead, and likewise to warn all other outlaws of the fate awaiting them. As for my affable friend the Syndic, he is at present on the island of Elba, serving a sentence of ten years' imprisonment.

I revisited Monte Lupo with some English friends a few days ago. The dynamite of the corps of Engineers has done its work well, for there is scarcely one stone standing upon another.

TO MY LADY.

THE light of stainless dawn is in your eyes,
And I have looked in them, and learned to pray
That in their glory I may find the way
That leads into the earthly paradise;
For you have bound me, freed me, made me wise
To read the promise of a perfect day
In your sweet face, fair as some morn in May
When earth grows young again 'neath cloudless skies.

And as through rifted clouds a man may read
The pledge of peace revealed in stormless blue,
So doth my heart, with every thought of you,
Have glimpses of a life completely freed
From all that is unrestful and untrue,
Spanned by the heaven of a lover's creed.

PERCY GALLARD.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



STEVENSON'S RELATIONS WITH CHILDREN.

By EDMUND GOSSE.

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IN 1885, when Stevenson published his book of poems called *A Child's Garden of Verses*, I was so greatly enchanted with it that I could not help importuning a great poet of an earlier generation, Mr Swinburne, to read it. If by any chance this page should meet the eye of my eminent friend, I trust that he will forgive me for saying that his reply was a terrible disappointment to me. Mr Swinburne told me that he had read *A Child's Garden* to please me, but that he could see nothing in it that showed any appreciation of childhood.

When the Editor of *The Youth's Companion* asked me to write him an article on Stevenson in his relation to children, this disconcerting incident was recalled to my memory. If Mr Swinburne was right, this essay should be like the famous chapter on 'Snakes in Iceland'—Stevenson had no relation to children! That would be a blunt way of answering the question, and it would have an element of truth, though very far from the whole truth.

Robert Louis Stevenson was an only child—a precocious child—brought up among grown-up people in the gravity of a professional home in Edinburgh. It is not for me, who was not there, to repeat anything which may have reached me about his playfellows and his relations to them in those early times. Mr Sidney Colvin will no doubt tell us all that it behoves us to know about them when he comes to publish his *Life of Stevenson*. I think we shall discover that, in spite of cousins and companions, his bringing-up was rather solitary. I may tell one story, because he told it to me himself. It holds back the veil from his childhood for a moment.

He was still a rather little boy, when, in the summer holidays, having been reading a number of 'detective' novels of a bad kind, he was passing one Sunday afternoon along a road which

led through one of the suburbs of Edinburgh, and saw a deserted house, left furnished, but without, apparently, a caretaker. It suddenly struck Stevenson that it would be a very gallant thing to break into this house. No one was in sight, and, stealing round, he found it possible to open a window at the back, and so climb in. It really was unoccupied, and he prowled from room to room, looking at the books and pictures, in a great excitement of spirit, until he heard, as he thought, a noise in the garden. This sent him immediately, in an instant collapse of courage, under a bed, and then terror seized him. He imagined himself pounced upon, charged with robbery, marched home with gyves upon his wrists, and arriving just as the family were assembling to attend evening service. He burst out crying, and could not stop, and his sobs echoed in the empty house.

He crept out where he had crept in, having done no harm to anything except his little tender Scottish conscience. But the spirit of adventure, which was native to him, is exemplified in the story, and also a sort of solitude, as of a boy obliged to play by himself for want of other pirates and burglars to combine with.

When his mind was rapidly opening out in all directions, and he was eager to form correct and independent impressions of various classes of humanity, Stevenson attempted to study children also. In 1874 he put down some notes on the movements of young children which he never, I think, published. There was little, I suppose, in these remarks which showed special interest in the theme. Of young people dancing he said: 'There is a sincerity, a directness, an impulsive truth, about their free gestures that shows throughout all imperfection, and is to us a reminiscence of primitive festivals and the Golden Age.' Again, in describing the movements of children, he rather quaintly remarked: 'In view of their future, our heart is softened towards these clumsy little ones.

They will be more adroit when they are not so happy.' These sentences, by a young man of four-and-twenty, show no instinctive sympathy with the innocent in consequence of children. Unconsciously, the writer is impatient of their immaturity, and looks forward to a time when they will have grown more interesting; and this, I think, was, in the main, Stevenson's attitude to children.

When our own children were born, it is among the pleasantest of our family memories that Stevenson took a lively interest in each event. We have to this day letters and verses from that period which are among the greatest treasures in our household archives. For ten years, from the earliest of the events so merrily and kindly recorded, Stevenson was constantly liable to break in upon us with his delightful presence. But my children, now that they are grown or growing up, lament that they recollect so little of our shining visitant. They recall his long hair falling almost to his shoulders, his brilliant eyes, the strange brown shawl which he wore about his arms in the house and even at his meals; but they have little memory of his playing with them or addressing them.

Another eminent writer, whose intimacy we enjoyed in those years long ago, used to insist on seeing the babies, on attempting to pierce their fat folds with a digging finger, and on kissing the curly rose-buds of their toes. That showed, no doubt, the genuine adorer of infancy; and, judged by that standard, I cannot question that Stevenson would have been found wanting. I do not think that he ever 'held a baby;' and, had he been forced to do so, I am convinced that the creature would have doubled up and slipped through his hands.

Some people secure a great reputation for the love of little children which they only half-deserve. I consider it only 'half-desert' when it is mingled with a desire to see how the act strikes grown-up people. I will mention a very eminent example of this. When I was young I had the privilege of knowing Hans Christian Andersen; and once, in a house in Denmark, I was fortunate enough to hear him tell a fairy-story of his own to a circle of young people. They were picturesquely arranged on low stools in front of him, and we men and women stood behind. The story was supposed to be no business of ours; but I could not help observing that the old poet constantly glanced up at us, and that there were asides and allusions in the story which the children could not have comprehended, and which he would have hated to see that we missed. I made inquiry of my hostess, and was told that Andersen would never tell stories to little children unless there was a background of adults. Stevenson was not so artful; he knew that it was the grown-up people who appreciated his conversation, and he addressed them directly. He was

prepared to wait for the children until they should grow old enough to comprehend. No one, indeed, ever supposed that he had any 'relation with children' until he began to write verses on the subject. He used to say that he wished he had a little son or daughter, in the casual, pensive way in which bachelors compliment the married, when they observe their domestic bliss and feel a fleeting caprice.

About 1878, I find, in looking over old letters, Stevenson telling me, 'I envy you your wife, your home, your child;' and this would be enough for a constructive biographer to build up a theory of Stevenson's domestic aspirations upon, were it not that, unfortunately, the sentence proceeds, and ends with 'your cat.' Now, Stevenson's relations to cats were absolutely cold; and if we had to argue that he loved children on the basis of this declaration, it would go ill with us. But, as all the world has been informed, he eventually married a lady who brought with her a young son by a former marriage.

I am not going to intrude on the province of Mr Lloyd Osbourne, who is thoroughly capable of telling us what his communications with his stepfather were; but I think he will not be angry with me if I say that the new relation, almost that of a father, and quite that of a playfellow, made an instant change in Louis Stevenson's attitude towards children. He began to see in them all variations of this intelligent and sympathetic little stepson of his own.

About 1881 Stevenson sent me a copy of verses, which have never been published; they are very entertaining in their solemn puerility; and I think that my readers will like to possess them. The poem is called 'A Martial Elegy for some Lead Soldiers,' and I suspect that it is the result of games with the pea-cannon between Louis himself and his little stepson:

'For certain soldiers lately dead
Our reverent dirge shall here be said:
Them, when their martial leader called,
No dread preparative appalled;
But, leaden-hearted, leaden-heeled,
I marked them steadfast in the field.
Death grimly sided with the foe,
And smote each leaden hero low;
Proudly they perished one by one;
The dread pea-cannon's work was done!
Oh! not for them the tears we shed,
Consigned to their congenial lead;
But, while unmoved their sleep they take,
We mourn for their dear Captain's sake—
For their dear Captain, who shall smart,
Both in his pocket and his heart,
Who saw his heroes shed their gore,
And lacked a penny to buy more.'

It was at Davos Platz, and in 1881, that the Captain, here so pathetically celebrated, put up a

small printing-press, in working which his step-father and he enjoyed themselves very much. Stevenson was inspired both with pen and pencil, and prepared three tiny volumes of verse, illustrated by himself, which were most laboriously worked off upon Master Lloyd's press. These little books are now extremely scarce, and huge prices are given for them. At that time, for five shillings, a regular 'corner' in them might have been made. In one of these the author makes the following apology:

Here, perfect to a wish,
We offer, not a dish,
But just the platter;
A book that's not a book,
A pamphlet in the look
But not the matter.

I own, in disarray,
As to the flowers of May,
The frosts of Winter,
To my poetic rage
The smallness of the page,
And—of the printer.

It is a temptation to make some extracts from these diverting little books; but as I look through my own set of them for this purpose, I am bound to admit that, although they are full of fun, it is the fun of a grown-up person reflecting on his own childishness, and not of a child among children.

We come, therefore, to the *Child's Garden of Verses*, which first made Stevenson known to the world as a poet and as a student of childhood. It is necessary to remind ourselves that twelve years ago Stevenson's name was not one to conjure with, as it is now. His friends were as timid as hens about this new experiment of their duckling's; they hesitated and doubted to the last. Nor was it only they who doubted. The poet himself had fearful qualms. He wrote to me about the proofs of the *Child's Garden of Verses*, March 12, 1885: 'They look ghastly in the cold light of print; but there is something nice in the little ragged regiment after all; the black-guards seem to me to smile, to have a kind of childish, treble note that sounds in my ears freshly; no song, if you will, but a child's voice.'

The book, therefore, was somewhat timidly published; but there was no doubt about the authenticity of the voice, and Stevenson was accepted at once as one of the rare writers of genius about childhood. And then it was that Mr Swinburne chilled my blood by denying to the verses all appreciation of childhood! The explanation was, no doubt, that Mr Swinburne—whose rapture in the helpless charm of infancy is so marked that he cannot pass a cradle without peeping in, while the sirens sing for him behind the curtain of every wandering perambulator—felt at once that Stevenson had experienced nothing of this particular fascination of the genus Child. It is true, I think; Stevenson did experience

nothing of it; but he possessed another and a still rarer quality. He retained, in extraordinary freshness, the memory of himself as a child. Most persons have a very vague recollection of what they themselves really felt and hoped for at the age of eight; they try to reproduce their impressions, and the experience of five mingles with that of fifteen. But Stevenson had no cloudiness of memory; he knew exactly what he had gone through. 'I remember,' he said, 'as though it were yesterday, the expansion of spirit, the dignity and self-reliance that came with a pair of moustachios in burnt cork, even when there was none to see.' He himself, as we soon divined, was the child whose emotions and adventures were described in the *Child's Garden of Verses*. But it was not so readily discovered that there was much of the grown-up Stevenson in some of those pretty confessions. Every one recollects and delights in 'The Land of Counterpane,' which begins:

When I was sick, and lay abed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.

All this, we may say, is the imaginative experience of a sick child. But, to the very close of Stevenson's life, he was accustomed to make up adventures as he lay in bed very still, forbidden to speak or move, propped up on pillows, with the world of fancy before him. He had retained a great deal of the temperament of a child, and it was his philosophy to encourage it. In his dreary passages of bed, when his illness was more than commonly heavy upon him, he used to contrive little amusements for himself. He played on the flute, or he modelled little figures and groups in clay. But he could not always be doing this; and when his fingers were tired he lay gazing down on the white world which covered him, and imagined that armies were marching over the hills of his knees, or ships coming to anchor between the blanket and the sheet. Towards the end of his life he complained that he could not care any more about the Land of Counterpane; and to those who knew him best this seemed quite a serious sign of impaired vitality.

My conclusion, then, would be that, in the years I knew him, if Stevenson expressed much interest in children, it was mainly for the sake of their fathers and mothers; but that after a while he began to take a very great delight in summoning back to his clear recollection the panic fears and adventurous pleasures of his own early youth, thus becoming, in his portraiture of himself, the consummate painter of one species of child. But his relation to other children was shy and gently defiant: it would have exhausted him to play with them; but he looked forward to a time when they should be old enough to talk to him.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXIX.



It would be idle to say that Browne will never forget his feelings when the hail reached him from the deck, announcing the fact that a boat from the Russian man-of-war was coming alongside. It was the most desperate moment of his life; and there are times, even now, when only to dream of it is sufficient to bring him wide awake with a cold sweat upon his forehead. As he heard it he turned to Jimmy, who was leaning over the bunk in which Maas lay, and said anxiously:

'I suppose I may leave him to you, Jimmy? You will take care that they don't get any information out of him?'

'You may trust me for that,' Jimmy replied, and there was a look of determination in his face as he said it that boded ill for any attempt Maas might make to communicate with the enemy. 'I hope for his own sake that he won't wake while they are here. Jack, my son, this is going to be a big deal for all of us. Keep your head while they're aboard, or you'll be in Queer Street.'

Thereupon they shook hands solemnly.

'Thank Heaven I've got you with me, old chap,' said Browne fervently. 'You don't know what a relief it is to me to know that. Now I must go and warn Miss Petrovitch and Madame Bernstein.'

'Good-bye, old fellow,' said Foote. 'Good luck go with you.'

Browne glanced again at Maas, then he went out, closing the door behind him, and made his way through the saloon in the direction of Katherine's cabin. He had scarcely knocked at the door before she opened it. From the pallor of her face he guessed that she knew something of what was happening. This proved to be so; for Browne afterwards discovered that the cruiser had all the time been plainly visible from her port-hole.

'I have just seen a boat pass,' she said. 'Have they come to search the yacht?'

'Yes,' said Browne. 'You need not be afraid, however; they will not find him. He is hidden in a place where they would never think of looking; and, to make assurance doubly sure, Mac-Andrew is with him.'

'But what was that noise I heard just now? It sounded as if you were struggling with some one, and trying to drag him down into the saloon.'

Browne informed her in a few brief words of what had occurred, and bade her, in case she should be questioned, keep up the fiction that Maas was seriously ill. Then, bidding her inform

Madame Bernstein of what was going on, he left her and returned to the deck. Simultaneously with his arrival there the Russian officer made his appearance at the gangway. He was a tall, handsome man of about thirty years of age. Having reached the deck, he looked about him as if he scarcely knew whom to address; then, seeing that the captain looked to Browne as if for instructions, he saluted him, and said in French:

'Your pardon, monsieur, but this is the yacht *Lotus Blossom*, is it not?'

'It is,' said Browne, 'and I am the owner. What can I have the pleasure of doing for you? You find us in rather a fix. We have had a break-down in the engine-room, and, as you can see for yourself, it has left us in a by no means pleasant position.'

'I have to present the compliments of my captain to you, and to request that you will permit me to overhaul your vessel.'

'To overhaul my vessel!' cried Browne. 'Surely that is a very curious request. For what reason do you wish to inspect her?'

'I regret to say that we have heard that an attempt is being made to rescue an escaped convict from the island yonder. From information we received, it is believed he is on board your vessel.'

'A runaway convict on board my yacht?' cried Browne in a tone that suggested complete surprise. 'You must excuse me if I do not understand you. You surely do not suppose that I make it my business to go about the world assisting convicts to escape from captivity?'

'That is no business of mine,' replied the officer. 'All I have to do is to obey my instructions. I should, therefore, be glad if you would permit me to inspect your vessel.'

'You may do so with pleasure,' said Browne. 'But let it be understood, before you commence, that I resent the intrusion, and shall, immediately on my return to civilisation, place the matter before my Government to act as they think best. You have, of course, considered what the consequences of your action will be?'

'It is not my business to think of the consequences,' said the other. 'All I have to do is to obey the orders I receive. May I therefore trouble you to permit me to carry them out? I should be loath to have to signal to my ship for assistance.'

'Such a course will not be necessary,' said Browne, with all the dignity of which he was master. 'If you persist in your absurd demand, I shall raise no further objection. Only, I should be glad if you could do so with as little delay as

possible. I have a friend below who is seriously ill, and I am anxious to return to him.'

'In that case, it would be as well for us to proceed without further loss of time,' said the officer.

Turning to Captain Mason, who was standing beside him, Browne gave the necessary orders. The Russian officer immediately called up a couple of hands from his boat alongside, and then, escorted by Browne, set off on his tour of inspection. Commencing with the men's quarters forward, he searched every nook and cranny, but without success. Then, little by little, they worked their way aft, exploring the officers' and engineers' quarters as they proceeded. The engine-room and stoke-hole followed next, and it was then that Browne's anxiety commenced. The convict, as he had good reason to know, was the possessor of a hacking cough, and should he give proof of its existence now they were ruined indeed.

'I presume you do not wish to look into the furnaces,' ironically remarked the chief-engineer, who had accompanied them during their visit to his own particular portion of the vessel. 'Should you desire to do so, I shall be pleased to have them opened for you.'

'I have no desire to look into them,' said the officer, who by this time was beginning to feel that he had been sent on a wild-goose chase.

'In that case, let us finish our inspection, and be done with it,' said Browne. 'It is not pleasant for me, and I am sure it cannot be for you.' As he spoke he turned to the officer, and signed him to make his way up the steel ladder to the deck above. Just as he himself was about to set foot on it, the sound of a smothered cough came from the spot where the men lay hidden, and at the same instant the officer stopped and looked round. Browne felt his whole body grow cold with terror. Fortunately, however, even if he had heard it, the other failed to place the proper construction upon it, and they left the engine-room without further comment. Then, having explored the smoking-room and deck-house, they made their way aft to the drawing-room by way of the main companion-ladder.

'I have two ladies on board, monsieur,' said Browne as they reached the drawing-room and stood for a moment looking about them, 'also the sick friend of whom I spoke to you just now. Perhaps you would not mind waiving your right to inspect their cabins.'

'Monsieur,' said the officer, 'I must see every cabin. There must be no exceptions.'

'In that case,' replied Browne, 'there is no more to be said. Will you be kind enough to accompany me?'

So saying, he led him forward a few paces, and, having shown him the pantry and stewards' quarters, the storerooms, bathrooms, and other domestic offices, took him to the cabin in which Maas was undergoing his involuntary confinement.

Browne knocked softly upon the door, and a moment later Jimmy Foote opened it, with his finger on his lips as if to warn them to be silent.

'Hush!' he whispered. 'Don't wake him; he has been asleep for nearly half-an-hour, and it will do him a world of good.'

Browne translated this speech to the officer, and when he had done so they entered and approached the bedside. The representative of Imperial Russia looked down upon Maas, who was sleeping as placidly as a little child; at the same time his eyes took in the rows of medicine bottles on the table and all the usual paraphernalia of a sickroom. It was plain not only that he imagined Jimmy Foote to be the doctor in charge, but also that he knew nothing of the identity of the man before him.

'What is the matter with him?' he asked a little suspiciously of Browne.

'Pneumonia, following a severe chill,' the other whispered. 'We want to get him down to Yokohama as quickly as possible in order that we may place him in the hospital there. I presume you are satisfied that he is not the man you want?'

The officer nodded his head. 'Quite satisfied,' he answered emphatically. 'The man I want is a little, old fellow with red hair. He is thirty years this gentleman's senior.'

Thereupon they passed out of the cabin again, and made their way along the alley-way towards the drawing-room once more.

When they reached it they found Katherine and Madame Bernstein awaiting them there. Browne, in a tone of apology, explained the reason of the officer's visit.

'However, I hope soon to be able to convince him that his suspicions are unfounded,' he said in conclusion. 'We have searched every portion of the yacht, and he has not so far discovered the man he wants.'

'Do you say that the person you are looking for is a Russian convict?' continued Madame Bernstein, who felt that she must say something in order to cover the look of fear that was spreading over Katherine's face.

'Yes, madame,' the officer replied. 'He is a most dangerous person, who in his time has caused the police an infinity of trouble.'

'A Nihilist, I suppose?' said Browne, as if he thought that that point might be taken for granted.

'Indeed, no,' said the officer. 'His name is Kleinkopf, and he is, or rather was, the most noted diamond-thief in Europe.'

'What?' cried Browne, startled out of himself by what the other said. 'What do you mean? A diamond?—'

What he was about to add must for ever remain a mystery, for at that moment Madame Bernstein uttered a little cry and fell forward against the table in a dead faint. With a face

as ashen as a sere-cloth, Katherine ran to her assistance, and Browne followed her example. Together they raised her and carried her to a seat.

'You see, sir, what mischief you have done,' said Browne, addressing the Russian officer, who stood looking from one to another of them as if he scarcely knew what to say or how to act. 'You have frightened her into a faint.'

Picking her up in his arms, he carried her to her cabin, and laid her in her bunk. Then, resigning her to the care of Katherine and the stewardess, whom he had summoned to his assistance, he rejoined the officer outside.

'If you will come with me, sir,' he said, 'I will show you the remainder of the vessel, and then I think you will be able to return to your ship and inform your commander that on this occasion, at least, he has committed an egregious blunder, of which he will hear more anon.'

'I am at monsieur's disposal,' replied the officer; and together they entered Katherine's cabin. Needless to say there was no sign of any fugitive there. Browne's own cabin followed next, with the same result. At last they reached the deck once more.

'You are satisfied, I presume, sir, that the man you want is not on board my yacht?' said Browne, with considerable hauteur.

'Quite satisfied,' replied the other. 'And yet I can assure you, monsieur, that we had the best of reasons for believing that you were conniving at his escape.'

'I am very much obliged to you, I am sure,' said Browne. 'I fancy, however, that, even presuming I contemplated anything of the sort, I have convinced you that I have not carried it out yet. And now I have the honour to wish you a very good morning. My engineer informs me that the break-down in the engine-room has been repaired; and, if you have any suspicions left, you will have the satisfaction of seeing us get under way without further delay. I tell you this in case you should imagine that I intend hanging about here in the hope of picking up the man to whom you allude. By the way, did you say that his name is Kleinkopf, and that he was originally a diamond-thief?'

'He was the most expert diamond-thief in Europe, monsieur,' the officer replied. 'Now, permit me to offer my apologies for the trouble to which I have put you, and to bid you farewell. At the same time, if you will allow me to do so, I will give you a little advice. If I were in your place I should leave this coast as soon as possible.'

'I shall do so within a quarter of an hour, at latest,' Browne replied.

With that the officer saluted once more and disappeared down the companion-ladder. A few moments later his boat was to be seen making her way in the direction of the man-of-war.

Browne stood and watched her, scarcely able to realise that all danger was now passed and done with. Then he turned to go in search of his friends, and as he did so a thought came into his mind, and brought him to a standstill once more. What could the officer have meant when he had said that the escaped convict's name was Kleinkopf, and that he was not a Nihilist, as they had been informed, but a diamond-thief; not a man who plotted and risked his life for the welfare of his country, but a common felon, who lived by defrauding the general public? Was it possible that Katherine's father could have been such a man? No; a thousand times no! He would never believe such a thing. But if it were not so, what did it all mean? Madame Bernstein had recognised the fugitive as Katherine's father, and the man himself had rejoiced at being with his daughter again after so long a separation. There was a mystery somewhere, upon which he would have to be enlightened before very long.

As he arrived at this conclusion Captain Mason approached him.

'The chief-engineer reports that all is ready, sir,' he said. 'If you wish it we can get under way at once.'

'The sooner the better, Mason,' Browne replied. 'I shall not be happy until we have put the horizon between ourselves and that gentleman over there.'

He nodded in the direction of the cruiser, which the boat had just reached.

'I agree with you, sir,' said the captain. 'I will get the anchor away at once.'

'Before you do so, Mason,' said Browne, 'just get those two men out of the tunnel and send them aft. Don't let them come on deck whatever you do. They're certain to have their glasses on us over yonder.'

'Very good, sir,' Mason replied, and went forward to execute his errand.

Anxious as he was to go below, Browne did not leave the deck until the screw had commenced to revolve. When he did it was with a great fear in his heart—one that he would have found it extremely difficult either to describe or to account for. As he argued with himself, it was extremely unlikely that the Russian authorities would make a mistake; and yet, if they did not, why had Madame Bernstein always been so anxious to assure Katherine that the man he had saved was her father? And, what was still more important, why had she fainted that morning when the officer had given his information concerning the fugitive? When he entered the drawing-room, to his surprise, he found Katherine alone there. Her face was still very white, and it struck Browne that she had been crying.

'What is the matter, dear?' he inquired as he placed his arm round her and drew her towards him. 'Why do you look so troubled?'

'I do not know,' she answered, burying her face in his shoulder, 'but I am very, very unhappy.'

He did his best to soothe her, but without success. A weight was pressing upon her mind, and until it was removed relief would be impossible. For some reason Browne made no inquiry after madame's condition. It seemed, for the moment, as if he had forgotten her very existence. At last he bade Katherine put on her hat and accompany him to the deck. The fresh air would revive her, he said. She accordingly departed to her cabin, and in five minutes rejoined him. In the meanwhile Browne had visited the cabin on the starboard side, and had informed Foote of all that had transpired. Maas was still sleeping quietly in his bunk.

'Thank goodness they've cleared out,' said Jimmy. 'Now our friend here can wake up as soon as he pleases.'

'The sooner the better,' Browne replied. 'In the meantime, Jimmy, I've something awfully important to say to you.'

In a few words Browne told him what he had discovered and what he suspected. Foote listened with attention, and when he had finished, scratched his chin and regarded his own face in the mirror

opposite, looking the very figure and picture of perplexity.

'What did I always tell you?' he said at last. 'I was as certain then as I am now that the woman was playing some underhand game, though what it is I cannot say. However, I'll find out somehow or another. Upon my word, when we return to civilisation I think I shall embark upon the career of a private inquiry agent.'

Feeling that there was nothing more to be said upon the subject just then, Browne left him, and returned to the drawing-room in search of Katherine. He found her ready to accompany him to the deck above.

'The fresh air will soon bring the roses back to your cheeks,' he said as they made their way along the drawing-room in the direction of the companion-ladder.

She was about to reply, when the sound of footsteps reached them from the port alley-way, and, before they had set foot upon the first step, MacAndrew and the fugitive stood before them. Browne noticed that Katherine instinctively shrank away from the latter. He accordingly slipped his arm round her, and, telling MacAndrew that he would like to speak to him in a few minutes, led her to the deck above.

CARTHAGE.



F all the great cities of antiquity, Carthage has perhaps the fewest traces to show of the glories of bygone ages. Rome, Athens, Thebes, Palmyra, Ephesus—all can boast of something: temples or mausoleums, inscriptions or sculptures; some remains to aid us in reconstructing the past. But when we stand on the green, breeze-swept plain near Tunis and look around for some trace of Rome's great rival, we think at first that all has indeed, like 'the baseless fabric of a vision,' vanished into nothingness. We can see about us only a rich upland, carpeted with asphodel and crimson pea, below us the blue Mediterranean, and beyond the fantastic peaks of the Zaghonan Mountains; while in the immediate foreground the most prominent object is the glaringly modern Cathedral, the consummation of the life-work of that remarkable man, Cardinal Lavigérie. But if we have patience and search more closely we shall find that a good deal remains which will well repay a careful examination. We must always bear in mind that the site on which we are standing has perhaps seen a more varied succession of civilisations than any other in the world. We have to look not only for what survives of Punic Carthage; we must remember that that was followed by an epoch of Roman domination, which, in its turn, was succeeded by the

period of Byzantine rule, during which Carthage was the central point of Christianity in Africa; and that it was eventually overwhelmed by the wild hordes of Islam, the traces of whose presence are here, as in so many places, entirely of a negative and destructive kind. Finally, we see, in the Cathedral, the Museum, and the Monastery of the Pères Blancs the obtrusive evidence of the last act in the great drama of the destiny of Carthage—the French occupation and protectorate of the Regency of Tunis, a curious tragi-comedy not without its moral, the full account of which may be found in that interesting book, Broadley's *Tunis, Past and Present*.

To begin with ancient Carthage, the Carthage of the *Æneid* and *Salammbô* and the Punic Wars, we must first turn to the grassy hillock which tradition tells us was the Byrsa, the original site of the infant city. When the fugitive Dido, with her noble followers, landed on the African shore, she obtained from the natives the concession of a piece of land which could be covered by a bull's hide, whereupon the wily princess cut the hide into strips, so that they enclosed the space of twenty-two stadia. That space, we are told, was the Byrsa. Some walls a little to the north-east of it are said to be the vestiges of the palace of Dido, from which, as she burnt upon her funeral pile, she watched the departure of Æneas and his Trojans. The site of the Forum is pointed out

between the Byrsa and the sea, and a little farther east we come to what are perhaps the most interesting remains of the first Carthage—the Punic tombs. They lie on the slope of a hill some distance below the site of the town, and have only recently been excavated. Each grave consists of a small, solidly-built chamber, with a pent-house roof formed by two massive blocks of stone leaning together, so as to resist the pressure of soil above; each has its arrangements for cremation still complete. Another remarkable feature is the great cisterns; but it is still a moot-point among archaeologists whether they are of Carthaginian or of Roman origin. They consist of a chain of subterranean aqueducts, with here and there large circular reservoirs; but it is supposed that the former are of more recent date, and that Punic Carthage was supplied only with rain-water, which was stored in the cisterns. In these curious underground chambers a tribe of Bedouins have made their abode; and, having walled round the area and constructed a rude mosque, they live there contentedly.

Of Roman Carthage nothing remains but the amphitheatre, which is more than half a mile distant from the site of the Punic city. The elliptical excavation is about forty feet deep, and a few of the stones are still in their places. It was the scene of the massacre of St Perpetua and her companions, who were there thrown to the wild beasts in 203.

Christianity was introduced into Carthage at a very early date, and the ruins of a fine Byzantine basilica are still to be seen. The bases of the columns, and in some cases the columns themselves, remain for the most part intact; and we also noticed a circular immersion-tank. The history of Christian Carthage is a deeply interesting one, associated as it is with the names of St Cyprian the martyr, who was beheaded in the amphitheatre there; of Tertullian and of St Augustine, the last of whom came thither to complete his studies. In his time the see of Carthage numbered over three hundred churches.

During the ebb-tide of the Western Empire, North Africa, like the south of Europe, was devastated by the Vandals, and Genseric established the seat of his power at Carthage. It was from there that he undertook the celebrated expedition in the course of which he sacked Rome, bringing back, amongst countless other treasures, the golden candlesticks and the holy table of the Temple, which had fallen into the hands of Titus at the destruction of Jerusalem. When, a century later, North Africa fell before the power of the Byzantine Empire, Belisarius, its conqueror, carried those priceless relics to Constantinople, whence they were sent by Justinian to the Christian Church of Jerusalem, after which there is no record of their fate. The Byzantine rule was but short-lived, for about the middle of the seventh century the invading hosts of Islam,

ardent in the zeal of a new faith, swept irresistibly over North Africa under the leadership of Abdulla Ibn Sâad, the brother of the Caliph. Legend relates that Gregorius, the Christian governor, had a surpassingly beautiful daughter, who fought by her father's side. Her hand, with one hundred thousand dinars, was offered to the warrior who should slay the Arab commander, the latter retaliating by offering her with the same dowry to whoever should kill or capture the Byzantine prince, her father. After a conflict which lasted several days, Abdulla Ibn Sâad succeeded by a treacherous strategy in overwhelming the Christian army; Gregorius was killed, and his daughter fell into the hands of the victors. Thus the province of Tunis became subject to the Arab race, and the new-comers soon overran it, driving the original Berber inhabitants into the strongholds of the mountains. At first under the nominal rule of the Caliphs, and later under that of the Sublime Porte, the Barbary corsairs were really independent and untamable sea-robbers, able for centuries to defy the great Powers of Christendom. Thousands of Christian slaves lived and died under their cruel thralldom. Cervantes was for five years and a half their prisoner, and describes the miseries he endured in the story of 'The Captive' in *Don Quixote*; while St Vincent de Paul, the noble founder of the mission to the unhappy Christians in the power of the North African pirates, was himself for some years one of their victims.

To return from this long digression to Carthage itself, we have still to notice a rather dilapidated little building standing on the green mound which archaeologists suppose to be the Byrsa or site of the original city. This is the chapel erected in 1841 by Louis Philippe on the ground conceded, ten years before, to Charles X. for that purpose. It is a mean edifice in the wretched pseudo-Gothic of the forties; and now that the Roi de France and the Roi des Français have alike vanished from the scene, and a republic rules in their stead, the poor little monument has rather a shabby and neglected air. Yet the episode which it commemorates is a sufficiently touching one, for it was here that St Louis IX. of France is supposed to have died of fever after his defeat before Tunis, during the siege of that city which was undertaken as the first step of the Seventh Crusade. The memory of the saint receives indeed, nowadays, in this locality, more veneration from Moslems than from Christians, on account of a tradition according to which he became on his deathbed a convert to Islam, and he is revered under the name of Sidi-Bou Said.

We can pass by without comment the staring brick Cathedral and the other institutions of the Pères Blancs. The monks of this fraternity, founded by the gifted and enthusiastic Cardinal Lavig  rie as a missionary order for work in North Africa, wear the white bernous and the red fez

of the Arabs. We cannot say whether they make many proselytes—the Mohammedan is not an easy man to convert; but they are undoubtedly doing a very noble work in ministering to the sick and the needy without regard to creed or race. One of the order, Père Delattre, has devoted his life to the exploration of the site of Carthage, and the results of his labour are preserved in the Museum, near the Seminary, where we find a very interesting collection of Punic, Roman, and Christian remains. It is curious to note that the Carthaginians, Phœnicians by origin and great traders, appear to have produced no original style of art, their bronzes, pottery, jewellery, &c. showing

curious resemblances in design and ornament to those of Egypt, Etruria, Greece, and other countries with which they doubtless had commercial dealings.

But when all is said and done, the Carthage of the past is no longer to be found on the green plain facing the Zaghonan Hills. If we wish to find her we must seek her elsewhere—in the walls of modern Tunis, in the mosques of Kairwan, in the palaces of Genoa, anywhere and everywhere but in the place that knows her no more. In the words of a recent French writer, 'Carthage, scattered over the whole world, is everywhere, and yet is nowhere.'

THE TAPU OF BANDERAH:

A TALE OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

CHAPTER III.—CAPTAIN BILKER MAKES A PROPOSAL.



BANDERAH, the supreme chief of Mayou, was, *vide* Mr Deighton's report to his clerical superiors, 'a man of much intelligence, not unfavourably disposed to the spread of the Gospel among his perishing people; but, alas! of a worldly nature, and clinging for worldly reasons to the darkness.' In other words, Banderah, although by no means averse to the poorer natives of the island adopting Christianity in a very free and modified form, and contributing a certain amount of their possessions towards the support of the mission, was yet a heathen, and intended, for reasons that Mr Deighton's mind could not grasp, to remain one. For the missionary himself the chief had conceived a personal liking, mingled with a wondering and contemptuous pity. During an intertribal war Banderah had received a Snider bullet in his thigh, which Mr Deighton, after much difficulty, had succeeded in extracting. Consequently his gratitude was unbounded, and he evinced it in a very practical manner, by commanding some hundreds of his subjects to immediately become Christians under pain of death. And being aware that polygamy in a convert would not be tolerated by Mr Deighton, he went a step farther, and decreed all those of the forced converts who were possessed of more than one wife to send the others to his own harem, knowing well that this addition to his family responsibilities would be fully compensated for by the labour of the surplus wives in his yam and taro plantations. Poor Mr Deighton, whose eyes filled with tears of joy when he baptised the converts, knew nothing of this; he firmly believed in his own statement to his superiors, when he said that 'Banderah has shown his gratitude to me, and the dawning of light in his

heart, by making provision for those wives who have been put away.'

In his younger days Banderah had once made a voyage to Sydney in the service of a trading captain, whose name in those days was a name to conjure with from one end of Melanesia to the other, and for whose valour as a fighter and killer of men the young chief had acquired a respect he could never entertain for a missionary. This captain, however, had died in Sydney, full of years and strong drink, and left the almost broken-hearted Banderah to return alone to his island home.

In the chief's curious, savage nature there were many good points, one of which was that he never broke his plighted word. A year or so after Blount's arrival on Mayou, Banderah had yielded to the earnest entreaties of the trader and the missionary, and agreed to put down the last remnants of cannibalism, which still lingered among the coast tribes over whom he ruled. And although the older men and some of the 'witch-doctors,' or priests, had protested strongly against the abandonment of one of the oldest customs on the island, they finally gave in when Blount presented each dissentient with a tomahawk, and Mr Deighton added a dozen highly-coloured and large-sized handkerchiefs illustrating the passage of the Israelites across the Red Sea.

An hour after Blount had set off along the beach to visit his timber-getters at Lak-a-lak, Banderah saw the captain of the schooner come ashore and walk up the path to Nathaniel Burrowes's house, where he was warmly greeted by the American and Schwartzkoff. He remained with them for nearly an hour, then came outside, and looking about him for a few moments, made direct for Banderah's dwelling, which stood about

three hundred yards back from that of the American trader.

When close to the chief's house the captain of the *Island Maid* raised his head, and Banderah caught sight of his features and recognised him.

'How are you, Banderah?' said the seaman, walking quickly up to the chief, who was sitting on a mat inside his doorway, surrounded by his wives and family. 'You haven't forgotten me, have you?'

'Oh no, Cap'en, I no forget you,' said the chief, civilly enough, but without warmth. 'How are you, Cap'en Bilker?'

'Don't call me that now, Banderah. I'm Captain Sykes now.'

'Yes,' and Banderah's face at once assumed an expression of the most hopeless stupidity; 'all right, Cap'en Syke. Come inside my house and sit down.'

'Right, my boy,' said Bilker genially, producing a large flask of Queensland rum. 'I've brought you a drink, Banderah; and I want to have a yarn with you.'

'All right;' and taking the flask from the captain's hand without even deigning to look at or taste its contents, he passed it on to one of his wives. 'What you want to talk to me about, cap'en? You want me catch you some natives to work on plantation?' and he smiled slyly.

'No, no, Banderah. Nothing like that. I don't run a labour-ship now. I am a gentleman now. I'm captain of that yacht.'

The chief nodded, but said nothing. He knew the evil-faced ruffian before him pretty well. Ten years before, the blackbird captain had managed to take thirty of Banderah's people away in his ship without paying for them; and the moment he had recognised the sailor he set his keen brain to work to devise a plan for taking a deadly vengeance.

'Banderah, old man,' continued Bilker, laying one hand on the chief's huge, naked knee, 'I meant to pay you for those people when I came back next trip. You see, as soon as I got 'em aboard bad weather came on, and I had to put to sea; but I meant to come the next morning—true as death, I did—but it came on to blow hard from the westward, and I couldn't beat back to Mayou. And then, the trip after, when I was coming back here from Samoa—to pay you, Banderah—I got took by a man-o'-war'—here Bilker crossed his wrists, to signify that he had been handcuffed—'took me to Sydney, and judge put me in calaboose for ten years.'

'You lie,' said Banderah quietly, but with a danger-spark in his eye; 'that man-o'-war no make you fast [captured him] for a long time after you steal my people. Plenty white men tell me you make two more voyage; then man-o'-war catch you and make you fast.'

'Don't you believe 'em, Banderah,' began the ex-blackbird, when the chief interrupted him.

'What you do with my sister, Cap'en Syke? You take her to Samoa to work on German plantation?'

The white man's face paled. 'I didn't know Nebarra was with the other people till the next morning, Banderah. You see, the mate put the hatches on so quick that I had no chance to see her. Yes, she's in Samoa, Banderah; but I never meant to take Nebarra'—

'All right; never mind talking about Nebarra. But what you want to talk about now, Cap'en?' And then, so as to put his visitor at his ease, he added, 'You — rogue; me — rogue, eh?'

'Yes, yes,' grinned Bilker, again placing his hand on the chief's knee. 'And now look here, Banderah, I'm not only going to pay you for those people I took to Samoa, but I'm going to give you a lot of money as well; not Chili dollars, but gold—English sovereigns. I'm going to make you a big, rich chief—big as Maafu Tonga.* But I want you to help me in return.'

'You speak me true?' inquired the chief.

'Swear it,' answered the captain, extending his hand, which Banderah clasped, his eyes fixed steadily upon the blackbird's face.

After a few moments' silence the chief made a sign for his women and slaves to withdraw to the farther end of the room, so that their muttered talk might not disturb the white man and himself. Then he lit his pipe and said, 'Go on, Cap'en; tell me what you going to give me plenty money for.'

'Look,' said Bilker, moving up closer to the native, and speaking in a low voice; 'these two white men on board the yacht have got any amount of money—gold sovereigns—boxes and boxes of it. They stole it; I know they stole it, although I didn't see them do it.'

Banderah nodded his huge, frizzy head. 'I savee. These two fellow — rogue, all same you and me.'

'Yes,' said Bilker. 'Now look here, Banderah, I mean to have that gold, and I want you to help me to get it. As soon as these two white men on board are dead I will give you a thousand sovereigns—five thousand dollars; and with such a lot of money you can buy rifles and cartridges and as many brass cannons as you want. Why, you can go to Sydney again and buy a little schooner, and come back and fight some of the Solomon Island people. Maafu had a schooner like that, and made himself a big chief in Fiji.'

Banderah nodded his head approvingly, and Bilker went on:

'Then, when the white men are dead, and I have given you the thousand "yellow moneys," I'll go away with the schooner. I believe these men are very bad men, and ought to be killed. Now listen, and I'll tell you how we are going to do it. Nat and Peter are going to help us.'

Then Captain William Bilker, *alias* Sykes, un-

* Maafu, of Tonga, the once dreaded rival of King Caco-bau of Fiji.

folded his plan. Banderah was to entice De Vere and his friend some miles into the interior, where there was a large swamp, the resort of countless wild-fowl. Here they were to be clubbed by Banderah and his people, and their bodies thrown into the swamp. Then Bilker, accompanied by Schwartzkoff and Burrowes, were to board the schooner and settle the mate and white steward.

'How many sovereign you going to give Peter and Burrow?' asked Banderah.

'Five hundred each,' answered Bilker—'a thousand between them. But you will get a thousand.'

Banderah appeared to think deeply for a minute; then he asked, 'You no 'fraid man-o'-war catch you by-and-by?'

'No. Who's going to tell about it? You and your people won't.'

'What 'bout Missa Blount? What 'bout missionary?'

Bilker grinned savagely. 'Peter and Burrowes say they will kill Blount if I give them another five hundred sovereigns. If I won't they will leave Mayou in their boats, and go to the Solomon Islands, and find a ship to take them to China.'

'What 'bout missionary—and missionary woman?'

For a moment or two Bilker, crime-hardened villain as he was, hesitated. Then he looked into the dark face of the native chief. Its set, savage expression gave him confidence.

'Plenty of missionaries get killed. And all the man-of-war captains know that the Mayou bushmen [bush tribes] are very savage. Some day—in about a week after I have gone away in the schooner—you will get the missionary and his wife to go with you to the little bush town which Peter and Burrowes tell me he goes to sometimes. They will sleep there that night; you and your people will sleep in the same house with them. You do that sometimes, Banderah, eh?'

'Yes, sometimes.'

This was perfectly true. The bush tribes on Mayou, although at war with Banderah and the coast people, yet occasionally met their foes in an amicable manner at a bush village called Rogga, which for many years had been a neutral ground. Here Banderah and his people, carrying fish, tobacco, and bamboos filled with salt water,* would meet parties of bush people, who, in exchange for the commodities brought by Banderah, would give him yams, pigs, and wild pigeons. At several of these friendly rencontres Mr Deighton had been present, in the vain hope that he might establish friendly relations with

* Having no salt, the bush tribes of Melanesia, who dare not visit the coast, buy salt water from the coast tribes. They meet at a spot which is always sacredly kept as a neutral ground.

these savage and cannibal people of the interior.

'Well,' resumed the ruffian, 'you will sleep at Rogga with the missionary and his wife. In the morning, when you and your people awake, the missionary and his wife will be dead. Then you will come back here and wait for a man-of-war. When she comes you will go on board and tell the captain that the wild bushmen rushed upon your people in the night, and killed the white man and his wife.'

'I savee. Everybody savee Mayou man-a-bush * like kill white man.'

'That's it, Banderah. No one will even say you did it. And very likely the man-of-war captain will send a lot of men ashore and kill as many bushmen as he can find.'

Banderah scratched his woolly head, and again appeared to think deeply. Presently he inquired sharply:

'What 'bout Peter and Burrowes? Suppose by-and-by those two fellow get mad with me some day, and tell man-o'-war captain that me been kill three white man and one white woman, eh?'

'Banderah'—and Bilker slapped the chief on his shoulder—'you're a thunderin' smart fellow! There's no mistake about that. Now look here. I want you to get another thousand sovereigns—the thousand I am going to give Burrowes and Peter. And after the man-a-bush'—he grinned with savage humour—'have killed the missionary and his wife, they will come down here to the beach one night, and will kill the two white men, and take away everything that is in their houses. Then there will be no white men, and you will be the biggest chief in the world—as big as Maafu Tonga, or Apinoka, King of Apamama.'

A curious smile stole over the grim features of the chief.

'Ah, Cap'en Bilker! you savee too much; you very smart man altogether!'

'Well, look here now, Banderah. Are you going to help me, and get all this money?'

'Yes,' was the answer; 'I help you, Cap'en. What you say I mus' do, I do.'

'When?'

'To-morrow.'

'To-morrow will do; the sooner the better. And look here, Banderah, I'm going to give you ten sovereigns for the men I took away from Mayou and didn't pay for.'

'All right,' answered the chief. 'Now you go away. I want to go and look for some men to come along with me to-morrow.'

'Right you are, Banderah. Take plenty of good men with you. You know what to do—white men walk along swamp to shoot duck,

* 'Man-a-bush' (literally, 'man-in-the-bush'), a term applied by the coast natives of Melanesia to all bush-dwelling people.

then *one, two!*' and Captain Bilker made a swift downward motion with his right hand that was perfectly comprehensible to Banderah.

For some minutes the native chief sat quietly on his mat and watched the captain return to Burrowes's house, from which a short time after he emerged, accompanied by the two fellow-conspirators, whose murder he had just planned. Then the three of them hailed the schooner. A boat put off and took them on board. Towards the evening Blount returned along the beach from Lak-a-lak, and walked slowly up the coco-palm-shaded path to his house. Just as he entered his door the sounds of revelry came over to him from the schooner, whose lights were just beginning to glimmer through the quickly-falling darkness of the tropic night. Some one on board was playing an accordion, and presently he caught the words of a song:

'Remember, too, the patriots' gore
That flecked the streets of Baltimore;
Maryland, my Maryland.'

'Burrowes only sings that when he's getting very drunk,' he said to himself as he sat down to drink a cup of coffee brought to him by Taya, his eldest daughter. 'No doubt he and that accomplished scoundrel Bilker are having a very happy time together.'

'Father,' said Taya as he put down his cup, 'Banderah is here. He came but now, and will not come inside the house, but waits inside the boat-shed, lest he be seen talking to thee.'

'What the deuce is wrong?' muttered Blount as, without waiting to touch the food prepared for him, he went outside to his boat-shed.

Half-an-hour later he and the native chief came out together, and as they stood for a minute in the broad streak of light that streamed out from the lamp standing on the table in the sitting-room of the trader's house, the gentle Taya, who sat at the doorway, saw that her father's face was set and stern-looking.

'Shed thou no blood, Banderah,' he said in the native tongue, 'not even that of these two men who have eaten and drunk in my house many times.'

'Challi [Charlie], that is hard to promise thee. Already are my people thirsty for the blood of this dog of a captain, he who stole one score and ten of my people. And because of Nebarra, my sister, who was one of them, have I promised them vengeance. But the other two who are with him, and whom he would have me slay, will I spare.'

'As you will. And as for these two here, who have planned to kill me, with them I will deal myself. If, when the schooner saileth away from here, these men go not with her, then I will shoot them dead.'

'Good;' and then, grasping the white man's

hand, the chief pressed his nose to his, and vanished in the darkness.

CHAPTER IV.—'DEATH TO THEM BOTH.'



EARLY on the following morning Messrs De Vere and Morecombe-Lycett, the latter being now quite recovered, informed Mr and Mrs Deighton that, having heard from the two traders there was good shooting at the big swamp, they were going there under the guidance of Banderah and a party of natives; and shortly after breakfast the chief, accompanied by a number of his people, appeared.

'I will send with you two of my best men,' said Mr Deighton, indicating a couple of his pet converts, who stood by.

But suddenly, to Mr Deighton's astonishment, Banderah, with a savage look, bade them stay where they were. He had, he said, plenty of men. They were to stay where they were, and not follow.

Presently the two yachting gentlemen, arrayed in a very stylish sporting get-up, appeared with their breech-loaders and cartridge-belts, and waving their hands gracefully to the missionary and his wife, disappeared with Banderah and his dark-skinned companions into the dense tropical jungle, the edge of which was within a very short distance of the mission-station. For about an hour the Honourable Lycett and De Vere, with Banderah leading the way, walked steadily onward through the jungle. Not a word was spoken among the natives, who followed close at their heels; and Banderah himself, in answer to their frequent questions, replied only by monosyllables.

At last they came out of the stifling heat of the thick jungle, and saw before them a great, reedy swamp, its margin fringed by a scanty growth of coco-nut and pandanus palms. Out upon the open patches of water here and there showing upon the broad expanse of the swamp, they saw large flocks of wild-duck, feeding and swimming about, betraying not the slightest fear at their approach.

'By Jove, Baxter!' said De Vere to his friend, 'looks good enough, doesn't it? I wonder if these beastly niggers will go in for us.'

'Of course they will. But let us have a drink first. Here, you, bring us that basket. I wonder what sort of tucker the missionary has given us. He's not a bad old sort of an ass. His wife, too, isn't bad.'

'Bah!'—and De Vere twirled his long, yellow moustache—'you're always finding out something nice in the face of every woman you come across. Wait until we get up to Japan; then you will see a new type of woman. Be a bit of a change for you after the Melbourne and Sydney peroxidized-hair bar beauties. Here, nigger, hand me that corkscrew.'

'I say, Dalton,' suddenly remarked his friend, 'pon my soul I believe we are making a mistake in going to Japan. You may be sure that we'll have a lot of trouble before us there.'

'Not a bit of it. Before we get there every one will have read the cable news that we have been seen in Callao, and no one in Yokohama will ever think of associating Mr Herbert De Vere and the Honourable Morecombe-Lycett, just arrived from Manila, *via* Singapore, in the Spanish mail-steamer, with—er—hum—the two gentlemen who arrived at Callao from Tahiti, after successfully diddling the Australian banks of thirty thousand quid.'

'But what are we going to do with the schooner at Manila?'

'Sell her, my innocent; sell her to our esteemed friend, Mr Moses Steinberg, who has assisted me in previous transactions (before I had the pleasure of meeting my present valued colleague, the Honourable Morecombe-Lycett), and who is now taking care to inform the world that we are living in South America.'

'And how are we going to account for our boxes of sovereigns? Two mining speculators don't usually carry about heavy sums in gold.'

'All managed, my boy. My friend, Mr Moses Steinberg, will see to that. The ten thousand sovereigns will be valuable gold specimens from Queensland, and will be placed on board the German Lloyd's steamer at Singapore for safe conveyance to London, where you and I, my dear boy, will follow it. And there also we shall find, I trust, an additional sum of fifteen thousand lying to our credit, the proceeds of our honest toil.'

'What are you going to do with Sykes?'

'Give him five hundred pounds, and tell him to hold his tongue. He's a thundering rascal, and we must pay to shut his mouth.'

Then the two English gentlemen proceeded to discuss their lunch; and as they ate and drank and talked and laughed, Banderah and three or four of his men whispered together.

'Seize them from behind and bind them tightly,' said the chief; 'but kill them not, for that have I promised to Challi.'

The Honourable Morecombe-Lycett had just finished his last glass of bottled beer, and wanted

to smoke. He had taken out his cigar-case, and, wondering at the sudden silence which had fallen upon their native guides, turned round to see where they were, and saw swiftly advancing upon himself and his companion some half-a-dozen stalwart natives. In that momentary glance he read the danger, and, quick as lightning—for he was no coward—he seized his loaded gun, which lay beside him, and fired both barrels, one after another.

A chorus of savage yells answered the shots, and two of the natives fell; but ere he could reload or Dalton could fire there came a fierce rush of all the dark-skinned men upon them, and struggling madly for their lives, they were borne down.

And then the lust of slaughter overcame their fierce assailants, and despite Banderah and two or three of his most trusted men, a club was raised and fell swiftly upon the white, fair forehead of De Vere, as he sought to tear away his hands from the vice-like grip of two huge natives who held them.

'Death to them both!' cried a thin-faced, wrinkled old man. '*Hutua** for the lives of the thirty-and-one!' Then, springing out from the rest, he swung a short-handled, keen-bladed hatchet over his head, and sank it into the brain of the wretched Baxter.

'Stand thou aside, Banderah, son of Baylap,' screamed the old man, waving the bloody hatchet fiercely at him. 'I, old Toka the priest, will to-day again show the men of Mayou how to drink the blood and eat the flesh of the white men the gods have given into our hands;' and again he buried the weapon in Baxter's breathless body.

And as Banderah looked at the old man's working face, and saw the savage mouth, flecked with foam, writhing and twisting in horrible contortions, and then looked at the almost equally dreadful visages of the rest of his men, he knew that the old, old lust for human flesh had come upon them. So, with the one idea of saving Blount and the missionary and his wife, he turned and fled through the forest towards the beach.

* Synonymous with Maori *utu*, 'revenge.'

WHO IS THE LEGAL OWNER OF TREASURE TROVE?



SOME one has remarked that there is a good deal of the detective in every one of us; and it might be said, too, that every man has something of the buried treasure-seeker in him. Who is there who has not dreamed of finding, like Legrand in *The Gold Beetle*, some glorious golden *cache*, buried in ages

past by a Captain Kidd or lying fathoms deep amongst the rotting bones of some old Spanish galleon? Who has not envied the luck of the world-renowned 'Monte Cristo' and the fortunate heroes of *Treasure Island*? The simplicity or fancifulness of poor old Whang, the miller, who was ruined by his fatal lust for buried treasure, is after all only a phase of humanity in general.

Every one is possessed, consciously or unconsciously, with the hope of one day coming on the little green fairy man or *leprechaun* who, as the Irish peasant will tell you, can point out as easily as he can wink where crocks of gold galore are to be found for the digging.

Unfortunately, however, in these countries there is a certain matter-of-fact legal liability connected with the discovery of buried treasure which neutralises largely the romance and absorbs the profitableness of such an event. It is a liability that ought to be more widely known in view of the fact that ignorance of the law is no excuse for a breach of the law, and may be defined in the quaint language of an old law-book as follows: 'When any money, gold, silver plate, or bullion is found in any place, and no man knoweth to whom the property is, then the property thereof belongeth to the king, and that is called treasure trove.' It does not matter where the treasure is found—whether buried in the ground, or hidden in the roof or walls of a castle, or in the trunk of an old tree; so long as the original owner is unknown, it is treasure trove and belongs to the Crown. However, the ambition of the industrious treasure-seeker is not absolutely limited in every direction by this rule, for we have it on the authority of no less a person than Coke that treasure found in the sea belongs to the finder and not to the Crown; but whether this rule applies within the three-mile limit of British jurisdiction over the sea or only outside that limit is still a matter for judicial decision.

In England it is the duty of every person who finds any treasure to make his discovery known to the coroner of the county in which it is found, and that individual must then, in obedience to an old statute of the reign of Edward I., hold an inquest on the find, just as he would on the body of a person who had died under suspicious circumstances. The jurisdiction of a coroner at such an investigation is more honorary than useful. It is limited to the inquiry as to who were the finders of the treasure, and who is suspected thereof. He has no power to inquire into the title of the Crown to the treasure, or decide any question of ownership as between the Crown and a private claimant. This point was decided by the courts in the year 1892. A farmer's son found some silver plate, consisting of three cups, one chalice, two pyxes, and one paten, worth altogether about eighty pounds, buried in the earth upon a farm at Stoke Prior in Herefordshire. The coroner duly held an inquest on these articles before a jury, who found unanimously that they were treasure trove. A claim to them was put forward by the Crown, and they were claimed also by Mr J. H. Arkwright, the lord of the manor, who insisted that he was entitled to such treasure trove by virtue of a deed of the year 1620, made by James I. in favour of the Marquis of Buckingham, under

whom Mr Arkwright held title. The coroner was proceeding to investigate this dispute, but the superior courts restrained him, holding that such questions of ownership must be reserved for a higher tribunal.

So the finding of abandoned treasure in the shape of gold or silver in coin, plate, or bullion is not such a piece of good luck as might be supposed. Any one who makes such a discovery and conceals it from the knowledge of the Crown commits a misdemeanour, and is liable to fine or imprisonment. Indeed, the punishment for such an offence was formerly nothing less than death. It is immaterial whether the offender actually found the treasure himself or got it from another who had found it, but who was ignorant of its value.

This principle was exemplified by the leading case of the *Queen v. Thomas and Willett*, decided in 1863, the facts of which are interesting. A man named Thomas Butcher, a labourer in the employment of a farmer at Mountfield in Sussex, was ploughing a field one fine day, when his ploughshare threw up a long piece of metal like brass, with a trumpet at each end, and doubled up like a coil of string. There were several other similar pieces in the same furrow, the whole weighing altogether eleven pounds. Butcher, who had very little imagination, thought nothing of the find, and allowed the metal to lie at the bottom of the field till evening, when he carried it home, thinking it to be the discarded ornaments of some gentleman's hall or parlour. Subsequently he mentioned the matter casually to an acquaintance named Thomas, who, after taking a look at the so-called brass, and consulting with his brother-in-law, Willett, went to Butcher's house with a pair of scales and a great show of honesty, and bought the metal at the rate of sixpence a pound—five-and-sixpence for the lot. The ploughman heard nothing more of the transaction until his acquaintances began to annoy him by inquiring jestingly if he had found any more old brass lately, and then it leaked out that Thomas and Willett had sold the 'brass' to a firm of gold-refiners in Cheapside for £529, 13s. 7d. The Crown took the matter up, an inquest was held by the coroner, and Thomas and Willett were at once arrested. Butcher, whose simplicity had saved him from temptation, was an innocent finder; but the prisoners, who, knowing how the metal had been found, had bought it as brass and sold it for their own benefit as gold, were convicted on the evidence and punished severely.

In Thomas and Willett's case the coroner held an inquest on the metal before the prisoners were prosecuted; but such a proceeding is not absolutely necessary in order to make the misdemeanour complete and punishable. According to the evidence in an Irish case of the year 1867, two labourers named Toole and Ryan were making a sewer in a yard in Booterstown, near Dublin,

and they had got to a depth of about two feet and a half, when their picks came in contact with an earthenware crock buried in the ground. They split it open, and found it to contain a great number of old silver coins of the time of Elizabeth, Charles I., and the Commonwealth, which the astounded labourers determined to appropriate. Ryan kept a lookout in the yard while Toole gathered up the hoard; then they went into Dublin and sold a number of the coins to a jeweller for £1, 2s. 6d., of which sum Ryan got half-a-sovereign. It may be conjectured that he was dissatisfied with the way in which he had been treated by his fellow-conspirator, for very soon afterwards the police came to know of the affair, and Toole was arrested and tried. His counsel, Mr Curran, argued ingeniously that, as no inquest had first been held by the coroner to determine the ownership of the coins, the indictment and prosecution could not stand; but this point was overruled. The remainder of the coins had been found hidden in a mat-

tress in poor Toole's bedroom, and on the evidence of the faithless Ryan he was convicted and sentenced.

It is pretty certain, however, that to some extent the law on this subject is a dead letter. Articles of great value and antiquarian interest—gold and silver plate, coins, ornaments, utensils, and the like—are constantly being discovered in odd out-of-the-way places, but very seldom indeed are they voluntarily handed over to the Crown. If a man by his own unaided industry or good fortune finds some old hoard, say of coin or plate, that belongs to no one, it is too much to expect from his respect for the law that he will give all up to the State—especially as it is the easiest thing in the world to keep the knowledge of such a find to himself. The truth is, the moral sense of the community is not at all in accordance with the principles of the law of treasure trove, and consequently that law is more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

A SNAKE FIGHT.

COMIC ENDING OF A TRAGEDY.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.



FANCY! two men—gray-haired men, too, and clergymen to boot—standing three precious hours to watch a fight between two snakes; and one of the two now sitting down eight thousand miles away from the scene to write the story of it, without any becoming sense of remorse or shame, but with the audacious hope that some readers of a journal which has relieved many a long and wearisome journey may not only read it with indulgence, but find in it some enjoyment.

It was in Australia, and in the fall of the year. My friend and I were returning from a tour which had carried us far into the bush, as the forests of gum-trees and scrub are there called. We were walking through a clearing, when the unmistakable rattle of a snake arrested us; and in a few minutes we saw the beginning of a fierce encounter between two deadly enemies—a black snake and a rattle. These two branches of the snake family are hereditary and implacable foes; though what was the origin of the feud Darwin saith not. Between them there can be neither fellowship, amity, compromise, nor even armed neutrality. War to the death is their unalterable law from generation to generation. The black snake is much smaller than the rattle, but he is a terribly formidable foe; and, as science is superior to mere size or strength, he generally comes out of the fray victorious. He seems to

'scent the battle (or rather the rattle) from afar,' and gives himself no rest until he gains a point of vantage from which he can make a sudden swoop upon the noisy foe. On this occasion we did not see the black snake until he leaped on the rattle's throat, nor could we afterwards make out how he had got so near without being seen. That power of silent, stealthy, rapid movement gives the black fellow an immense advantage over the rattling enemy. It is that, indeed, on which his hope of victory mainly depends. Let the blacky by a sudden leap grasp the throat of the unwary rattle, and the chances are he will never let go again 'until death them do part;' but if that first chance be lost, and the two meet in fair fight, after fair warning, the fangs of the rattle are pretty sure to gain *him* the victory. In this instance no such misfortune was the blacky's. He made his spring and got his grip of the throat, and there he held on 'like grim death.' With a fury that was sometimes awful, the rattle wriggled and shook, and rolled and writhed. He leaped into the air, twisted and tossed himself about, banged his assailant down on the ground, rolled on him and over him; but all in vain. Blacky simply *stuck*. Nothing could move him, nothing tempt him or compel him to relax his hold for a single moment. To have done so would have been almost certain death to himself; but, through all the rearings, leapings, tossings, writhings, and hissings of his victim, on he held

with a relentless tenacity that was equal only to his love of his own life and his hate of his foe's.

Thus, for more than an hour and a half the life-and-death game was kept up without a minute's intermission, and without any sign of weakening on either side. Then we perceived that the rattle's strength seemed to be giving way; and all of a sudden he coiled himself up and lay still, as if to die. Whether it was from sheer exhaustion, or only a ruse to deceive his enemy, a faint or a feint, we were not sure. We thought it was the former; but blacky evidently thought otherwise. He understood his enemy better than we did, and did not mean to be tricked. Down he lay by the side of the prostrate victim, but with his teeth firmly set in the now torn and crumpled throat. Then, after a quiet interval, the one-sided truce having come to an end, or the ruse having failed, the rattle rose again and resumed the unequal struggle with the energy of desperation—a supreme struggle for life. Again he reared and rolled and coiled, and darted up and down, forward and backward, carrying his enemy with him in all his contortions, trying by every conceivable twist to get his fangs into the merciless foe; but all in vain. Then we began to see in the poor victim renewed signs of failing strength; but, notwithstanding increasing weakness, he struggled for a time continuously, then intermittingly, until, more than two and a half hours after the first attack, the poor rattle gave up the contest, and lay down to die. This time it was no ruse. The poor fellow was done for, and within ten or fifteen minutes after the mute surrender he yielded up the ghost. But even then blacky still stuck, and it was not until the corpse began to stiffen that he for the first time withdrew the nails which had been driven nearly three hours before into the sure place—the throat of the unhappy rattle.

Then, the tragedy being ended, the comedy began; and a comedy indeed it was, at any rate to the two spectators. On the part of the victor there was no sign of triumph, no dancing round the prostrate enemy; but with all possible staidness and straightforwardness the hero prepared for the celebration of his victory. He began by stretching and straightening out the lifeless body, smoothing out every crease and every wrinkle on its scaly surface, with what intent we could not even guess. He seemed to have assumed the rôle of undertaker, and to be preparing the corpse for decent burial, magnanimous towards a brave though defeated foe. Not a twist or wrinkle was left upon the carcass from tip to toe, from nose to outstretched tail. Then, to our greater bewilderment, we saw that he was licking the body from end to end, making straight parallel lines of saliva along its entire length, which, with the rays of the setting sun falling on it, exhibited all its varied hues, and made us long for its possession, that

we might carry it away with us. But the dargy had something better to do than indulge a benevolent sentiment for our gratification. For ten minutes or more he continued his preparations, until he had made four or five streaks of saliva, which shone like satin ribbons, laid horizontally on the dead body from end to end. Then blacky rose and shook himself, and, having done so, took up his position at the head of his victim and calmly gazed upon him, with the first gleam of satisfaction in his bright little eye. We were still full of wonder and conjecture as to his purpose, interment of some kind being the only thing we yet thought of. But then we saw him calmly open his mouth to its utmost capacity, and take into it the entire head of the defunct rattler; then he gulped and swallowed; then rested; then another gulp and another swallow; and so on until he had tucked into him the whole body, a foot longer than himself; and then, with the tip of the tail still dangling from his mouth, he dragged himself into the scrub, and thence probably into a gully, there to spend a month or more digesting his ponderous meal, and 'fighting the battle o'er again' in blissful dreams.

PARTING.

OVERHEAD, a great aurora,
Flashing all among the stars,
From its wide arch in the northward
Flinging up its opal bars.

Round, the dim lights of the city,
Distant sound of harp and song,
Sat we in the shadowed garden
Speaking of our parting long;

Wondering of the unknown future,
What for us it held in store—
Sweetest meeting like the present,
Or farewell for evermore!

Whether, with earth's lights around us,
We should clasp each other's hand;
Or, beyond these narrow limits,
In yon vast mysterious land,

Spirit met with spirit, knit up
Threads of life that broke below,
Telling in each other's bosom
All the trouble and the woe?

Happy in the recollection
Of the fated hour we met,
Perfect love and peace succeeding
Every longing and regret.

T. P. JOHNSTON.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE BORDERS OF CIVILISATION.

To what better place, then, can the tired man go? There he will find refreshment and repose. There the wind blows out on him from another century.—ALEXANDER SMITH.



WE arrived in primitive fashion, for it was half-past ten on a cloudy August night when two footsore tramps reached the little clachan—the goal of our hundred-mile walk. Dark as it was, we could not mistake the inn. It was the only two-storied building in the place, except the schoolhouse, and that stood back from the high-road in academic seclusion, while the inn lay full in the way of all passers-by, though these were at most a handful. We had been given up for that night; but still it was not long before we were sitting, each perched on her bed, recklessly drinking strong tea, congratulating ourselves that we had ‘done it,’ and speculating as to what daylight would reveal. For one of us had never seen the place before (if, indeed, it is not Irish to speak thus of an arrival in pitch-darkness), and the other had had but one hasty glimpse, a year earlier, of the wild scenery surrounding the little cluster of black cabins; but that glimpse had been sufficient to raise the desire to see more of the spot, to inveigle a companion into the adventure, and to bring us, as you shall see, to the very borders of civilisation.

Such was the prelude to an existence which to-night feels like a dream, and which even at the time seemed like an enchantment. Think, if you can, of a place where time is absolutely of no value, and where the rule of life is to rise when you are sufficiently awake, to go out when sunshine and fresh air call you, to return for food when you are hungry, to lie down and to sleep when limbs are weary and eyelids close. We never knew the hour of the clock, and we never needed to. Here were no engagements, no trains, no regular posts; nothing that bound you to punctuality or energy of any kind. We used to get up (or think about it) when we heard the schoolmaster's horn calling in his barelegged troop from over the hills—the horn being simply a large

spiral shell washed on to the shore by some tropical current, and ingeniously turned to use by breaking off its point. We began to make acquaintances as soon as we crossed the threshold that first day, and we soon got to know everybody in the place. Were we not the first strangers who had ever stayed there, and was not our appreciation of it a ready passport to favour?

It was strange how much there was to see, too. From the high-road a passer-by looked over nothing but bleak moorland, culminating on the south in jagged ridges piled one above the other; while to the north lay peat-bog and meadow, and a ‘nothingness’ beyond which betokened the neighbourhood of the sea. Our first explorations were in this direction. Once safely through the oozy peat, we raced over the short turf which sloped gently down, and suddenly found ourselves looking into space, with a foaming sea breaking into dazzling white surf, full three hundred feet below us. For some miles there was no possible way of descending the cliffs; but later on our good friends the salmon-fishers showed us such wonders of water-worn architecture as made us hold our breath in awe-stricken delight.

Those were delicious hours when we rowed from net to net, watching the men as they hauled in the strong meshes, and the silvery monsters came writhing to the surface. The black cliffs, with their still deeper shadows, barred our vision landward; but elsewhere blue water was round us, and we knew that Greenland would be our first stopping-place could we follow the setting sun. Wonderful caves these men showed us, running far under the land, so that you could hear the muffled roar of the in-coming tide as you lay, out of sight of the water, on the grass above. How delightful, too, were these sturdy fishermen themselves! There was old Macdonald—there is always a Macdonald in the Island of Mist where two or three are gathered together; there was the silent giant who smiled quietly when we spoke, but who would not trust himself in a foreign tongue; there was Aleck the boy, and Rory

McFie—Rory the glib of tongue and ever laughing—Rory the black-eyed, the singer, the flatterer—though, indeed, our finest compliment came from old Macdonald. It was a rough day, when the men hesitated about taking us. 'Why not?' quoth he. 'The lassies are just like ourselves,' and that settled it—in we were flung next time the swell brought up the boat within jumping distance of the black basalt. But I must not forget our other friends: the postman, who strolled up some time or other every day with our mails in his coat-pocket. We must have doubled his work, and we frequently exhausted his supply of stamps, for the nearest office was eleven miles off, and he never could remember to bring us money-orders. He took back our written letters, and so saved us a two-mile walk to the barn with a slit in the wall which served as post-office (a word with no equivalent in the native tongue), where the cows showed a feminine curiosity as to your movements which was alarming until you became accustomed to it. Other institutions were on as primitive a scale. There was certainly a school, but we had no telegraph, no doctor, and no church; we were twenty-six miles from a reel of cotton, and more than fifty from a railway. And we did not miss any of them. On fine evenings we would go fishing with the aforesaid postman, or else rambling over the moor and scrambling down cliffs with the schoolmaster, who was our chief companion. He it was who taught us to eat the dulse so cunningly hidden under overhanging seaweed; he, too, who showed us the witch-stone where the milkmaids still pour libations to an otherwise forgotten god; and it was with him that we discovered that clump of white heather which we could just surround with our outstretched arms. I wonder if he has kept the oath we all swore, to conceal its hiding-place. In contrast to this handsome Norseman was Jamie Macdonald, the big navy just home from

digging canals in Mexico. Poor Jamie! I wonder in what country you are toiling to-day, and if you ever think of our climb up steep Quirang, and how you set off, after a look at your compass, in the twilight, making a bee-line for home through the bog. And do you remember the day I just saved myself from slipping over the grassy slope of Duntulm Island on to the rocks below, and clung desperately to a saving stone, and your spring from the gunwale of the boat, and your climb to help me? I remember, too, though you may not, how neatly you footed it at the nightly reel in the kitchen with yellow-haired Annie Nicholson as your partner. She married the quiet MacPherson—did she not?—after breaking your heart among many others. Many little stories such as this we saw begun or ended at our 'social evenings,' when the schoolmaster led the revels, and we would sit round singing each in turn, or else dance reels to the music of Somerled's concertina. Other nights, and on rainy days too, we read much and wrote more, and made wild efforts to pick up the soft, elusive tongue of the country; and I learnt to spin, taught by the sweetest of old women—old, though her hair was raven and her back unbent. Her dark skin and her features were of a type rapidly dying out, betokening a race which they say is pre-Celtic in origin. Certainly she always impressed us as weirdly old-world, even in this atmosphere of the past. Where is she now, I wonder? Has she forgotten the happy girls who taught her all the English she knew, and who cherish her memory as the most beautiful thing in that land of sleepy delight?

Has anything changed since we left the place that dark night, after the *deoch-an-dorus* on the doorstep? I should fear to return; yet if time can stand still anywhere, surely—surely it must be there, among the basalt cliffs and the peat-bog, and in the company of those simple-hearted men and women.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XXX.



THEIR first business when they reached the deck was to glance in the direction whence they had last seen the cruiser. Then she had been a living and very present reality to them; now she was only a tiny speck upon the horizon, and in a quarter of an hour, or even less, would have vanished altogether. They made their way aft to the taffrail, and stood there leaning on the rail, looking at her. Both felt that it was a crisis in their lives that had to be tided over, and knew that if ever they desired to be happy together they must fight the next ten minutes on

their merits. For this reason, perhaps, they began by being unusually silent. It was Katherine who spoke first.

'Dearest,' she commenced very slowly, 'I want you to listen to me and not to speak until I have finished. I have something to say to you, and I don't quite know how to say it. I don't want you to think that I am capricious, or that I think only of myself. In this I am thinking of you, and of your happiness only.'

'I can quite believe that,' Browne replied, trying to force down the lump that was rising in his throat. 'But I must hear you out before I can say more. What is it you have to say to me?'

'I want you'—here she paused as if she were fighting for breath—'I want you to give up any idea of marrying me, and to put me ashore at the first port at which you call. Will you do this?'

Nearly a minute elapsed before Browne replied. When he did his voice was curiously husky.

'Katherine,' he said, 'this is just like you. It is like your noble nature to try and make my path smoother, when your own is so difficult that you can scarcely climb it. But you don't, surely, suppose that I should do what you ask—that I should give you up and allow you to go out of my life altogether, just because you have been tricked as I have been?'

She glanced up at him with a face as white as the foam upon which they looked. What she would have replied I cannot say; but at that moment MacAndrew, accompanied by Jimmy Foote, appeared on deck. The latter approached them and asked Browne if he could spare him a few minutes. Not being averse to any proposal that would tend to mitigate the severity of the ordeal he was then passing through, Browne consented.

'What is it you want with me?' he asked, as savagely as if he were being deliberately wronged. 'For Heaven's sake, Jimmy, be easy with me! You can have no idea what the strain of the last few minutes has been.'

'I know everything, my son,' said Jimmy quietly. 'Do you think I haven't been watching you of late? That is exactly what I am here for. Poor old boy, you've been on the rack a shade too long lately; but I think I can put that right if you'll only let me. I've great news for you.'

'I don't know what sort of news you can have that will be acceptable to me,' said Browne lugubriously. 'I'm carrying about as much just now as I can possibly manage. What is it?'

'Do you think you're altogether fit to hear it?' he asked. 'And what about Miss Petrovitch? Can you leave her for a few moments?'

'I will speak to her,' Browne replied, and accordingly went back to Katherine. A moment later he rejoined Foote.

'Now then, what is it?' he asked almost fiercely. 'What fresh treachery am I to discover?'

'Come to the smoking-room,' Jimmy replied. 'I can't tell you here on deck, with all the world trying to overhear what I have to say.'

When they reached the cabin in question Browne discovered MacAndrew there, sitting on one of the marble tables and smoking a cigarette.

'I don't know what you think about it, Mr Browne,' said the latter; 'but it strikes me now that we have come very well out of that little encounter with our Muscovite friend over yonder. The idea they've got in their heads is that the runaway and myself are not on board; and if I know anything of their tactics, they will patrol

the coast for the next week or ten days in the expectation of your coming back to pick us up.'

'I wish them joy of their stay,' Browne replied. 'By the time they're tired of it we shall be safely out of reach. But what is it you have to say to me, Jimmy? You didn't bring me here to talk about the cruiser, I suppose?'

'I did not,' said Jimmy, with a great show of importance. 'I brought you to talk about something far more interesting. Look here, old man. I don't, of course, know what your feelings may be; but I've got a sort of a notion that—well, to put it in plain words—that you're none too pleased with your prospective father-in-law. He doesn't quite come up to your idea of the man whom you had been told suffered martyrdom for his country's good—eh?'

'I have never said that I disapproved of him,' Browne replied. 'I don't know why you should have got this notion into your head.'

'You're very loyal, I must say, old man,' continued Jimmy; 'but that cat won't fight—not for an instant. Any one could see that. No, no; I know as well as if you had told me that you're as miserable as a man can well be, and so is Miss Petrovitch. I don't wonder at it. I expect I should be as bad if I were likely to be blessed with such a papa. I should be inclined to wish him back again in the wilds of Saghalien.'

'Oh, for Heaven's sake, get on with what you've got to say!' cried Browne. 'Why do you keep me on the rack like this?'

Jimmy, however, was not to be hurried. He had never had such a hand to play before, and he was determined to make the most of it.

'It was MacAndrew there who made the discovery,' he said. 'I only came in at the end, like the Greek Chorus, to explain things. The fact of the matter is, Browne, when our friend here and the little red-haired gentleman were shut up together in the tunnel, the former elicited the information (how he managed it I am not prepared to say) that the name of the ex-convict is not Polowski or Petrovitch, but Kleinkopf; that he is not a Nihilist, as we have been led to believe, but a diamond-thief of the first water.'

He paused to hear what Browne would say, and, if the truth must be confessed, he was mortified to find that the other betrayed no sort of surprise.

'I know all that,' said his friend. 'Have you discovered nothing else?'

'A heap more,' replied Jimmy; 'but perhaps you know that too. Are you aware that the convict is the famous Red Rat, who once defied the united police of Europe? Well, he is! He is also—and mark you, this is the greatest point of all—he is no less a person than *Madame Bernstein's husband*!'

'Madame Bernstein's husband?' cried Browne, in stupefied surprise. 'What on earth do you mean by that? I warn you not to joke with me. I'm not in the humour for it.'

'I'm not joking,' Jimmy replied, with all gravity. 'I'm telling you this in deadly earnest. The Red Rat is Madame Bernstein's husband. He was sentenced to transportation for life in St Petersburg, was sent to Siberia, and later on was drafted to Saghalien.'

'Is this true, MacAndrew?' inquired Browne. 'You should know.'

'It is quite true,' said MacAndrew. 'For my part, I always thought he was the man you were trying to rescue. If you will look at it you will find that he tallies exactly with madame's description of the man we wanted?'

'Oh heavens! how we have been deceived!' groaned Browne. Then, as another thought struck him, he added, 'But if this is so, then Miss Petrovitch's father is still in captivity.'

'No,' said MacAndrew; 'he has escaped.'

'What do you mean? When did he escape?'

'He is dead. He died early last year.'

A silence that lasted upwards of five minutes fell upon the trio.

'The more I think of it the farther I am from understanding it,' Browne said at last. 'Why should I have been signalled out for the task of rescuing this man, in whom I don't take the least bit of interest?'

'Because you are rich,' said Jimmy. 'Why, my dear fellow, it's all as plain as daylight, now that we've got the key to the puzzle. Madame was aware that Miss Petrovitch would do anything to rescue her father, and so would the man she loved. Therefore, when you, with your money, your influence, and, above all, your yacht, came upon the scene, she took advantage of the opportunity Providence had sent her, and laid her plans accordingly. You know the result.'

'And while Miss Petrovitch has been wearing her heart out with anxiety to save her father, this heartless woman has been deceiving her—to whom she owes everything—and adapting our means to secure her own ends.'

'It looks like—does it not?' said Jimmy. 'Now, what do you intend doing? Remember, you have two traitors to deal with—Madame Bernstein and Mr Maas.'

'I don't know what to do,' replied poor Browne. 'It is sufficiently vexatious. I shall have to tell Miss Petrovitch, and it will break her heart. As for Maas, we must consider what is best to be done with him. I'll have no mercy on the brute.'

'Oh yes, you will,' said Jimmy. 'Whatever you are, you are not vindictive, Jack. Don't try to make me believe you are.'

Leaving the two men together, Browne went in search of his sweetheart. When he found her, he

summed up all the courage he possessed and told her everything from the beginning to the end. She was braver than he had expected, and heard him out without comment. Only when he had finished she rose from her seat, and asked him to excuse her, saying that she would go to her cabin for a little while.

A little before sunset that afternoon a small brig was sighted, five miles or so away to the south-west. A course was immediately shaped to intercept her. Her attention having been attracted, she hove to and waited for the boat that Mason warned her he was sending. When she put off the third officer was in charge, and MacAndrew was sitting beside him in the stern sheets. They returned in something under an hour, and immediately on his arrival on board MacAndrew made his way to the smoking-room, where he was closeted with Browne for upwards of an hour. After that he went below with Jimmy Foote.

The orb of day lay like a ball of fire upon the horizon when they reappeared. This time they escorted no less a person than Maas himself, who looked as if he were scarcely awake. Without inquiring for them or asking leave to bid his host and hostess farewell, he disappeared down the accommodation-ladder, and took his place in the boat alongside, and his traps were bundled in after him. Half-an-hour later the boat returned, but this time Maas was not in her. MacAndrew ascended to the deck, and once more made his way to the smoking-room. He found Browne and Jimmy there as before.

'They will land him at Tomari in the Kuriles in three months' time,' he reported, with what appeared to be considerable satisfaction.

'Tomari is the capital of Kunashiri Island,' said Jimmy, who had turned up a copy of the *China Sea Directory* during the short silence that followed. 'It has a permanent population of about one thousand five hundred souls, which is largely increased in summer-time by fishermen.'

'You are sure he will be quite safe,' said Browne. 'Scoundrel and traitor though he is, I shouldn't like to think that any harm would befall him.'

'You need not be afraid,' replied MacAndrew. 'He is quite able to look after himself. Besides, the skipper is an old friend of mine, and a most respectable person. He will take every care of him, you may be sure. You have paid him well enough to make it worth his while.'

After that, for the remainder of the voyage, the name of Maas was never mentioned by any of the party. Even to this day Browne scarcely likes to hear it spoken. Nor does he permit himself to dwell very often upon what happened a few days later, when, after a most uncomfortable interval, the yacht rounded Hakodate Headland and came to an anchor in the harbour.

'Leave everything to me,' said MacAndrew when

he went into the smoking-room to bid Browne farewell. 'I know how painful an interview would be for you all, and I think you can very well dispense with it. I believe they are ready to go ashore.'

'In that case, let them go. I never wish to see their faces again.'

'I can quite understand it; and now I must bid you farewell myself. I am sorry our adventure has not turned out more successfully; but at any rate you have had a run for your money, and you have seen something of life in the Far East.'

'I have indeed,' said Browne. 'Now, tell me of the arrangements you have made concerning these two miserable people. What will happen to them eventually?'

'They can do as they think best,' replied MacAndrew. 'They can either stay here or go wherever they please. The Nippon Yusen Kwaisha Line call here thrice weekly; and from Yokohama you can reach any part of the known world.'

'But they are practically penniless,' said Browne. Then, taking an envelope from his pocket, he handed it to MacAndrew. 'If you can find an opportunity of delivering it, will you contrive to let them have this. There is something inside that will keep the wolf from the door, for a time at least.'

MacAndrew looked at him a little curiously. He was about to say something, but he checked himself, and, stowing the envelope away in his pocket, held out his hand.

'You were not inclined to trust me when first we met; but I hope you are satisfied now that I have done my best for you.'

'I am more than satisfied,' replied Browne. 'I am very grateful. I wish you would let me do something to help you in return.'

'You *have* helped me,' MacAndrew answered. 'You have helped me amazingly; more perhaps than you think. Now, good-bye, and may good-luck and every happiness go with you.'

'Good-bye,' said Browne; and then the tall, graceful figure passed along the deck in the direction of the main companion-ladder. A few moments later the sound of oars reached his ears; and when they could no longer be heard Browne went in search of Katherine and Jimmy Foote.

'Well, old man,' said the latter when the screw had begun to revolve once more, 'what now? What is the next thing?'

'The next thing,' Browne replied, seating himself beside Katherine as he spoke, and taking her hand, 'is Yokohama, and a wedding, at which you shall assist in the capacity of best man.'

That night the lovers stood on deck, leaning against the bulwarks watching the moon rise from behind a bank of cloud.

'Of what are you thinking, sweetheart?' Browne inquired, looking at the sweet face beside him. 'I wonder if I could guess.'

'I very much doubt it,' she answered, with a sad little smile. 'You had better try.'

'You were thinking of a tiny landlocked harbour, surrounded by snow-capped mountains, were you not?'

'Yes,' she replied. 'I certainly was. I was thinking of our first meeting in Merok. Oh Jack! Jack! how much has happened since then!'

'Yes,' he answered slowly. 'A great deal has happened; but at least there are two things for which we should be thankful.'

'And what are they?'

'The first is that we are together, and the second is that you are not THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER!'

THE END.

HAREM HOSPITALITY.



TRAVELLERS, even the leisurely and the enterprising, find themselves limited to the tourist tracks in the lands they visit. They may pay their way and welcome among bazaars, shops, and show-places; but the true inwardness of home-life is sacred everywhere from foreign curiosity, however well filled its open purse. One is more hopelessly aware of this fact in Eastern than in Western countries. It is quite possible to visit in Italy and France, and enjoy watching the many ways various families find of doing the same things; and the worst bar between us and our entertainers, in addition to individual peculiarities, is the difference in our race, religion, and language. But in the East the differences are beyond counting; for the world presents an angle to harem eyes so unfamiliar to us that there are indeed few things we can appreciate in common.

Off one of Cairo's most crowded thoroughfares, surrounded by high walls, stands the harem of a certain Turkish nobleman, Pasha S—, who was uncommonly well known in Egypt; not so much because he was bad—for there is nothing startlingly uncommon in that—but because he openly defied the laws, thereby drawing on himself the wrath of the English authorities, and consequent exposure of his doings in the leading British papers. On one occasion Pasha S— and some other Eastern potentates were arrested on the charge of buying slaves up the Nile and bringing them to Cairo. The case, however, could not be proved against him, and he was released; he testified gratitude for this by inviting to his harem two women-members of a Scottish family resident in Cairo, of which the present writer is one.

On the day appointed for our reception the outer gates were swung back by a tall Nubian,

who led us down a stone walk flanked by high walls, through an archway into a square court. Here he was supported by the presence of at least a dozen other men of equal blackness and solemnity, who escorted us in state to the door of the harem itself, where we found the Pasha's wife *par excellence* waiting to receive us. She was an immensely stout woman, enveloped in a dressing-gown of figured cotton; and, although the conversation that we had together was highly condensed owing to a total ignorance of each other's language, her demonstrations of welcome were exceedingly gracious. She led us, with kindly signs and a flat-footed waddle, through a suite of large, empty rooms, whose floors were waxed to such a degree that any pursuit but that of skating would have been a difficulty. We reached the supper-chamber, however, without accident, and found divans to sit on, arranged conveniently near two or three small Arab tables, set out with coffee, native scones, bowls of buffalo-milk, and the butter that had been made from it, as strong in taste as it was dark in colour. These delicacies were handed to us by our two harem friends, the Pasha's daughter and Feerooza, his niece. The latter we knew well, having spent many a hot afternoon in the cool of her airy bedroom, watching her twist brown cigarettes with her browner fingers. It will be a disappointment to the lovers of the beautiful to hear that she was only redeemed from plainness by a magnificent pair of dark eyes. She was distinctly too fat for our ideas of grace; and although not browner in face than a Spaniard, yet her colour was mottled and muddy. When we had drunk as much buffalo-milk as politeness obliged, our hostess went to the opening in the room where the door ought to have been, and clapped her hands. In answer to this summons, a black servant appeared and led us through rooms, empty of all but the gathering shadows, to the door of our sleeping-quarters, which he politely opened for our entrance, and then, as he respectfully withdrew, turned the key securely on us for the night.

The room was large and lofty, and contained no furniture of any description whatever except a bed. This familiar object did not blushing hug the wall as one expects a bed to do, but stood defiantly in the very centre of the room. Its magnificence suggested the thought that generations and generations of Pashas must have been born on and have died in it. It was four-posted, with gold gauze mosquito curtains, and destitute of sheets and blankets, but provided with two curious thick coverlets rolled together and stretched across the foot, with the object doubtless of symmetrically balancing the one long pillow in a cotton bag, hard as the floor and humpy as a camel, which occupied the other end. This bed emitted and radiated around it scents of all the spices of Arabia, and the still, hot air was noticeably thick to the eye with the fumes of some penetrating

incense that the guardians of the bed had been burning round it to do us honour. In defiance of those unaccustomed luxuries, we slept until shortly after six next morning, when the door was unlocked to admit black servants bearing water-jugs and cups of thick native coffee, to refresh us within and without.

On leaving the room we were joined in the court by the ladies of the harem, who were all clustered round the well with their dusky, dark-eyed babies. The Pasha's daughters-in-law, with their children, all inhabited this building; and it was such an immense place that nobody seemed exactly to know how many people were under the same roof. As soon as the sun's rays reached the courtyard, a procession of two or three dozen women started for the bath-house. In this place at first sight there appeared to be neither baths nor water. It was simply a marble room with taps fixed in the walls, whence the water fell on the floor and was led off by small gutters through a grating. Ranged round the sides were projecting basins like marble mangers, where a child might be placed out of the wet or given a bath. In the centre of the room a fountain was playing for people to sit under. It was not long before the taps were on and the clothes off, for instantly congested masses of women surrounded each water-spout. Until now we had absolutely believed that the women's leisure hours comprised every moment of the year; but we were mistaken, for here they are all busy washing either themselves, each other, or their clothes.

From this entertainment of jubilant femininity we were summoned to a twelve-o'clock English breakfast, where we sat upon chairs, the first we had seen since our arrival. After this meal everybody retired to rest, and we followed Feerooza to the largest of the two rooms belonging exclusively to her. This apartment, instead of presenting the crowded appearance of an English girl's boudoir, had nothing in it but a heap of cushions and a table hardly large enough to hold the candle (bent double with the heat), and a packet of tobacco. The room was hot and dark; Feerooza was proceeding to make a cigarette, when something banged against the closed shutters, and a large locust burst through a hole in the woodwork and fell with a thud on the polished floor. She carefully pulled her clothes well out of the way of contact with the wounded insect, and began leisurely to fan her ankles with a dried palm-leaf. These afternoon siestas were very pleasant, as we lay on comfortable cushions, wearing little but talking much. The discussions ranged round our different religions and customs, and over books we had or had not liked. Our girl-friend was a very devout Mohammedan, reverent in her prayers, and was spreading out a carpet, with her face bowed towards Mecca, when a cry from the neighbouring minaret reminded her that 'there is no God but one

God, and prayer is better than sleep.' She spoke of the howling Dervishes with great scorn, as merely mad fanatics, looked upon by any educated Mohammedan as beneath contempt. She also told how much more religious the men of her country were than the women, almost all of them abstaining from food, water, or amusements between sunrise and sunset during the Ramadan month; while they rarely drink wine, and constantly attend readings and other religious ceremonials in the mosques. She was so firmly persuaded that we Christians were polytheists that nothing could shake this idea; it had arisen from something she had read in a French book regarding the mystery of the Trinity. Her curiosity concerning our religion was quite inextinguishable, although she displayed an almost equal interest in hearing how our English engineers sat up night after night with the Nile, watching by its bed with an attentive finger on its fluctuating pulse; or how English girls rode races to the Pyramids and picnicked with the Sphinx. Strangely enough there were many customs that we had seen and she had only heard of—such as an ordinary Moulid; the cutting of the Khaleej, when the figure of a girl—in olden days no effigy—is thrown into the water, to propitiate the angry Nile; or the passing of the Holy Carpet on its way to cover the Caaba at Mecca.

It was impossible for us, even with Feerooza's help, to arrive at an understanding of the exact position of the servants in the harem. Of the fifty or sixty women who were there, certainly most were either slaves or guests, for they received no payment beyond their food and lodging for doing for the most part nothing at all; while, on the other hand, some of them received handsome salaries. If any of them were ill-treated and wished to leave the harem, they could seek the protection of the British Government in the Cairo Slaves' Home, where they might remain until provided with a husband or a situation.

The conversation on those hot afternoons more often wandered to Feerooza's early years than to her present life. Of course a description of her presents no type of an ordinary harem-lady; for they are mere children in mind and manners, while Feerooza was exceptionally clever. Her father was born in Constantinople, and educated in Paris, where he learnt not only French and English, but absorbed with an appreciative mind many European ideas. Some years later, when his daughter was born, he arranged that German and English governesses should have complete charge of her, and Feerooza was twelve years old before the calamity of his death put an end at once to her education and freedom. From that day, ten years ago, until now she has been under her uncle's care, not only shut up in his harem, but engaged to be married to one of his sons, an honour which she has successfully managed to put

off more than once. Here, in addition to the occasional donkey-ride, there is only one outing allowed to relieve the monotony in the lives of the harem ladies. This treat is a picnic to a small island on the Nile belonging to the Pasha. Feerooza and her cousin, or one of us, veiled, and protected within a shut carriage by two female servants, guarded without by two male ones, might drive to the river and cross the water to this palmy grove. Here the excitement and delight consisted in the fact that they might walk without anything on their faces, lie on the grass if they could find any, or sit up to the knees in the Nile, enjoying all manner of delicious fruits, while watching man, the only forbidden one, sailing silently past them. On these occasions, instead of the ordinary dressing-gown of coloured cotton, they wore their state-garments of black silk, with black scarfs worn round the head. The servants changed their blue working-gowns for others made of camel-hair. We never heard Feerooza express any bitterness about her position during those rare holidays, nor, indeed, at any other time. She was so indolent that to hurry, even in the pursuit of pleasure, would have been impossible, although she was ready enough to enjoy any little change such as our society brought her, if there was no exertion required on her part.

Even more important, if possible, inside than outside the harem, was the dinner-hour; and the arrival of it put an end to our afternoon talk, for a servant had appeared to summon us to the table of our host. The party assembled in an outside room beyond the courtyard, and consisted of my cousin, with her husband, myself, and Pasha S—, who deferentially invited us to seat ourselves on the cushions surrounding the low dinner-table. The first course, a large bowl of white soup, stood in the centre of it, and we all ate from this common tureen with the wooden ladles provided. Fourteen courses followed on this solid foundation; one of them was a small sheep boiled whole. We were given no knives or forks; but each one pulled with the fingers the bit he or she liked best, and laid it on the flat scone which supplied the place of a plate. Whenever our host saw a piece of meat that he thought was particularly appetising, he pulled it off the sheep, and thrust it into the mouth of the guest unfortunate enough to be next him. The immediate neighbourhood of this man, whose face was the colour and consistency of perspiring putty, extinguished all desire to eat. Yet, for duty's sake, we went bravely through the goat-steaks, the iced vegetables, the rich sweets and pastries, and the elaborately constructed jellies. Our host told us with pride that he gave his cook ninety pounds a year; but we have no particular reason to suppose that he was speaking the truth. Two of the Pasha's sons waited on us during dinner, which was tediously long; and their last office, after handing coffee, was to place before each of us, in turn, a golden

basin with water to wash in. This meal and the Pasha's after-dinner smoke lasted so long that it was late before we separated. We were thankful to retire to the golden bed and sleep off the exhaustion that must ever follow the strain of combined overcivility and overeating.

On the afternoon of the next day we were invited, by good fortune, to the common women's quarters, to join the feast and add our voice to the rejoicings that welcomed the birth of a dragoman's son. Proceeding to this scene of festivity, we found a large crowd of women in blue-striped gowns and brightly-coloured shoes, waiting about aimlessly, gossiping. The arrival, however, of some dancing-girls immediately sent the whole bevy upstairs in hot haste to secure good places in the room used on such birthday occasions. The floor was instantly covered with kneeling and squatting women, leaving, one would have thought, hardly space in the centre for any dancing at all. This performance, however, occupied more time than space, for the dancers rarely took even a step backwards or forwards, confining their movements entirely to the body, which they jerked about as if it had no connection with the legs at all. After any peculiarly disgusting convulsion the applause rose high, and was shown by the curious whirring, throaty noise that is here the outward expression of pleasure. The happy announcement that food was ready mercifully put an end to the dancing, or we might have been sitting there yet; and the whole company flocked into the feast-room, where meats of all kinds were arranged down a low table. Here the women fell tooth and nail on the food, pulling off a bit of flesh here or fat there, till considerably more eating might have been had off the fronts of their dresses than from the disarranged dishes. Much-needed basins to wash in, coffee, and cigarettes followed each other fast, and the general opinion conveyed to those who could understand it was that the *fantasia* had been eminently successful.

It was with considerable relief that we left the heated atmosphere of the eating-room, to examine the quaint wicker beds that the native women

use. Nobody seems to care about sleeping in one place, and the beds are to be found anywhere and everywhere, from the court to the roof of the house. From these domestic scenes we passed out into the garden, which was delicious in the luxuriance of its undergrowth and tropical variety of flowers. We rested on timeworn marble seats, warm, as if possessed of some inward heat. White butterflies, like flickering flecks of sunlight, palpitated past us; bees with heavy force flew from flower to flower. Before us was an old fountain; it represented a cherub, whose marble cheeks were worn away by the countless living lips that have pressed his to receive the water that flows from them no longer. We were possessed by a drowsy lotus-eater feeling. Like a pulse throbbing within us, and a visible force enveloping us, the never-ceasing hum of life saturated the breathless air. Waves of heat arose tauntingly from the ground around the parched water-sprite; they quivered above his head like living things, and drove us, drowsy with their fumes, to seek the shelter of the cool harem. As we passed along the garden path the roar of traffic reached us from the street, where trees, choking for breath, threw a dusty shade on the thirsty throng. We had left for a day the rush of advancement, and were standing within shut walls which have enclosed, without a change, generation after generation of women for hundreds of years. It transports us to any age, for time has stood still here, while women's lives have flowed through it. Outside the walls voices echo to them from thousands of unseen speakers, and all day long the tread from ceaseless feet, following each other fast, rises to their ears from invisible travellers. Everything is unreal to them, except the harem wall, casting its deathly shadow on their lives, shutting them out of a world that would furnish them at least with some variety, if it was only a variety in their pain. It needs, indeed, the halo of romance that surrounds all ancient customs to conceal the horrible deformity of an institution that places under lock and key the best thing in the world—the influence of good women.

THE TAPU OF BANDERAH: A TALE OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

CHAPTER V.—THE TAPU OF BANDERAH.



MR and Mrs Deighton were at lunch, talking about the genial manners and other qualifications of their guests, when suddenly they heard a rapid step on the veranda, and Blount, the trader, dashed into the room.

His face was white with excitement, and they saw that he carried his revolver in his hand.

'What, in Heaven's name, is wrong, Mr Blount? Why are you armed?'

'For God's sake, don't ask me now! Our lives are in danger—deadly, imminent danger. Follow me to my house.'

'But, my dear sir,' began Mr Deighton, 'I do not see—I fail'—

'Man, are you mad? Do you think I do not

know what I am saying? Your two friends are both murdered. Banderah is now at my house, too exhausted to tell me more than to come and save you.'

'Dear, dear me! Oh, this is dreadful! Let us, Alice, my dear, seek'—

'Not now,' and the trader seized the missionary by the arm as he was about to sink upon his knees. 'Stay here and pray if you like—and get your throat cut. In ten—in five minutes more every native in the place except Banderah will be here, ready to burn and murder. I tell you, man, that our only chance of safety is to reach my house first, and then the schooner. Come, Mrs Deighton. For Heaven's sake, come!'

Pushing past the missionary, he seized Mrs Deighton by the hand and descended the steps. They had scarcely gone two hundred yards when they heard a strange, awful cry peal through the woods, and Mr Deighton shuddered. Only once before had he heard such a cry, and that was when, during the early days of the mission, he had seen a native priest tear out the heart of a victim destined for a cannibal feast, and hold it up to the people.

Suddenly Mrs Deighton gasped and tottered as they hurried her along; she was already exhausted. Then Deighton stopped.

'Mr Blount—go on by yourself. We have not your strength to run at this speed. I will help my wife along in a minute or two. Some of the mission people will surely come to our aid.'

'Will they?' said Blount grimly. 'Look for yourself and see; there's not a soul in the whole village. They have gone to see'—and he made an expressive gesture.

Mr Deighton groaned. 'Oh! this is terrible.' Then suddenly, as he saw his wife's deathly features, his real nature came out. 'Mr Blount, you are a brave man. I beseech you, save my dear wife. I am too exhausted to run any farther. I am too weak from my last attack of fever. But we are only a quarter of a mile away from your house now. Take her on with you, but give me your pistol. I can, at least, cover your retreat for a time.'

Blount hesitated; then, giving his pistol to the missionary, he lifted the fainting woman in his arms, and said:

'Try and come on a little. As soon as I am in sight of the house your wife will be safe. You must, at least, keep me in sight.'

As the trader strode along, carrying the unconscious woman in his strong arms, the missionary looked at the weapon in his hand and shuddered again.

'May God forgive me if I have done wrong,' he muttered. 'Take the life of one of His creatures to save my own I never will. Yet to save hers I must do it.'

Then, with trembling feet but brave heart, he

walked unsteadily along after the trader and his burden. So far no sound had reached him since that one dreadful cry smote upon his ear, and a hope began to rise in his breast that no immediate danger threatened. A short distance away, enbowered among the trees, was the house of Burrowes. The door was closed, and not a sign of life was discernible about the place.

Heavens! were they asleep? He had heard that Burrowes and the German had been carousing all the morning with the captain of the *Island Maid*. Likely enough they were all lying in a drunken slumber. 'Lord give me strength to warn them,' he said to himself; and then, with a last glance at Blount and his wife, he resolutely turned aside, and began to ascend the hill.

But before he gained the summit Blount reached the fence surrounding his house, and Banderah and Taya and her two young brothers, rifles in hand, met the trader.

'Quick! take her;' and he pushed Mrs Deighton into Taya's arms and looked back.

'He's going up to Burrowes's house! Come, Banderah'—and he started back again—'he'll be speared or shot before he gets there.'

Just as the missionary reached the door and began in feeble, exhausted tones to call out, Blount and the chief caught up to him, and seizing his hands, dragged him away again down the hill.

'Don't bother about them; they are all on board,' was all Blount said. And there was no time to talk, for now fierce cries were heard in the direction of the mission-house, and Blount and Banderah, looking back, saw black, naked figures leap over the low stone wall enclosing the missionary's dwelling, and disappear inside.

'Just in time,' muttered the trader, as, dragging the missionary between them, they gained the house and set him down beside his wife, who, with a cry of thankfulness, threw her arms about his neck, and then quietly fainted.

For nearly half-an-hour Blount, with Banderah and the missionary by his side, looked out through the windows, and saw the natives plundering and wrecking the mission-house and the dwellings of Schwartzkoff and Burrowes. A mile away, motionless upon the glassy waters of the harbour, lay the schooner, with her boat astern, and every now and then Blount would take a look at her through his glass.

'I can't see a soul on deck,' he said to Mr Deighton. 'I heard that Peter and Burrowes went off this morning with the captain, all pretty drunk. I wish I knew what is best to do. To go on board would perhaps mean that those ruffians would shoot us down before we were alongside. No; we'll stay here and take our chance. Banderah says he feels pretty sure

that he can protect us from his own people. They'd never dare to hurt him; and I think that will steady them a bit;' and he pointed to the fence, upon which, at intervals, were tied green coco-nut boughs. These had just been placed there by Banderah himself, and meant that the house was *tapu*—it and all in it were sacred.

'God grant it may,' said Mr Deighton; and looking at the mystic sign, the use of which he had so often tried to put down as a silly, heathenish practice, he felt a twinge of conscience.

At last the work of plunder was over, and Blount and those with him, grasping their rifles tightly in their hands, saw a swarm of black, excited savages, led by two 'devil-doctors,' or priests, advance towards the house. At the same moment Banderah, looking seaward, saw that the boat had left the schooner and was pulling ashore. He was just about to point her out to the trader, when, for some reason, he changed his mind, turned away, and joined his white friends at the other end of the room.

Following the lead of the devil-doctors, who, stripped to the waist, and with their heads covered with the hideous masks used in their incantations, looked like demons newly risen from the pit, the yelling swarm of natives at last reached the fence outside Blount's house; and Mr Deighton, with an inward groan, saw among them some of his pet converts, stark-naked, and armed with spears and clubs.

Leaping and dancing with mad gyrations, and uttering curious grunting sounds as their feet struck the ground, the devil-doctors at last came within a few feet of the gate in the trader's fence. Then, suddenly, as they caught sight of a branch of coco-nut twisted in and around the woodwork of the gate, they stopped their maddened whirl as if by magic; and upon those behind them fell the silence of fear.

'Thank God,' muttered Blount, 'we are safe. They will not break Banderah's *tapu*.'

Then, rifle in hand, and with quiet, unmoved face, Banderah opened the trader's door and came out before them.

'Who among ye desires the life of Banderah and those to whom he has given his *tapu*?' he said.

The smaller of the two priests dashed aside his mask, and revealed the face of the old man Toka, who had struck Baxter his death-blow.

'Who, indeed, oh chief? If it be to thy mind to make *tapu* this house and all in it, who is there dare break it? To the white man Challi and his sons and daughters we meant no harm—though sweet to our bellies will be the flesh of those whom we have slain, and who now roast for the feast. But more are yet to come; for I, Toka, lost my son when thou, Banderah, lost thy sister, and the gods

have told me that I shall eat my fill of those who stole him.'

The savage, bitter hatred that rang through the old man's voice, and the deep, approving murmur of those who stood about him, warned both Banderah and Blount that the lust for slaughter was not yet appeased; so it was with a feeling of intense surprise and relief that the trader and the missionary saw them suddenly withdraw and move rapidly away to the rear of the house among the thick jungle.

'That's very curious,' said Blount, turning to Banderah, and speaking in English; and then the chief took him by the arm and pointed towards the shore. The boat pulled by Schwartzkoff and Burrowes, with Captain Bilker sitting in the stern, had just touched the beach. Then it flashed across his mind in an instant why the natives had left so suddenly: they were lying in ambush for the three men.

'By heavens! bad as they are, I can't let them walk to their death,' said Blount, jumping outside, so as to hail and warn them. But before he could utter a sound Banderah sprang upon him and clapped his hand to his mouth.

'Challi,' he said, 'they must die. Try to save them and we all perish. For the sake of thy daughters and of thy sons, raise not thy voice nor thy hand. Must all our blood run because of these three dogs' lives?'

Even as he spoke the end came. Staggering up the beach in drunken hilarity, the three whites did not notice, as they headed for the path, a file of natives, armed with spears and clubs, walk quietly along between them and the water's edge. There they sat and waited. But not for long; for presently, from out the thick tangled jungle in front came a humming whirl of deadly arrows, and in a few seconds the three white men were wallowing in their blood. Then came that blood-curdling shout of savage triumph, telling those who heard it all was over. Before its echoes died away the bleeding bodies were carried to where a thick, heavy smoke rising from the jungle told the shuddering missionary that the awful feast was preparing. When he looked again not a native was in sight.

Standing apart from the others in the room, Blount and Banderah spoke hurriedly together, and then the trader came to the missionary.

'Mr Deighton, if you wish to save your wife's and your own life, and escape from this slaughter-house, now is your time. I believe we shall never be safe again, and I would gladly go with you now if I could. But my daughter Nellie is at Lak-a-lak, and—well, that settles it. Banderah here will tell you that he dreads for you to stay, as the priests may plot your death at any moment. I implore you, sir, to think of your wife. See! there is the boat, drifting along the beach with the tide. By all that is dear to you, I entreat you to be advised and get on board

the schooner, and whatever port you do reach, send a vessel to take me away.'

Then, almost before the missionary and his wife could realise what was happening, Banderah had run to the beach, swum to the boat, seized the painter, gained the shore again, and pulled her along till opposite the trader's house, just as Blount and Taya, supporting Mrs Deighton between them, were leaving the house to meet him.

In twenty minutes more they were close to the *Island Maid*, and saw that her crew were weighing the anchor. On the after-deck stood the mate and steward, with rifles in their hands.

'What on earth is wrong?' said the mate as the boat bumped up alongside, and the missionary and his trembling wife were assisted on deck.

'Don't ask now, man. Get your anchor up as quick as you can, and put to sea. Your captain and the two passengers are all dead. Clear out at once if you don't want the ship to be taken.'

'I thought something was wrong when I saw the native dragging the boat along. Lend us a hand to get under way, will you?' and the mate sprang forward.

In another five minutes the *Island Maid's* anchor was up, and then Blount and Banderah, with a hurried farewell to Mr and Mrs Deighton, sprang into the boat and pushed off.

'May God bless and keep you,' called out the missionary to Blount, 'and may we meet again soon;' and then, sinking on his knees beside his wife, he raised his face to heaven, and the trader saw that tears were streaming down his worn and rugged cheeks.

But Blount never more saw nor heard of the missionary and his wife. Long, long afterwards he did hear that some wreckage of a vessel like the *Island Maid* had been found on Rennel Island, and that sovereigns were discovered among the pools and crevices of the reef for many years subsequently. Whether she ran ashore or drifted there dismasted—for a heavy gale set in a week after she left Mayou—is one of those mysteries of the sea that will never be solved.

Soon after the great feast Toka made a request for another victim to be furnished for the ovena. Banderah's practical nature showed itself in his reply. 'Yes,' said he, 'and thou shalt be the man;' and taking a spear, he passed it through the old priest's body.

Two years passed before another ship touched at Mayou, and Blount, now perfectly assured of his own safety, felt no desire to leave the island, for matters went along smoothly enough after this; and the trader prospered and grew rich under Banderah's protecting care.

THE 'ERMAK,' A NEW RUSSIAN ICE-BREAKER.



THE Russians, with their ports ice-bound and useless for some three or four months in the year, have always felt themselves cruelly handicapped in the commercial race for wealth, which seems to bid fair within the next half-century to take the place of the old-fashioned steel and gunpowder warfare among the nations of the future. Their attempts to secure open ports in the south were thwarted by the restraining clauses of various treaties, which hamper their movements, however little regard they may pretend to pay to them; and now that they have seized ice-free ports in China, and have an eye to a like chance on the Persian Gulf, they are more than ever concerned in all possible means of keeping open the existing home ports. In default of the Gulf Stream being obligingly induced to alter its course by the cutting of the Panama Canal (about which a good deal was said at one time), and so change the winter conditions of certain Russian ports on the Baltic, other less uncertain means towards the desired end have been taken. The ice-breaker, on any important scale, first presented itself to the Russians in the course of the construction of the great Siberian railway, when it became a

question of crossing the Lake Baikal, a distance of forty or fifty miles, by a ferry, or of building a line round its southern end, a distance of some hundred and fifty miles in length. The former route was first chosen, and a huge ferry to take three loaded trains at once was ordered, together with a combined tug and ice-breaker, to ensure a free passage all the year. The enormous cost of this scheme—a special floating-dock had to be built to facilitate the construction of the ferry and tug—and several other considerations, led to the practical abandonment of the ferry for the longer but more certain course of a railway round the southern end of the lake. The next attempt at ice-breaking on a considerable scale was made at Vladivostok, and with success. The port is now kept open the year round, and, together with the railway from it to Khabarovsk (the Ussuri Railway), on the Amur River, has completely revolutionised the conditions of life in the Russian Far East. Whereas in the old days the country was supplied with all the necessaries of life—with the exception of meat and certain low grades of flour which came from the Chinese in Manchuria, only once a year from America and European Russia—it is now provided for by regular monthly sailings of the Russian Volunteer

Fleet steamers, as well as services, mostly under the German flag, from Chinese and Japanese ports.

The immense importance of an open port never, of course, required any demonstration; and once the practicability of the ice-breaker had been put to the test at Vladivostok, it was determined to attempt the same means at the more difficult port of St Petersburg. Admiral Makarof, a very distinguished oceanographer, whose pet scheme it was to construct an ice-breaker of such power that not only would it keep open the port during the winter, but also to some extent serve in the solution of Arctic problems, secured funds from the Russian Government, and the order for the new vessel was placed with the Armstrong-Whitworth Company on Christmas Eve, 1897. The *Ermak*, built of mild steel and on the admiral's plans, was launched on the Tyne on 17th October of last year, and in March 1899 arrived at Kronstadt, breaking its way with ease and certainty through the winter ice of the Neva.

The ice-breaker, it is not generally known, works not by direct impact, but by its enormous weight, artificially increased where required by filling numerous water-tight compartments distributed all over the ship. It will readily be understood, with a moment's reflection, that to ram or charge a field of ice and cut through it, as one so often hears these ice-breakers spoken of as doing, is an utter impossibility, even with ice no thicker than, say, a couple of feet. When that thickness is increased to double and treble, as is the case in the severe winters of Russia, the absurdity of the notion becomes still more evident. But the ice-breaker never attempts to cut through Arctic ice. It is constructed with a flat bottom; and when about to make an attack on a field of ice, water is pumped into the aft-compartments to bring the bow well above the surface. Then, retiring some distance from its mark, the ice-breaker charges full tilt at the ice, and lands, in consequence, partly on the top of it. The water in the aft-compartments is then pumped with all speed into those forward, so that, apart from the great weight of the steel ship, the enormous pressure of hundreds of tons of water is brought to bear upon the ice along a comparatively narrow line, starting from the edge of the field. If a crack as long as the ship itself does not ensue at the first attempt, it is pretty certain that at least the edge of the field will give, and by repeating the process a clear path is eventually made. The old pattern of ice-breaker in use at Vladivostok did no more than this, and after some hours' work generally found itself considerably hampered by frozen clouds of spray all over its bows, besides being under the necessity of passing to and fro unceasingly to keep the channel it had made open, since it did not dispose of the broken ice in its wake, and this, naturally, was not long in re-forming.

The *Ermak*, however, is a great improvement on

the old pattern, and is calculated to overcome all the old obstacles. In the first place, it is over three hundred feet long, and the value of length, when combined with strength, will be plain from the explanation given above of the *modus operandi*. It has four engines, each of two thousand five hundred horse-power, and four screws. Of the latter, three are placed in the usual manner at the stern, where also are three of the engines. The fourth engine and screw are placed forward. The vessel is seventy-one feet wide, and is divided into forty-eight water-tight compartments, capable of being filled and emptied with great rapidity by a large pump placed amidships, which is constructed to deliver two thousand three hundred gallons per minute.

The use of the novel introduction of a screw near the bows is to complete the opening up process by creating a strong rush of water, which will carry the blocks of ice broken up by the weight of the ship well astern, and allow of no re-forming while the ship is preparing for another charge at the field. There are many minor novelties. Among the least happy, perhaps, may be noted the introduction of the 'marine buffer,' an idea of Admiral Makarof's for avoiding the disastrous results of a collision at sea. He hopes to see it generally applied at some future time, either in the form now first invented for the *Ermak*, or some modification of it. The *Ermak's* buffer is a combination of tubes placed vertically, and supposed, in the event of a collision end-on, to yield sufficiently to avoid the penetration of the other ship's side, as would be the case with a sharp prow. It is probable that the Admiral's humane invention will not find very ready acceptance among shipbuilders or shipowners generally; but perhaps he may be able to give it a trial on the *Ermak*, and it would therefore be premature to anticipate the result. Among less utopian devices is one for utilising the heat of the waste water from the engines to warm the fore-part of the ship, which he hopes to do sufficiently to prevent the clogging of the bows, and consequent stoppage of way by freezing spray and the drift snow of the icefields. A hydrothermograph, placed beneath the ship, is intended to give warning of the changes of temperature, and can be made to ring an alarm at any desired degree, so as to indicate, for example, the approach of an iceberg or any other considerable quantity of ice.

The *Ermak*, named from the Cossack who in 1580 conquered part of Siberia for Russia, is capable of a speed of sixteen knots; but as that will only be required to charge and drive her well upon the icefields, her engines are so arranged that she can use all her three stern screws at a much less rate of speed, and with the least possible expenditure of fuel. Admiral Makarof exhibited a large model of the *Ermak*, and expounded the plan to the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1899.

As arranged, the new ice-breaker was employed during this last winter in keeping the port of St Petersburg open. In summer the *Ernak* will pass through the Kara Sea to the mouth of the Obi and Yenisei. In autumn she will be on the way to England with a cargo of timber from the

mouth of the river Yenisei, and will return to St Petersburg, bringing a full load of good English coal for the Russian fleet, in time for the resumption of her peculiar duties during the winter. If the Kara trip succeeds she may ultimately bring her powers to bear on the ice that defends the pole.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE NEW PLANET.



IN a certain August night last year Herr G. Witt, of the Observatory of Urania, in Berlin, took a photograph of a particular portion of the heavens, giving that picture a very long exposure, so that the minutest stars might find a record there. When the plate was developed it was found that in one part of it, amid the hundreds of dots which were star images, was traced a little streak, that streak indicating a body which was in movement. This body turned out to be an asteroid, one of those little planets which during the present century have been discovered to the number of four hundred and thirty-two, not counting this new one, which has been named Eros. The new asteroid turns out to be by far the most important of all its kindred, not because of its size, for it is only a very small body, but because at one part of its journey round the sun it will approach this earth nearer than will any other of the heavenly bodies—our moon alone excepted. The importance of such a near neighbour in space means that by its aid the actual distance of the sun and other bodies can be far more accurately measured than was possible before its discovery. It will also materially help in the more accurate determination of the movements of comets. Indeed, the discovery of our little neighbour Eros is one of the most important astronomical events of the century.

FOG-SIGNALS AT SEA.

Some interesting experiments have recently been made by the Rev. Mr Bacon, of Newbury, Berks, by means of a balloon, in order to detect, if possible, the presence of invisible banks of vapour in the upper atmosphere. Some years ago, when Professor Tyndall was making acoustical experiments at sea, off the South Foreland, the firing of detonating cartridges was followed by an echo not only from the land, but from space; and Tyndall ascribed this last echo to the presence of what he called acoustic clouds. From his balloon Mr Bacon has failed to obtain the same effect, although he uses a four-ounce cartridge of tonite, which gives a report like a cannon. The cartridge hangs by a line one hundred feet below the car of the balloon, and is exploded by electricity. Some

seconds after the explosion, the echo comes up from the earth like a tremendous roar; but no aerial echo has yet been detected. It is proposed to use these loud-speaking cartridges during foggy weather at dangerous rocky points at sea, and they have actually been tried with great success. They can be heard for twenty to thirty miles; and it seems certain that if such a means of warning had been available at the Casquets, and employed at the proper moment, the recent wreck of the *Stella* might have been obviated.

WASTE PRODUCTS.

From a very interesting report recently issued by Lord Kelvin and Professor Barr, it would seem that the term 'waste products' will in the near future cease to be employed; for the simple reason that there will be no waste. These two gentlemen have for some time been making investigations at Edinburgh, Bradford, and Oldham with regard to the destruction of town refuse, and the conclusions at which they have arrived are of great interest to local authorities, as well as to the general public. By means of modern methods of destruction, the most unpromising refuse—most of it of a noxious and putrescent nature—can be absolutely consumed without the creation of either nuisance or smoke. More than this, the products of combustion assume in many cases a distinct commercial value. In some cases, too, as our readers are already aware, the heat engendered in the destruction is utilised for the production of electricity for both light and motive-power. When this important result was first obtained it was found necessary to use coke and coal to assist the rubbish to burn; but now, by improved methods, no fuel is needed. This transformation of noxious filth into the finest and most beautiful form of artificial light is one of the triumphs of the century.

THE RAILWAY REST.

Railway carriages, of all classes, are now made so comfortable and luxurious that there is little to find fault with; and the happy possessor of a corner seat feels little fatigue although he may have travelled two hundred miles or more. If he has not been lucky enough to secure one of the corners, he will be in equally comfortable circumstances if he carry with him 'the railway rest' invented and patented by Mr Stewart of

Twynholm, Scotland. It consists of a band of serge material, with an attachment at one end by which it can be fixed to the bracket supporting the luggage-rack. The traveller slopes the band according to his taste, and, sitting upon the end of it, makes for himself an elastic back-rest against which he can lounge in great comfort.

SIXTY-FIVE MILES AN HOUR.

Our best express trains occasionally exceed the great speed of one mile a minute; but such a rate of travelling would have been until recently considered quite impossible for any sort of vehicle on a common highway. M. Jenatzy, a Belgian engineer, has recently built and driven a form of auto-car in France at the wondrous speed of nearly sixty-six miles per hour. The vehicle has apparently been built for speed and nothing else. It has the shape of a Whitehead torpedo in order to reduce air-resistance to a minimum, it is made of sheet-iron, and is mounted on a frame having four pneumatic-tired wheels. The motive-power is electricity; but after a short spurt at the tremendous speed mentioned the batteries require recharging. Photographs of the apparatus, stationary and in rapid motion, are reproduced in *The Auto-car journal*.

A REFLECTING FILM.

At the first conversazione of the Royal Society, held at Burlington House in May, many scientific novelties were shown; but none aroused more interest than the infinitely-thin silvered films exhibited by Mr A. Mallock. These films are obtained in a very novel manner, and consist practically of a material nearly akin to celluloid. A few drops of a solution of pyroxyline in amyl acetate are allowed to fall on the surface of water, when they spread out into a sheet a couple of inches in diameter, with a thickness of about the twenty-thousandth of an inch. The solvent evaporates, and the solid film can be lifted from the water on a ring of thin glass, and is afterwards gently washed in distilled water and silvered. Mirrors are constantly in request for various scientific instruments, and are very expensive when of glass; for the surface of the material has first to be optically worked—that is, made perfectly true—and the silver must be deposited on the surface so as to avoid the double reflection inseparable from ordinary looking-glass. It is said that the definition afforded by a reflected image from the film mirror is quite equal to that from carefully worked glass, while the cost is in comparison quite trivial.

POISONOUS PLANTS.

Distressing cases are not uncommon in which children, wandering in country places, have died through eating poisonous leaves, roots, or berries. The lower animals are commonly supposed to be

able to decide for themselves whether a plant is edible or not, and will refuse to touch anything harmful. But that this is not the case is well known to stock-keepers. The Royal Agricultural Society have recently been turning their attention to this important matter, and their consulting botanist has presented to them a report which abundantly illustrates the danger to grazing animals from poisonous plants growing on or near pasture-land. The pretty buttercup comes under the category of condemned plants, and is described as 'a worthless and dangerous weed.' It is more or less acrid in all its varieties, and cattle should not be allowed on pastures where it grows. Yews, laurels, and rhododendrons are very dangerous, the last two yielding a secretion which is rich in prussic acid. On the other hand, the cypress, which by common report is poisonous to cattle, does not seem to be harmful to them. It acts as an astringent; but no case is known in which any real injury has been caused to cattle from its presence.

NEW USES FOR GLASS.

The United States consul at Lyons has recently reported upon a new kind of pavement which has for some months been in use in Lyons, and has satisfactorily withstood the effects of heavy-traffic. It is made of glass prepared in a peculiar manner, the product being known as ceramic stone. The factories where this material is prepared are of great extent, and we are told that in the yards were seen many tons of broken bottles, which the superintendent described as their 'raw material.' The treatment consists in heating the broken glass to the melting-point, and then compressing it by hydraulic pressure and forming it into moulds. For paving purposes the glass is made into bricks eight inches square, and is scored with cross lines, so that when the pavement is completed it resembles a huge chess-board. The glass loses its transparency and brittleness, and is said to be devitrified; it is as cheap as stone, and far more durable. It will resist crushing, frost, and heavy shocks; and can be employed for tubes, vats, tiles, chimneys, &c. It is available for all kinds of decorative purposes; and a large building made of the material will form an attractive object at the Paris Exhibition next year.

AGRICULTURAL REVIVAL IN ESSEX.

Six years ago the farmers in Essex were in a bad way. Thousands of acres were going out of cultivation, and landowners were glad to let their farms for a shilling per acre, if the tenant would pay tithe and taxes. Later on they offered their holdings free for a year or so to tenants who would undertake the trouble and expense of cultivation. A number of Scottish farmers came upon the scene, accepted the terms, and the experiment has succeeded. It is no longer profitable to grow wheat in Essex, and the new farmers at once

turned their attention to the dairy. They soon discovered that the industry would not pay them if the middleman were allowed, in the case of milk, to continue to absorb the lion's share of the profits. They therefore combined, formed a protection society, and determined to give the milk to the pigs rather than sell it below a certain price. Even under the revised conditions, the middleman secures about one hundred per cent. of the profits, and it thus comes about that a small milk-business employing only two carts will often produce an income of one thousand pounds per annum. There are few farmers nowadays who can hope for anything like such a return for their far more arduous and anxious labours.

TELEGRAPHY WITHOUT WIRES.

Owing chiefly to sensational newspaper reports with regard to the possibilities of wireless telegraphy, the public have been looking forward to the time when our streets shall no longer be excavated for the disposition of telegraph cables, and when our house-tops shall be free from a network of metallic spider-webs. Mr Preece's lecture before the Society of Arts will have dashed these pleasant hopes to the ground, for he has most emphatically shown that wireless telegraphy in its present form and limited speed cannot be named in the same category as the old system, and that it is only useful for special service under abnormal conditions. A curious instance of its efficacy is afforded by the collision in a fog of a steamer with the only lightship upon which Marconi's apparatus is as yet established. This lightship, which is twelve miles to the north-west of the South Foreland, was able to wire news of her predicament; and, had the need arisen, lifeboats would have been started from three or four ports to her assistance within a few minutes of the accident.

NEW LIFE-SAVING DEVICE.

There was recently a successful trial in St Katherine's Docks, London, of a method of rendering boats unsinkable—the invention of Mr E. S. Norris—a method which is as simple as it is effective. Supposing that he wishes to apply the invention to a lifeboat which is already fitted with water-tight compartments, he would fill those spaces with an indefinite number of closed tubes, each only a few inches long, made of some strong impervious material such as waterproof paper. But a boat with such compartments is not necessary, for the little cases can be held in a canvas band which can be nailed along the sides of any ordinary row-boat, and render it quite unsinkable. The principle can also be applied to life-belts and buoys—replacing the cork ordinarily used, with a great saving of expense. In the trials referred to, a specially-designed boat, with canvas-held tubes along her sides as well as fore and aft,

righted herself after being purposely capsized, although fitted with a mast and sail; while an ordinary boat similarly treated failed to sink, although the bung was removed to fill her with water, and seven men were aboard. These hopeful experiments were witnessed by representatives from the Admiralty and various shipping authorities.

FIRE EXTINCTION.

Lord Fortescue has in a recent letter to the *Times* advocated a system of water-supply which he has adopted in his own country house as a preventive against fire—a system originally suggested by Mr Osbert Chadwick, C.E. It is unfortunately only applicable when a constant supply of water under high-pressure is available. Upon every floor of the building to be protected there is provided a hose fitted with a nozzle; but this hose, instead of being the usual size, is only one inch in diameter. On the other hand, it is so light that a woman or child can easily control it, and a single valve will charge it with water at a moment's notice. The idea is to attack the flames before they get untamable, and before the arrival of a fire brigade. Every one knows that a gallon of water at this stage is more effectual than a hundred gallons later on. Another consideration is that the damage to decorations, furniture, and in factories to delicate machinery by the tremendous impact of a two or three inch stream of water—very often far more serious than that wrought by the flames—is almost altogether avoided by the use of the smaller hose. Protected in such a manner, and with a weekly 'fire-drill' for the inmates, any house or factory should be practically safe.

LENGTH OF LIFE.

According to M. I. Holl Schooling, of Brussels, there is a very easy way of calculating the age to which a human being may reasonably expect to live, but it is only applicable if his present age lies between twelve and eighty-six years. The method is really an old one, and was originally discovered by the mathematician Demoisire, who in 1865 emigrated from France to England, and became a member of the Royal Society. The rule is this: Subtract your present age from 86, divide the remainder by 2, and the result will give the number of years which you may expect to live. The rule may be approximately correct for some ages, and represents perhaps the nearest solution of an insoluble problem at which we can arrive.

ARTIFICIAL PEARLS.

The French scientific journal *La Nature* recently described some experiments by which the production of pearls was artificially induced in the shells of some molluscs kept in an aquarium.

No allusion is made to the circumstance that an extensive industry of this kind has been carried on for many years by the Chinese. The creature selected for the operation is a species of large fresh-water mussel, which is fished up from its *habitat* and returned to the water as soon as a little operation has been performed upon it. This consists in inserting between its body and the inner side of the shell a number of small round pellets of wax or clay, which in the course of a few months become coated with a layer of nacre, or mother-of-pearl. Sometimes small leaden images of some idol or divinity are made use of instead of the circular pellets, and these, when coated with the nacre, are sold as amulets or charms. All the gasteropods which secrete nacre will coat with it any foreign body which may by accident or design get within their shell, and hence it comes about that natural pearls have frequently a piece of driftwood or a particle of sand as a nucleus.

THE MANNA OF THE BIBLE.

The same journal has an interesting note by M. Henry Castrey on the manna picked up in the desert, which is supposed to be identical with that which plays such an important part in the history of the Jews as told in the Bible. It seems that in the present day Arabs who are obliged to traverse the sandy wastes of Arabia depend to a large extent upon this 'angel's food' both for themselves and for their camels. The manna is in reality a fungus which is found in great quantities on the sand after rain. Of a gray colour and of the size of a pea, it has a pleasant, sweet taste; and although its analysis shows that it is by no means a perfect food, it is sufficiently rich in nitrogenous matter and carbohydrates to sustain life for a long period.

FOG.

There is a prevailing notion that fog is something special to the Metropolis, and hence the term 'London particular' as applied to the 'pea-soupers' of November and December. But fog is not a thing by itself—an essential entity, so to speak—but simply the outcome of something else—smoke, to wit. So that wherever there is a large consumption of coal by our present barbarous process of open grates there is sure to be fog. Manchester and Glasgow afford abundant evidence of that. Professor Oliver Lodge, who has discovered an electrical invention which will turn Scotch mist into rain and smoke into 'something white,' says the only way to prevent a London fog is not to cause it; and the way not to cause it is not to burn coal-fires, like savages, in open grates. He believes that the day will come when it will be forbidden to import crude coal into London, and he would like to see the experiment tried of making gas at the great coalfields, and

conveying it to the towns in huge pipes and conduits. The experiment, of course, could not be made with respect to London, as it would have to be conducted on too large a scale; but it might be tried with a small town, and it will have to come to that some day. People say they cannot bear 'gas-stoves;' but, as a matter of fact, all fires are gas-stoves, and people make the gas themselves, and make it very badly. No doubt, however, the gas-stove of the future will be a very different contrivance from that of to-day. Professor Lodge is right, and knows what he is talking about. Meanwhile there is to be a very determined effort made to deal with the 'black smoke' nuisance in London, under the provisions of the Public Health Act of 1893. An influential society has been formed, of which Sir W. B. Richmond, the eminent artist, is the head, to wage war against the polluters of the London atmosphere, be they manufacturers, hotel-keepers, or householders. As the *Spectator* points out, there is no evil better worth fighting than that of black smoke, for it is black smoke which puts a curse on city life, and helps to degrade the population of the poorer quarters of London. If the black smoke could only be got rid of, London, with its noble tidal river and its splendid parks and gardens, might be one of the most beautiful cities in the world, and also one of the most habitable. As it is, it is hopelessly dark, dirty, and depressing. Perhaps when Londoners realise that fog is only arrested smoke, they will take to grates which consume their own smoke, or, better still, to coals which emit none.

'WHEN DAWN TAKES WING.'

WHEN Dawn takes wing, she eastward drives and 'lights
From love-dreams deep to wake the languid Sun;
The crimson portal with her pinions smites,
And cries, 'A day begun!'

When Night takes wing, she flies toward the west,
Where flames with drowsy light the Day-god dear;
She piles cloud-curtains o'er his place of rest,
And whispers 'Night is here!'

When Hope takes wing, she toward true hearts aspires
With fancies to beguile the soul forlorn;
She weaves fond dreams of wistful, sweet desires,
Proclaiming 'Love is born!'

KATHLEEN HAYDN GREEN.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE LOST CAUSE.

A ROMANCE.

By DAVID LAWSON JOHNSTONE, Author of *The Rebel Commodore, An Unauthorised Intervention, &c.*

[NOTE.—That which follows is the narrative of certain passages in the earlier career of Mr George Holroyd—afterwards a member of Parliament and a holder of high office under George III., and latterly Lord Dunsyre in the peerage of Ireland—and is taken from a memoir in his own hand, now in the possession of the fifth Lord Dunsyre. The memoir, for weighty reasons that need not be set down here, has hitherto remained unpublished; but it has seemed right to the present peer that at least the events described in the ensuing extract, as throwing a new and valuable light on a byway of history and a great historical personage, should no longer be hidden from the world. It may be premised that at the date of these events—namely, towards the end of the second George's reign—Mr Holroyd was secretary to Lord Kynaston, one of the Ministers of State. On the January day on which the extract opens he was on his way from London to Bath to consult his chief, detained in the western city by an attack of the gout, on matters of most urgent import connected with his office. One servant rode with him. The narrative, it should be added, has been freely edited.]

CHAPTER I.—THE KING'S HIGHWAY.

THUS delayed, 'twas late afternoon ere we pulled up at 'The Bear' inn at Devizes for dinner. The early winter dusk was creeping in when we started again; there was a pleasant touch of frost in the air, giving promise of harder roads and a speedier progress than we had hitherto experienced; and I had good hope that, with luck and no mishaps, we should yet reach Bath in fair time that evening. You are to hear whether we did so or no.

For a time, after leaving the town behind, we pushed on at an easy canter. Now it was that I noticed a change in Joseph's bearing. 'Twas his first journey with me; he had but lately entered my lord's service, and I had chosen him to accompany me because of his knowledge of the road; and so far, much to my liking—for, to my mind, a surly and unsociable fellow is of all men the most hateful—he had proved most capable

and light-hearted. With the twilight, however, his mood was strangely different. His high spirits were gone, and he met my approaches to friendly conversation with ungracious monosyllables. Bethinking that he might bear me a grudge for dragging him from the warm fireside of the inn kitchen, I sought to rally him—impelled thereto, it may be, by the pint of good port that lay beneath my waistcoat.

'You're cursedly glum, Joseph!' I remarked. 'A-hankering after some fair chambermaid at "The Bear"?''

'Seen none, sir,' said he shortly.

'Well, what is it? Confess, man!'

He was silent.

'Come, heart up!' I cried. 'Not afraid of pads, are you?'

Again he said nothing; but the look on his face, and his quick, furtive glance ahead, told me that my random shot had hit the mark. I laughed outright.

'A pretty fellow like you—shame!' said I.

'Taint no joke, sir,' he replied, finding speech. 'For true, 'tis a bad stretch, this—none worse this side o' London town than 'twixt here and Bath. And they're terrible bold, sir—scarce a night but what they're out. Why, only last night'—

'Tales of "The Bear" kitchen?' I threw in. 'Well—last night?'

'I see'd him myself, sir—a cattle-dealer he was; and last night a pair of 'em took fifty pound from him, five miles out o' Bath. Then, no farther gone than Saturday'—

So he ran on with a string of stories, all telling of the recent exploits of the pads, mounted and on foot, who had made themselves unpleasantly familiar with many worthy people journeying to and from Bath. If a tithe of them were true we had some ground for apprehension. But were they true? Honestly, I did not believe it. At

the worst—well, I had seen something of these 'gentlemen of the road' at the Old Bailey and Tyburn, where they showed to small advantage; I had my sword and pistols, and some confidence in arm and eye; and at twenty-eight, I take it, a man should still have the appetite for an adventure. 'Twas plain, however, that Joseph thought otherwise. He started in his saddle when I gravely suggested that it might be our turn that evening.

'The Lord forbid, sir!' cried he most fervently.

'Even if we meet one alone?' said I. 'For myself, I hope we will—I should like a shot at a live pad. I warrant he'll run fast enough. And think how you could boast about it in London, Joseph!'

But he shook his head, unconvinced; and presently, as the dusk deepened, he busied himself with his own thoughts. By his countenance, they were somewhat doleful.

So we rode on for half-an-hour or more, along a road that was quickly hardening in the grip of the frost. Left to myself, my mind recurred to the papers in the satchel that was now strapped before me, and to the urgent necessity that they should reach my lord's hands without a moment's delay. He alone could decide the precise value of these communications from our agents abroad; but my knowledge of their gravity had been sufficient to draw me from the pleasures of town—which at that season, to an unmarried man not without prospects, meant something—and send me post-haste on the long and uncomfortable journey to Bath.

Seend was behind us when Joseph broke the silence. The night had now fallen, and although there was a moon, 'twas of small service to us; for here the road ran on in the shadow of a wood that bordered one side of it, and the darkness was such that we could scarce perceive each other, and already perforce had slackened our speed. And it was a terror of the dark, or his tone belied him, that had now given my companion the use of his tongue.

'This must be the place, sir,' said he in little more than a whisper—'just here, in this very wood—that the coach was stopped to-morrow week. Maybe'—and here his teeth came together with a snap.

'Yes?'

His voice sank still lower. 'Maybe they're waitin' to-night,' said he. 'They say 'tis a favourite spot o' theirs.'

For a moment I said nothing. The man was plainly in deadly fear, and, for myself, the reality of an encounter was somehow brought closer home to me here, with the black wood abreast and the darkness around. But the keen air and brisk exercise had served to raise my spirits, and I turned again to Joseph.

'Well, what odds? You can use a pistol, I dare say?'

'Y—yes, sir—a little. But I'm a miserable

poor hand in a fight—always was, sir!' said he, with something of a whimper; 'and they're terrible when they're countered!'

And, being a fellow of no spirit, he refused to be heartened; by which 'twas evident that I could put no dependence on him in the event of a meeting. It behoved me to lay my plans accordingly. For I had a fancy to discover for myself, if chance offered, if the highwaymen of the Bath road were truly so redoubtable. But how? All at once I had an idea. Turning it over, I began to convince myself that, if the worst befell, it was even the best course to ensure the success of my mission.

In a few words I explained it to Joseph, and at the same time entrusted to his care the satchel and its papers, giving him full directions for its disposal. 'You understand me?' I asked. 'You are a lighter weight than I, and it may easily be done.'

'Right, sir!' cried he briskly; and manifestly was overjoyed at the chance. He was thinking of his own skin, and had not a thought to spare for the consequences to me of the failure of my part. Nor, for that matter, had I.

'How far does this wood run?'

'We've half a mile of it yet, sir—or rather more, maybe.'

'And beyond?'

'Fairly open for a good bit.'

'Be ready, then—and, for Heaven's sake, keep your head. If you don't,' said I, 'I may be tempted to put a ball into you instead of the pad!'

All this, you will understand, was by way of precaution—or was it the prompting of some strange instinct within me? The danger might not arise; and indeed, as we jogged slowly onward, the chances that it would do so seemed sensibly to lessen. For, listen as I might, not a sound was there to warn us; none at all, in truth, save the clatter of our horses' hoofs and a gentle rustling in the tree-tops. So for perhaps five minutes longer, and then—

'Pull up, for your lives!'

The command came from the shadow of the wood, directly in front; it was at our very ears; the voice loud, harsh, peremptory. What immediately ensued was scarce of my own will. Somehow, my horse sprang forward—I must, in the surprise of the moment, have dug my spurs deep into his flanks—and simultaneously I heard an angry shout, and descried (not five yards from me) a couple of mounted forms looming indistinct by the roadside. Joseph's animal was not more than half a length behind mine, having wisely followed its example. And I was on the inside.

'Stop!'

We could not, even if we had wished. In a second we were upon them, and past. The shadowy figures took form and shape for an

instant as I dashed past their horses' noses, with not three feet to spare—safely and without interruption, for plainly our assailants were too much taken aback to attempt to cut us off. Their surprise did not endure. There was a sudden report, a ball whistled past my ear, and then an ominous clattering behind us. Suddenly I came to myself again; for these events had happened (so to speak) of themselves, and happened in less time than it takes to relate them. Now I found myself fumbling with the flap of my right-hand holster; Joseph was running neck-and-neck with me; and we were racing at highest speed towards the stretch of moonlit road that showed far in front, with the enemy thundering close at our heels.

'Faster, Mr Holroyd, faster!' said my servant.

I glanced behind. Less than fifty yards separated us from the nearest of the pursuers. Was the start enough? . . . And then, as we sped on, my first impulse was succeeded by one madder still. The reality of the position flashed upon me: that here was I, a man of some quality and repute, fleeing before a pair of common robbers without striking a single blow, my fate perhaps to be shot ingloriously in the back. A quick feeling of anger swept over me. We were nearing the open; Joseph was drawing gradually ahead; the sound of the chase dinned in my ears like the voice of a reproving conscience. I tightened rein.

'Now, Joseph,' I cried, 'on you go. Don't pull up till you're safe; never mind the beast.'

He nodded, nothing loath; for fear was upon him, and he was incapable of aught else. For me, my resolution was taken: come good or ill, I would try a fall with these gentlemen of the road.

Ere I had managed to rein in my horse—no easy task—we had passed the end of the wood, and emerged into a light (were it only that of the half-moon) which seemed most adequate by comparison with the darkness behind. I gripped my pistol harder. Joseph was already several lengths ahead, spurring for dear life: the moment had arrived for me to face the danger. And then, as I strove to pull the animal round, I heard this cry:

'After him, Tom—tally-ho! Leave the other to me.'

When at last I got the stubborn beast round, it was just in time to see a dark form dash past me and onward in the wake of my servant, now seventy yards away. I should have fired—as it befell, it would have mattered little; but I had neither the wit to do so at the proper instant, nor (as it proved) the opportunity to watch the upshot. For now I had my own concerns to mind. I took in the position with one glance. The second highwayman had pulled up his horse—'twas a big, deep-chested bay, with a patch of white on its forehead—at a distance of some ten yards, and now sat the panting animal immov-

able, toying idly with a great pistol; himself a tall, stoutly-made fellow, heavily cloaked, with a black beard showing beneath his crape mask. My pulses went a little faster. We were man to man; surely here was my opportunity. But for a minute I did nothing. I had a strange reluctance to take the first step. I could only watch my opponent, who confronted me in grim and uncomfortable silence, and wonder at his inaction—and my own. And the sound of the chase came fainter and fainter to our ears.

It was the highwayman who spoke at last.

'Give you good-evening, sir,' said he in smooth and cultured tones, albeit with a shade of mockery in them. 'Pray let me thank you for your courtesy in stopping. My friend will probably settle with yours. For yourself, I need not detain you long.'

'You are very kind,' I returned, instinctively adopting his tone. 'You want my valuables, I suppose?'

He pulled off his hat with a flourish. 'To put it bluntly,' said he. 'I will only beg of you to be quick. I have yet to overtake my friend—and yours—and time is precious.'

The fellow had the grand manner, and spoke as if he were conferring a favour. I should have been angry at his impudence. Instead, I had an inclination to laugh. After all, if one is to be robbed, surely it is preferable to be robbed with some degree of politeness.

'Your valuables, papers—and your horse,' he repeated. 'If you please, sir.'

'But I don't please,' I said, and with that covered him with my pistol. Down with your pistol, sir, or'—

His answer was a derisive laugh.

'Then if you *will* have it'—And, somewhat nettled, I lowered my pistol and fired point-blank at his horse, for I had no wish to shed his blood if it could be avoided. But there was no result.

'My young sir, let me give you a piece of golden advice,' said he coolly—'namely, never to leave your pistols in your holsters when you are dining at an inn. Or, if you do, recharge them when you go on—especially, if you'll pardon me saying so, on the western section of the Bath road. Oh! you may try the other if you like. There! And now, if you are satisfied, it would be well to get to business. . . . Ah! would you?' he cried in quite a different tone. 'Down with that, man! I have no wish to hurt you; but—So if you *will* be a fool'—

For, after the first moment of bewilderment and chagrin, I had tossed away the useless pistols and whipped out my sword. Now, touching my horse with the spur, I made for my opponent. But he, on his part, was not less quick. With a lusty oath, he swerved his animal aside, none too soon. Then, as I strove to recover myself, there was a flash in my eyes; I felt my horse

stagger under me; and, just as I had freed my feet from the stirrups—again I must have acted by instinct—down it went with a crash, and I was flung heavily to the frozen ground.

For a minute or two I lay, stunned and half-conscious. Luckily for me I had fallen clear of the wounded horse. Then I heard a second report—doubtless that of the shot required to put it out of pain.

When at length I looked up the highwayman had dismounted, and was bending over me, with his bridle on his arm.

'An unfortunate accident, sir,' said he, nodding grimly. 'Honestly, I am grieved—for the horse. Besides, I have no liking for these little misadventures: they are too apt to make bad blood. But you are not hurt, I hope?'

'I think not,' I said, sitting up; and indeed, save that I was shaken and rather sore, and that my head swam a little, I had escaped marvellously well. I glanced round, first at the dead horse, next at my sword glittering in the moonlight a dozen yards off, and last of all at the man standing above me. I could have sworn that a broad smile showed beneath his mask.

'Good!' He held out his hand. 'Can I assist you to rise?'

But I did so without his assistance, wondering what was to follow. For a moment he listened intently, saying nothing. Again my eyes wandered longingly to my sword.

'Have you not better get it?' said he, intercepting the look.

'But, sir'—I broke off, not sure if I had heard aright.

He took me up with a touch of impatience. 'You can use it, I suppose?'

'But . . . I don't understand.'

'Tush! we are wasting time,' he said. 'Get your sword, man. It isn't business; but you seem to be a gentleman of spirit, and—well, I have a fancy to give you another chance.'

Even yet I failed to understand him, so strange was the whole episode, so unexpected such a move on the part of a robber who had his victim at his mercy. But he was plainly in earnest; for as he spoke he doffed his cloak and threw it across his saddle, and proceeded to tether the horse by the

roadside. Whether he were gentleman masquerading as pad or pad trying to masquerade as gentleman, I had naught to do but obey. Yet as I faced him, sword in hand, 'twas in a kind of a dream. Then, as if he read my thoughts:

'You will pardon me, sir, but I could not resist the temptation,' he said in a tone that was quite brisk and friendly; 'although perhaps 'tis scarce fair to you so soon after your fall. But it must be two years, egad! since I had a turn with a gentleman. In the Place Royale it was, with half Paris looking on, and the best swordsman in the King's Guards opposite. The light was rather better than to-night's, and otherwise—— But to work. If you are ready, sir'—

'I am at your service,' said I.

So, saluting, we fell to. As the swords rang together, surprise and curiosity—surprise that such an adventure should have fallen to my lot, curiosity regarding my opponent—still divided my attention. A minute's play, however, sufficed to drive these away, and thereafter I had no thought save for the urgent necessity of the moment. I may lay claim, with due modesty, to some skill in the art: that minute told me I had met a master. From the beginning the highwayman pressed me hard—so hard that my utmost vigilance was strained to withstand him. Once, indeed, I barely saved myself by a quick leap backward. The escape served to steady my nerve. At the least, I thought, let me make a good fight of it!

For a time I held my own. Then, somehow, the uneasy feeling grew that the man was toying with me, and, perchance, sneering behind his mask. I had soon proof of it. I perceived, as I imagined, an opening, and—fell forthwith into the trap. My stroke was easily parried; the counter-stroke caught me unawares. It was the end. I felt a quick, stinging pain in my shoulder; there was a swirl of blood in my head; my sword clattered on the road, and the road itself seemed to leap upwards. And for the rest, my recollection carries only a confused image of moonlight that was now strangely red, of a black mask close to my face, of agony as my wound was examined; and, last of all, of hearing a voice that sounded low and far-off:

'The devil! Half-an-inch lower than I intended!'

HOW SAILORS FIND THEIR WAY AT SEA.

By C. C. MARRIOTT.



Those whose good fortune it may have been at some period of their lives to make a long ocean voyage—and alike to some of those whose equally good fortune, for various reasons, it may have been never to have done anything of the kind—there is a strange fascination connected with the science of naviga-

tion, accurately, if tersely, described by one of its greatest teachers as 'the art of conducting a ship from one port to another.' So long as the mariner is in sight of land, and he is well acquainted with all the local tides and currents, and his charts are to be depended upon, there would not appear to be any very great difficulty in the art; but when there is nothing between him and his horizon

in every direction—and nothing, it may be, for thousands of miles beyond that—but a vast, unvarying, trackless waste of water, it seems little short of miraculous that the navigator should be able to steer his ship with the nicest accuracy to the one infinitesimally small spot in the great world that he desires to reach. And how is this done with such almost unfailing regularity, such apparent ease? It is the object of this article to endeavour to give an outline, avoiding as far as possible all merely technical details, of the means by which the difficulties, at one time thought by our ancestors insuperable, have been overcome.

Prior to the year 1546, when Gerrard Mercator published his famous chart of the world as then known, now universally adopted under the designation of 'Mercator's Projection,' the parallels and meridians of the old plane charts represented the surface of the globe as a huge chess-board, the squares of equal size, the lines equidistant. The distortion of the higher latitudes was something enormous, and rendered the calculation of the longitude of the ship impossible; and it is to Mercator that modern navigators are indebted for the solution, by dead reckoning, as it is termed, of that difficult problem. Briefly, the revolution he effected was as follows: The representation of the earth as a plane surface for navigation purposes being essential, the question arises, How are the meridians of longitude which meet at the poles, but are far apart at the equator, to be dealt with in such a manner as not to magnify out of all proportion the area of the countries near the poles? Mercator's solution was to draw the meridians equidistant and parallel, as had been done before; but he treated the parallels of latitude in exactly the opposite manner—that is to say, he drew them farther apart as they reached the poles, thus making one distortion counterbalance the other. The relative bearings of all places to one another were by this means preserved on the chart, in spite of the apparent disproportionate enlargement of countries far north or south; and the old danger of one place appearing east of another, when it might in fact be west, was for ever removed.

Let us suppose we are taking a voyage to South America. We are in a steamer, and therefore need not trouble ourselves with calculations as to how far it is advisable to proceed upon one tack before changing, or how much we must allow for leeway; we shall have enough to fully occupy our attention without those complications. The Channel having been successfully negotiated, we are now off the Lizard at, say, twelve o'clock noon, and our voyage outward is just commencing. We therefore proceed, in nautical language, to 'take our departure.'

We have provided ourselves with an excellent set of charts; our compasses have been adjusted (though we do not place too much reliance on that circumstance), and our sextants, chronometers,

nautical almanacs and tables, are all in their places. Just a word as to the compasses. Every one is more or less familiar with the instrument known as the mariner's compass, with its magnetised needle popularly supposed to point to the north. As a matter of fact, this needle, except at a few places on the surface of the earth, never points to the true north, but always to a point some degrees east or west of that pole. The angular difference between the true north and the magnetic north, as it is called, is termed the *variation* of the compass; and this variation must always be allowed for when directing the course to be steered. We shall find it marked for us in various places on our charts. It must be clearly distinguished from *deviation*—that is, the result of the pernicious influence of ironwork in the immediate neighbourhood of the compass, which is always endeavouring by insidious means to tempt the fickle instrument from the paths of duty. The fact is, the compass is very easily led astray, and its idiosyncrasies must be constantly studied and allowed for. It is nevertheless absolutely indispensable. We are now saying good-bye to Old England; and it is essential that we should know the exact distance and bearing of the Lizard, from which we take our 'departure,' as that point is the last sight of land we are likely to obtain for some time. The bearing by compass is found to be, say, NE., and the distance we calculate to be twelve miles; we therefore note in our log as our first course the *departure bearing*, reversed of course to SW., as we are supposed to have sailed from the Lizard, and corrected for variation. We now refer to our chart; and, with a parallel rule and the assistance of one of the engraved compasses we find dotted about our chart, we estimate the course we must steer to safely reach our port.

We have now begun our 'day's work.' In a few hours' time we are out of sight of land, and the distances covered (ascertained by our patent log) and the particular courses sailed on every twenty-four hours must be registered with the most scrupulous precision. The knowledge at all times of our latitude and longitude is of the most vital importance; and it is by calculations based on the data furnished by those records that our 'dead reckoning,' as it is called, is enabled to give us that knowledge. At twelve o'clock the next day we proceed to discover the net result of the previous twenty-four hours' run. As we have been sailing in a south-westerly direction, it is obvious that our latitude must be less than that of the Lizard. The log gives us the number of miles we have travelled, and the course is four points of the compass—that is, we have sailed at an angle of forty-five degrees from the Lizard. A simple calculation or a reference to one of our tables with these data gives us the *difference of latitude* we have made; we deduct this difference from the latitude of the Lizard, and the remainder is our

own latitude. But we also require to ascertain our longitude, or distance measured in degrees of the equator from the meridian of Greenwich, before we can find the exact spot on our chart which represents our position. This is not quite so simple. We have been sailing in a westerly direction, and our longitude is, therefore, greater than that of the Lizard; but we have not been sailing along a parallel of latitude, and consequently we certainly cannot consider the number of miles sailed as our distance due west of the Lizard. However, we know our latitude, so we can go back in imagination along that parallel until we meet the meridian of the Lizard, and the length of that parallel will represent, not our difference of longitude, but our *departure*, as it is termed—that is, our distance west of the meridian of the Lizard. This has to be converted into *difference of longitude* by calculation, or reference to our tables, and the difference added to the known longitude of the Lizard. Now we know where we are, and we mark, or 'prick,' as sailors say, our position on the chart. That is the point from which we take our next departure in the same manner as we took our first from the Lizard.

What we have just been considering, in a superficial and inadequate manner, is what is known as ascertaining our position 'by account' or 'dead reckoning;' but, for many reasons, it is not usual or advisable to trust to that means alone, though we never dispense with it altogether. The results obtained in this manner are tested and verified by observations of the sun, moon, and stars, taken with a sextant. The latter method, so far as finding the latitude from the sun's meridian altitude is concerned, is comparatively simple. Our object is, of course, to ascertain our distance from the equator. As there are three hundred and sixty degrees in every circle, it follows that the number of degrees from our horizon to our zenith (immediately overhead) is ninety—one-fourth of a circle. With our sextant we take, at noon precisely, the altitude of the

sun above the horizon; we then subtract the number of degrees contained in that altitude from ninety degrees, and the difference is the distance of the sun from our zenith. Now, we know that at some place in the tropical regions the sun is immediately overhead at noon, and the sun's declination at noon (which corresponds to the distance of that place from the equator) is given for every day in the *Nautical Almanac*. Knowing, then, the sun's distance from our zenith, and also from the equator, we also know our own distance from the equator—that is, our latitude. By a somewhat similar process latitude may be discovered from the altitude of the moon or stars.

To find our longitude by means of an observation of the sun, we have first to ascertain the exact time of taking the observation. This—a by no means easy matter—having been done, we learn from our chronometer the time at Greenwich at that moment; and, remembering that the earth rotates at the rate of nine hundred miles an hour, we can calculate the number of degrees and minutes we are east or west of Greenwich, one hour of time representing fifteen degrees of longitude.

The problem of finding the time at sea is of too complicated and difficult a nature to be explained in a short article; but enough has been said to give a general idea of the means adopted in modern times for finding one's way at sea. If the rate and direction of all currents were known beyond the possibility of doubt, and if we could always be sure of the alterations in our positions due to gales and hurricanes, it might possibly be safe to rely on dead reckoning alone; but in the present state of our knowledge we cannot dispense with astronomical observations; and if, as sometimes happens, the state of the weather prevents these being taken for several days, it may be weeks, it is scarcely to be wondered at that we occasionally hear of ships being lost at places miles away from their proper positions.

SECRET DESPATCHES.

By T. W. SPEIGHT.

CHAPTER I.



ALLOW me to begin by introducing myself.

My name is Josiah Simkinson, and I am senior partner in the old-established firm of Simkinson Brothers, Bottlers and Exporters of Bitter Ales, of Bucklersbury Buildings and Shadwell Dock, E.C.

I am a family man, verging on middle age, of rather a plethoric habit, and addicted—perhaps a little too much so—to good living. (I know

my failings, and have no wish to disguise or ignore them.) Existence with me has flowed along prosperously and uneventfully. I am happy to say that I have been the hero of but one adventure, so to term it, and I have no ambition to be the hero of another. My intention, in now taking up my pen, is to furnish my readers with a faithful and unvarnished account of the incident in question.

Simkinson Brothers do a fairly large Continental trade, more especially with France, and the

interests of the firm take me to Paris, and occasionally as far as Lyons or Marseilles, two or three times in the course of each year.

On the occasion to which I now come, having brought my business to a conclusion satisfactory, I hope, to all concerned, I found myself at the Gare du Nord, Paris, in time to book a seat by the 5.45 P.M. express for Boulogne. To all appearance, I was destined to have my compartment to myself, and I was felicitating myself thereon, when, at the last moment, the door was flung open and an elderly lady of uninviting aspect was bundled in by one of the officials; and scarcely was there time to thrust in after her a somewhat shabby-looking carpet-bag, of a kind as much out of date as herself, before the train began to get under way. As our cousins over the water might say, I felt 'pretty considerably riled.' There was a carriage 'for ladies only' attached to the train. Why had she not betaken herself to it, and left me to the not unpleasant solitude of my own thoughts?

My unwelcome travelling companion, who was unmistakably of French nationality, had seated herself in the far corner of the carriage fronting the engine, while I sat in the near corner with my back towards it, so that we were as far apart as the circumstances allowed of our being. I do not set myself up as being a judge of such matters, but in my own mind I put down her age as fifty or thereabouts. She was wearing an ugly black poke-bonnet, from under which straggled two or three limp curls thickly streaked with gray. It was not easy to tell through her veil whether she was well or ill favoured, but I was able to make out that she had a portentously large nose, bridged by a pair of smoke-tinted spectacles. A voluminous cloak, with sleeves which reached to her wrists, enveloped her from throat to feet; finally, her hands were hidden in taffeta gloves several sizes too large for them. At once I set her down as being one of those acidulated spinsters who rarely find any one bold enough to make them an offer of marriage, after which I took no further interest in her; while she, on her side, sat bolt-upright, her hands clasped in front of her, and seemed stonily oblivious of my presence.

I had lunched well, and was in a comfortable frame of mind; and we had not long left the outskirts of Paris behind before a pleasant drowsiness began to steal over me, to which I yielded myself up readily enough; indeed, I should have been glad to sleep right through to Boulogne. It was a close, muggy day towards the end of September, and presently finding my fur-lined overcoat (a birthday present from my wife) somewhat oppressive, I took it off and laid it on the seat next my own. Then I settled myself afresh in my corner, folded my arms, and shut my eyes.

I had been oblivious of all mundane matters

for some time, when a more than ordinarily piercing shriek on the part of the engine abruptly broke my slumbers. It took me about half-a-minute to collect my faculties, and then I opened my eyes very wide indeed.

What had become of my travelling companion, the unprepossessing spinster? She had vanished as completely as if she had flown through the window, leaving nothing to remind me of her—not even her shabby carpet-bag. I rubbed my eyes, and rubbed them again. And well I might, for, in place of the elderly female with the limp curls, the big nose, and the spectacles, there was now seated in the opposite corner a very pretty and fashionably attired young woman of about twenty summers, with a charming little tip-tilted nose, big blue-gray eyes, and an abundance of fluffy straw-coloured hair. She was wearing a tailor-made gown of dark-blue cloth, a jacket *à la mode*, and a coquettish little soft felt hat with a pheasant's quill in it.

If it be rude to stare persistently at a lady, then was I very rude indeed. She was gazing up at the lamp in the roof, seemingly in a meditative mood; but presently she lowered her eyes, and turning her head slightly, looked me full in the face. After a few seconds her mouth began to twitch, then a twinkle came into her eyes, the rosy lips parted in a smile, and the end of it was an explosion of musical laughter. Never had I felt myself look more like a nin-compoop.

'How do you do, Mistare Seemkinson?' she said as soon as some measure of gravity had come back to her. 'I hope you have enjoyed your—how call you it?—your nap, and that you find yourself all the better for it.' She spoke the most delightful broken English imaginable.

'How! You know my name?' I stammered, with a gasp of astonishment.

'Is it not there, on the label of your *necessaire-de-toilette*, for any person to read?'

I had not recovered from my stupefaction, and was wholly at a loss what to say next.

But presently my fair companion moved to the seat opposite mine, by which time her mirth had toned itself down to a fascinating smile.

Bending forward a little, she said, addressing me in French:

'It was a fairly good disguise, was it not, monsieur? And keener eyes than yours were taken in by it. But it is time to put an end to your mystification, which, however, can only be done by confiding my story to you—the story of a most unhappy girl—if you will condescend to listen to it. You are an Englishman, monsieur; and there is that in your face which convinces me I shall do right in trusting you.'

She was serious enough by now. Her beautiful eyes were gazing into mine with a sort of pathetic entreaty, or so I read their expression.

I even fancied that a tiny tear stood in a corner of each of them.

'I need scarcely assure you, mademoiselle,' I gravely replied, 'that whatever you may choose to confide to me will never pass my lips to any one without your permission. But here we are at Creil,' I added. 'Had you not better delay beginning what you have to tell me till the train has started again?'

She nodded assent, and taking up one of my newspapers, at once, to all appearance, became immersed in it. Fortunately no one invaded our compartment, and a few moments later we were once more speeding on our way. Then she put down the paper and began her narrative.

'My name is Fannie Dufarge. My father, a Frenchman of good family, married an Englishwoman, but I lost my mother at an early age. We moved from the provinces to Paris when I was eight years old, and there I have lived ever since. In France, as you are doubtless aware, monsieur, it is customary for parents to arrange the marriages of their children, and those most concerned have very little voice in the matter. It is a state of affairs in which my father is a firm believer. Some time ago he chose a husband for me, and insisted on my accepting him, although well aware that I loathed and detested the man in question.

'At length home became unendurable, and, as a last resource, I determined on flight. But my father seems to have had some suspicion of my intention, and for the last fortnight my movements have been carefully watched, while at the same time the preparations for my wedding were hurried forward. This morning, however, I contrived to escape to the house of a friend who was in my confidence and had prepared for me the disguise in which you first saw me. But my escape was discovered, and one of the private detectives employed by my father was on the platform of the Nord terminus to make sure that I did not get away by the very train in which we are now travelling. When you went to sleep I seized the occasion to divest myself of my disguise, drop it out of the window, and become my proper self. Such is my story, monsieur. I may seem to have acted rashly, but I would sooner have poisoned myself than have married the man my father chose for me. Do not say that you blame me over much.'

She put her little hands together, and looked at me with such a prettily pathetic air that there and then I felt strongly tempted to kiss her. But such privileges are not for elderly married men who happen to be stout and slightly bald into the bargain.

'Blame you, my dear mademoiselle!' I exclaimed. 'On the contrary, I think you have done a very right thing, and I heartily applaud your courage. But where are you bound for, if I may be permitted to ask?'

'My ticket is for London.'

'You have friends there?'

She shook her head sadly. '*Hélas!* no. I know no one there. My uncle, my mother's brother, lives at—what do you call the place?—Invaerness in Scotland. When I reach London I shall telegraph to him to come and fetch me.'

'In that case you will have to make some little stay in London before your uncle can join you. But here we are at Amiens,' I continued, as the train began to slacken speed. 'There is a wait here of five minutes. Will you permit me to have the pleasure of procuring a cup of coffee or some other refreshment for you?'

But Mdlle. Dufarge replied that she would prefer waiting till we reached Boulogne; so as soon as the train came to a stand I alighted and strolled down the platform towards the buffet on my own account. There I learned that, owing to the break-down of a mineral train, the express was likely to be delayed for some little time. That being the case, I did not hurry back to my carriage, but lighted a cigarette and sauntered to the far end of the platform, turning over in my mind the affair of my pretty travelling companion, and wondering whether Georgina would object to my offering her the shelter of my roof till her uncle should have time to arrive from Scotland.

When at length I got back to my compartment I found it empty. Mdlle. Dufarge had vanished even more completely than the elderly spinster had done; that had merely resulted in a change of identity, whereas this was a case of total disappearance. That her absence was merely temporary I did not doubt; but presently my attention was drawn to a small crowd of persons, among whom I could distinguish the uniforms of several police agents, surrounding a fiacre a little distance away. Some impulse drew me to the spot. Judge, then, of my amazement when in one of the occupants of the vehicle I recognised my late travelling companion, the two others being officers of the law! The light from a near-at-hand lamp shone full on her pale face, with its firm-set lips and contracted brows. It was no longer the April face of a pretty, wilful runaway which could change from smiles to tears at will, but that of a resolute, high-souled woman, with the courage of a dozen ordinary men enclosed in the compass of her little body. Marvellous was the change. Her gaze, wandering indifferently over the little crowd of faces surrounding the cab, seemed to me to dwell on mine for the space of a single second and then to pass on, but not by so much as the flicker of an eyelid did she betray any recognition of me.

But scarcely had I time to note these particulars before the driver cracked his whip, the crowd parted right and left, and the fiacre was driven rapidly away. Then I found my tongue.

'What would you?' said a courteous railway

official, with an outspreading of his palms, in reply to a question I had put to him. 'The young woman just arrested is said to be mixed up in a plot against the government. The police here were telegraphed to from Paris to look out for her. Ah, bah! why can't women leave politics alone, and content themselves with looking after their babies and the *pot-au-feu*?'

At this juncture there came a strident cry of '*En voiture, messieurs*;' and I was compelled to hurry off to my carriage. For several minutes after the train had started I sat like a man dumfounded, my mind full of the scene I had just witnessed, and of all that had led up to it.

Was the story told me by Mdlle. Dufarge about herself true or false? Had she really run away from home in order to avoid a hateful marriage?—or had she merely been imposing upon me with a harmless piece of fiction for the furtherance of her own ends, whatever those might be? These were questions impossible to answer; and yet it seemed hard to believe that so much beauty and apparent innocence could be leagued together for the furtherance of one of those plots with which the political atmosphere of France was just then rife. But, as we know from history, women have been plotters from the beginning of time.

(*To be continued.*)

ON THE LIFE AND DEATH OF BOOKS.

By JOSEPH SHAYLOR.



WHEN is a book dead? This is a question often asked by those who are interested in books, and the answer usually given is, 'It is quite impossible to say.' It is to the elucidation of this important question and answer that the following remarks are directed, and also to the pros and cons of the life, the suspended animation, and the death of books. Judging from the enormous output which now takes place, and the ephemeral existence of many of the works published, it would appear doubtful whether many of them can be said to have really lived. In spite, however, of this, I would hazard the opinion that, with certain reservations, which will be mentioned later on, it is quite impossible to state that a book is absolutely dead. The nearest approach to the death, or, as I would rather term it, the want of life in a book is when the author is dead, when the subject of the book has ceased to be of any public or private interest, when the publisher has fallen out of the ranks of the trade, or has discontinued placing the work in his catalogue, or when the book is, from a literary or critical point of view, practically worthless.

Farther on I shall give some few illustrations of this book-asphyxia; but before doing so I should like to point out some of the causes which, I think, tend to place books in a condition of suspended animation.

The majority of books published are written principally to gratify some whim, vanity, or fad on the part of the author. The balance and those which have the longer vitality may, I think, be divided into two classes—books which are produced by authors who write for a livelihood, and those produced by authors who write for the love of authorship, and who, having something to say, know how to say it.

The works in the former class may be looked upon as only of a transient character, yet even

here there are many books which develop a life little anticipated by their authors. For instance, when a writer has published his experiences of a trip taken probably for pleasure, and has during his travels visited some previously little-known place or region, and made some remarks concerning the undeveloped condition of the country likely to prove of interest to traders or settlers, this is not an infrequent way in which attention is directed to his book.

Another stimulus is that of colonisation and the expansion of our sphere of influence in some partly explored continent, such as Africa. The land hunger which now exists for that country has caused books upon the northern, eastern, southern, western, and even the central districts to be sought after. The demand for these books has of late been so brisk that extensive catalogues have been prepared by some booksellers, giving minute information of all works helpful or necessary to those visiting the Dark Continent; and these are eagerly bought whether they are good or bad. Many booksellers could give ample illustration of this fact, and they have often been thankful that an incident of this nature has occurred to help them to dispose of stock which had already been far too long upon their shelves.

Authors who write either for a livelihood or from a love of literature are themselves answerable at times for the want of life from which their books occasionally suffer. This arises from a lack of trade knowledge and of the channels through which books are sold. It often happens that an author who has adopted literature as a profession finds that his first serious effort has proved a brilliant success. This success may, however, not have been attained solely through the ability of the author, but be largely due to the tact and judgment of the publisher. For it is through the publisher's influence that the book has been well boomed; he has also looked

well after its advertising, and has used his trade machinery to place it effectively upon the market. But how often the author loses sight of all this work done on his behalf! Again, by his success the author becomes unduly elated, and for his next book demands perhaps an excessive royalty, which his publisher is unable to give. He therefore goes to another, with the result that the first publisher ceases to interest himself in the original production, and by degrees it drops out of advertisements and gradually dies, unless, indeed, the author scores another brilliant success.

Many authors are known by one particular book, upon which their popularity is founded. It occasionally happens, however, that an author's permanent reputation may rest upon his second, third, or even a later work. In this case it is only fair to state that a demand would be created for his previous books, even though they were issued by different publishers. My remarks, therefore, principally refer to an author who has made a reputation by his first book only.

In furtherance of this argument, there has grown up during recent years a factor which has not only a considerable influence in the direction above indicated, but also upon the earnings of some of our leading authors. I mean the literary agent. His interference between author and publisher is not, however, without its drawbacks; for, when an author is issuing his works through a publisher who is just and honourable in his dealings, it would be wiser to leave the financial arrangements in his hands, for the commission which has to be paid to the agent must naturally come out of the author's pocket. Neither can it be permanently beneficial to an author's reputation, or to the literature of his country, for him to allow his work to be practically put up to auction and bought by the highest bidder, irrespective of the reputation and influence which belong to a great publishing house. This fact is clearly demonstrated by some living authors, whose early works gained an almost spontaneous recognition, and who have since, through the inducements offered by the literary agent, greatly overwritten themselves. Owing to the constant demand for some book from their pen, the literary quality of their writings has deteriorated; and thus, by attempting too much, they have shattered, probably for ever, the reputation acquired in the early part of their career.

If an author be dealing with a publisher who is interested in the works he produces and in his authors, it is better in the long-run for him to stand by the publisher through whom his first book was issued. A volume has been written on *Books Fatal to Authors*, and might also be written on authors who have been fatal to the sale of their own books. Not infrequently, by his anxiety for immediate recognition, without

scaling the heights which lead to permanent success, a writer falls a victim to that race for riches and popularity which is, and has been, the downfall of so many.

Another factor which operates upon the life of books is the number of well-regulated and brilliantly edited daily and weekly journals, to which must be added the immense array of our monthly periodical literature. Many of these contain short and pithy articles, combined with news which suits the general reader, and is considered sufficient by those who think reading a necessity rather than a pleasure. It should, however, be remembered by authors that contributions to *current* literature are not always contributions to permanent literature, and a vigorous or long life cannot be expected for these productions.

The reasons for the life of a book are sometimes difficult to understand, and it is quite impossible to point out with certainty the exact reasons which stimulate or give renewed life. The following example will illustrate the career, and serve as an example, of many books which at one time had almost dropped out of circulation, but by some fortunate occurrence, or by their own intrinsic value, have eventually attained a permanent success. The work I have in my mind is Edward FitzGerald's translation of the *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám. The incidents in the growth of the popularity of this book I have heard told by Mr Quaritch more than once at his trade sale dinners. The translation of this poem had been published some few years, and FitzGerald had a number of copies still remaining unsold. Wishing to get rid of them, he asked Mr Quaritch to take the entire remainder off his hands; and this was done, more to please FitzGerald than with any expectation of effecting a sale. After a considerable time, finding there was still no demand for the work, he placed some copies outside his shop, and marked them one shilling each. This, however, proving unsuccessful, he then marked them down to sixpence each; and as they did not move at that price, they were offered at fourpence, and finally placed in a box of all sorts at one penny each. At the latter price they found a ready sale, and with the disposal of the last copies FitzGerald's masterpiece appears to have had its start. Mr Quaritch says that from this period there commenced a steady demand for that book, and these original copies are now worth almost their weight in gold, one having recently been sold for the sum of twenty guineas. FitzGerald and his translations have now acquired a world-wide popularity, with the result that a cult has been formed which yearly sings the praises of the great Persian poet, and with feast and becoming ceremony discourses in graceful eloquence to the memory of his first English translator. Who can possibly say how it was that this masterpiece remained so long without recognition, or what eventually caused that interest to be

awakened which has now placed the book amongst our most treasured classics?

It is well known that much of the juvenile literature of sixty years ago may, from many points of view, be considered dead, only a small part being now reprinted, or even known to the present generation. Yet many of the books by such well-known authors as Mrs Sherwood, Mrs Opie, Miss Edgeworth, Mrs Hoffland, and others are occasionally inquired for. This shows that they still linger in the memory of some of their former readers, and their renewed life arises probably from the wish of some who are well stricken in years to give to their grandchildren books which were a charm to their own early days. By these means the vitality of a book is occasionally handed down to the third, fourth, and even later generations.

Mention should be made of a few technical books which in most instances may be considered really dead. This is brought about through no fault in their character or production, but by the steady advance of ulterior influences. I refer particularly to educational literature and to the altered conditions in the system of teaching, as well as the changes made by the Council of Education through their annual code. These alterations often render many thousands of books worthless, and fit only for waste-paper.

New Acts of parliament, or amendments to those in operation, frequently render the various treatises on or expositions of particular Acts quite worthless. This argument also applies to works on photography and other sciences in which new discoveries and advances are continually being made.

Sometimes books are conveyed to fresh classes of readers, and new life given to them, through a channel which is known as the 'remainder market.' As is said in the trade, they are 'slaughtered;' but that does not necessarily mean that they are killed. I must explain to the uninitiated that the remainder of a book is the balance of copies left after the ordinary sales have practically ceased. These are offered at a very low price, or sold by auction to the highest bidder. By this means the books get into a cheaper market, a new medium is opened for their sale, and occasionally a fresh lease of life is given to them.

To illustrate this point more fully: through their cheapness these books are sometimes bought for distribution to free libraries, for presentation to school libraries, or to be sent out to our colonies. Here again, through their cheapness, they are sold to a fresh public, a new market is tapped, the copies to be disposed of in this manner are soon sold, and in some cases a second edition of a book has thus been required, with the result that a steady sale for many years has followed. Sometimes a portion of a large edition is in the above manner disposed of on purpose to make the book known in fresh channels. This acts

as an advertisement, and occasionally leads to the balance of an edition being sold at the original published price.

Those who follow the lists of 'Books Wanted' in the trade journals may frequently notice that in these advertisements there are required books which have been sold off, and are considered dead and forgotten. For some reason, however, the interest in them has revived, or they are required either on account of the subject-matter, or from the fact of the author having subsequently become famous; or, again, many are sought after by collectors of first editions.

It will be obvious from these facts that books that are termed failures are not necessarily wanting in merit; their want of life may arise from the fact of their author being unknown, or in some from want of appreciation by the book-buying public.

Sometimes a publisher, for the sake of his own reputation, prefers sending what he considers his dead stock to the paper-mills to be reduced to pulp, and so made again into paper. This is a practice to be commended, as it will often cause a book with an after-recognised value to become scarce and in great demand.

The books that appear most frequently in the remainder market are works of biography and poetry and those upon religious subjects. To this list must be added works by unknown authors; but, as I have previously pointed out, authors of little note at first may afterwards become famous, and this invariably creates a demand for or enhances the value of their early writings.

There is in literary circles a growing attention directed to the question how young and unknown authors can obtain a publisher and the support of the public, and so prevent their first productions from being still-born. Much has been done in this direction by the Authors' Society; and although publishers have the MSS. which are submitted to them carefully read, yet, as in the past so in the present, occasionally mistakes are made by refusing MSS. which are afterwards accepted by other publishers and prove a great success. A long catalogue might be made of mistakes in this direction, from *Robinson Crusoe* to *Jane Eyre*, from Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*—a book which, besides the difficulty found in obtaining a publisher for it, almost ruined *Fraser's Magazine*, in whose pages it first appeared—down to Drummond's *Natural Law*, and others. Some of these were refused by more than one publisher. With the mass of MSS. in existence, these mistakes in judgment are inevitable, particularly in the case of unknown authors. Under these circumstances, it is open to suggestion whether some partial return to the old system of patronage is not desirable.

Publishers frequently display great courage and commendable enterprise in projecting such schemes as the *Dictionary of National Biography* and many series of works on science and biography. In all

these large sums are invested. Many of them, by the lapse of time and the advance and development in the subjects upon which they treat, would become obsolete but for the fresh life which is continually being infused into them in the form of new editions.

The present *ex libris* craze, or that known as grangerising, is accountable for the destruction of many books; as, in the enthusiasm of collectors, the book-plates and illustrations are preserved, but the books themselves are wasted.

Another reason put forth for the death of books is the quality of the paper now used in their production. This, we are told, is of such a perishable nature that at no distant period it will decay and crumble to powder.

The question naturally arises, If so few books by unknown authors are published, what becomes of all the MSS. which are returned from the publishers with thanks, and which never reach the printing-office? Their number must be legion, and even to publishers the solution of the problem remains a mystery. A short time ago Mr Andrew Lang, speaking upon this subject at the Philosophical Institution, Edinburgh, is reported to have said: 'Out of every hundred who write novels only one was fortunate enough to get his work printed; and as about nine hundred secured a publisher, the novelists of Great Britain he calculated to number about one hundred thousand.'

It is not intended to bring within the scope of this article any detailed account of the rare 'first editions' of many of our classics, which occasionally fetch at auctions such fabulous sums, and which, from a financial point of view, are very much alive. A separate paper might well be written upon this subject; still, one or two illustrations would not be out of place as showing what a high value collectors place upon these masterpieces, which in their early existence were considered of little worth. Gray's *Elegy* (first edition, 1751), published to sell at sixpence, realised at auction, in 1892, fifty-nine pounds. At the same sale Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* (first edition, 1807) reached sixteen pounds ten shillings; while in Boston, Mass., Poe's *Tamermine* (first edition, forty pages) realised three hundred and seventy pounds.

Take a modern instance—the case of Richard Jefferies, who barely earned a livelihood by his writings during his lifetime, yet after his death collectors paid excessive sums for first editions of his books. One of his pamphlets—*Suezide*—being very scarce, three or four pounds is frequently given for a copy, though it was originally published at only threepence. It will be remembered that Keats died a poor man, but recently two of his MSS. were sold by auction—*Endymion* fetching under the hammer six hundred and ninety-five pounds, while *Lamia* realised at the same time three hundred and five pounds.

Of all scarce books which have once been popular, early juveniles, school-books, and old cookery-books are probably the most difficult to obtain. This arises from the destructive character of the owners of this class of literature.

To return to the question of the 'Life and death of books,' Milton wrote in his *Areopagitica* that 'it was better to kill a man than a good book.' I would venture the opinion that it were far easier to kill a man than to kill a good book. Reviewers have frequently made the attempt, and in some few cases have partially succeeded, but in many others they have miserably failed. It is recorded that upon the publication of William Cowper's *Poems* there was scarcely a review which did not load them with the most scurrilous abuse, and condemn them as fit only for the butter-shop; but they still rank among our national poetry. The power of the reviewer to-day is gradually becoming less, for the reading public are now more in a position to decide for themselves upon the merits of a book.

I am confirmed, however, in the opinion that it is quite impossible with absolute certainty to say that a book is really dead. If it is a good book, its life may be for a time in a state of suspense, yet it is quite within the bounds of possibility that some of the causes above mentioned may bring it into demand, and eventually lead to its success—a success which, though attained late in its existence, may in its eventual career be one of which both author and publisher will be justly proud.

SALMON-FISHING ON THE NAVER, SUTHERLANDSHIRE.



If you suffer from insomnia, and you are rich, rent a portion of a salmon-river; if you are poor, go to Innerleithen and fish for ten hours a day on the free water on the Tweed, and your insomnia will 'fold its tents like the Arabs, and as silently steal away.'

The Naver is not a difficult river to fish. You have no left-hand casting, as you have on the Shin; and it has an advantage over the Helmsdale: you can follow the most peaceful of all recreations without being disturbed by the passing of the trains from Inverness and Thurso; you have solitude—something of the getting into a lone land, the silence and peacefulness of a long

and beautiful Highland glen. I remember once when I was fishing above Dalvina Lodge two stags came to drink. There are not many salmon-rivers left in Scotland upon which such an incident could occur. The Naver is eighteen miles long, rising in the shadow of Ben Klibrech, and flowing almost due north to the little village of Bettyhill, where it enters the sea. Bettyhill is famous in the story of Celtic depopulation; it is one of the villages formed by the crofters when they were driven from their homes to make room for the big sheep-farms. They don't care to speak about their troubles; but there is no doubt they believe that one day they will be back in the strath again. As you walk towards Altnaharra you see the ruins of their cottages and the stones that mark the outlines of their gardens.

The fishing season opens on the 10th of January, when I have sometimes gone north accompanied only by a collie dog. But what a companion a collie dog can be! How he grows in your affections, faithful to you as Rab was to James and Ailie in Dr John Brown's immortal story!

It is curious to find yourself alone in a Highland lodge in winter. You are familiar enough with the scene in August, when you can look away across the moor, purple with the bloom of heather, rendered cheerful by the song of birds, perhaps the pleasant music—for you as an angler—of the burns rolling in spate. But it is different in midwinter. Many days are what Walter Pater calls a 'harmonious gray;' you may have frost and blinding snow; when you go out in the morning you find that the branches on the birch-trees sparkle with a fringe of silver. The little lochs, that in summer will yield you a trout at every cast, are frozen over.

Syre, in Strathnaver, is a characteristic Highland lodge, and one of the most out-of-the-way in the Highlands. You only get letters delivered to you twice a week, and a telegram costs twelve shillings for portage. It is forty miles to the shop in Thurso where your food comes from, and sixteen miles to the nearest railway station, over Kinbrace, one of the bleakest moors in Scotland. If you ask the parish minister to dinner he will have a drive of twenty-six miles. But the truth is, you are in no great need of company; you come home tired after a long day on the river. Casting twenty odd yards of line with a salmon-rod is no easy task. It is harder work than cricket, harder than football or hunting. The way the fly comes round to your side of the river, and requires to be cast again, takes it out of you as a long climb in the Alps, say from the Riffelberg to the summit of the Breithorn. Breakfast at eight—ham and eggs and salmon-steaks—and then your gillie comes to tell you the state of the river, and to help you to select the flies with which you are to do battle for the day.

What a fascination salmon-fishing has for those

who have experienced it with any reasonable amount of success! There is the river with its familiar casts; season after season you go to them looking for the unexpected. Perhaps you have never killed a thirty-pounder; to-day he may be waiting for you in some silent pool or breaking stream. I remember, on the Tweed, talking to Mr John Bright about salmon-fishing. He said it was a fine sport if you caught fish; but then there is that 'if'!

The best chance on the Naver in the early spring is Syre Pool. It is deep, and a fish in his long struggle up the stream is likely to rest for a time. You come to it about midday. It is not an easy cast; but you must get your fly as well across as you can. As the fly is nearing your side of the river something seems to touch your line; you take a step or two back, and cast again. This time the fish makes sure of it; there comes the welcome pull under water, the rod bends with a tremor, and away goes the line from the reel. How the hooking a salmon transforms for you the whole scene! There is a different light now on Ben Klibrech. 'The splendour falls on castle walls and snowy summits old in story.' Away he goes down the river, as if bent on regaining the sea from whence he came. Again and again he will move slowly back to where you hooked him, and tug at your line, and this is not a pleasant sensation—it is even worse than when he leaps in the air; but the steady pressure of arm and rod begins to tell, and he is tired. He takes one more run to the rocks at the foot of the pool, and for a moment there is a feeling of uncertainty, 'doubt, hesitation, and pain;' your line slackens, and the fly soars over your head. There is the sad reality that your fish is gone. It takes all your philosophy to comfort you. I am not sure that many things in life vex one more than the loss of a fresh-run salmon. To walk from the Pavilion at Lord's in a big match and be bowled first ball is bad enough, but it's not half so bad as losing a salmon. But killing a salmon may not at all times be unattended with regret. How often they make a gallant fight! I remember once hooking a fish on the Naver on the beat next the sea, just below the shepherd's cottage. He rose to me in the pool, and almost immediately undertook the ascent of the stream that stretches above it. It is a long stream, and was, I knew, too much for him; but I let him go, giving just the amount of pressure that would tire him before he could reach his goal. There was something pathetic in that hard struggle up the river against the weight of rod and line, and the collapse that had to come at the finish, when he came back straight as an arrow into the gillie's net.

The greatest number of fish we ever killed in the spring was one hundred and fifty-three, fishing two and sometimes three rods; but the water was in perfect order from the middle of

March to the end of April. The largest fish I ever killed weighed twenty-four and a half pounds. I remember Mr Vernon, who used to play cricket for Middlesex, killing one that weighed thirty pounds.

If you had your choice of only one beat on the river you would choose number three; it is a perfect piece of water in its succession of stream and pool. But late in the season the three miles immediately below the loch are best. A characteristic of the Naver is, the fish do not remain in the pools; they are merely birds of passage on their way to the loch, and you do not have to cast over the same fish day after day. As to wading, there is not much to be done on the river, except on beat four, when you have to wade almost every pool. Parson's Pool takes half-an-hour to fish, all the time nearly up to your arms in water. When the wind is from the north, blowing from the Faroe Islands and Iceland, it is, to say the least of it, bracing. Fishing it one day when I had to come ashore three or four times to have the ice broken from the rings of my rod, I was grateful when my task was finished; but I got little sympathy from my Sancho Panza. He remarked that 'it would be best to give it another fly.'

You need never lose hope on the Naver. I remember going down to the foot of the river. It was bitterly cold, frost and snow; in fact, just about hopeless. I met the river-watcher, and he shook his head, saying it was 'no sort of weather for fishing.' We were at a pool called Breeding-Box. I got out on to a rock where I believe no one has ever ventured before. I let my fly sink deep below the wall of rock, working the fly slowly, in the Tweed fashion. I killed two fish weighing twelve pounds each. As Charles Carse of Sprouston used to say, 'Let the fly hang over their noses.'

But there is another angler on the river besides you. Now and again he may see you, and I have no doubt he does; but he takes good care that you never see him. There are a few otters on the Naver, but not many. I once saw the footprints of one; he had made his way to a small island near Dalmalard. The keeper set a trap for him, and the next day as I was wending my way homewards in the gloaming I found him—I must say with regret—in the trap. When I came in sight he never moved, but simply lay and watched me, doubtless wondering what it all meant. Was he to have no more pleasant times on the river, no more passing to the lochs in the dripping heather, or stealing into some hiding-place known only to himself, as daybreak came sweeping up from Ben Morven? As our knowledge of animal life increases, our sympathies with them deepen; they have capacity for pleasure and for pain like ourselves, and instincts and intelligence often superior to our own.

Fishing on the Naver many years ago, I met Mr Sydney Buxton, and have read with pleasure his article on 'Fly-fishing' in the *Nineteenth Century* for January. I cannot, however, quite agree with him when he says that 'salmon flies do not resemble any known article of diet.' When as boys we used to fish for trout in the Tweed, we continually hooked parr or young salmon. These little fish feed freely on the river flies; they pass down to the sea, returning after a time as salmon; the parr of a few ounces has grown into a fish of many pounds in weight, and I hardly think it need cause him much surprise to find that the tiny neutral-coloured fly upon which he used to feed has developed, say, into a 'Jock Scott' or a 'Silver Gray,' like Joseph putting on a coat of many colours. After all, Sir Herbert Maxwell's contention that fish are colour-blind may be correct; in which case there would be nothing to distinguish the salmon from the trout fly save the increase in size. I have seen a salmon rise to a natural fly on the Naver; and there is no doubt they feed freely in freshwater. In fishing the Corrib River at Galway, I have often in the early morning fed them with prawns; they lie under the bridge in shoals, and if you throw a prawn into the water one of them will rise and take it.

Fishing in the lochs in the Lewis, when the wind would die away we used to wade out on the long sandy ridges to the deep water, and wait for a salmon to rise to the natural fly. Using only a trout-rod, and casting over him with a small loch-fly, we killed many fish; you only require a little patience and plenty of line on your reel. How the first run of a ten-pound salmon on a nine-foot trout-rod would have delighted Izaak Walton!

For many years on the Naver the kelts have been carefully marked before being returned to the water; being hooked and landed seems to give them little pain. You frequently land fish that have been only a few days before marked by yourself or your friends.

And writing about a collie dog as a companion: at one time I went out on the river with one called Yarrow. If a fish rose down the stream below where I was casting, he would walk quietly down among the heather to the spot to watch until I came. There used to be a little food taken out for his midday meal; when he was eating it, at the slightest sound from the reel the food was forgotten and he was off to see the sport. He had one trouble; he could never understand why we kept some fish and put others back into the water.

Sunday is a great day when you are alone in a Highland lodge. You have been fishing all week almost from dawn to sunset, and the strain has told on you, and you are grateful for rest. There is no church to go to, so you may light your pipe and settle down in front of the peat-

fire to read. You gather your books round you as you would gather your old friends—Ruskin, Tennyson, Browning, Oliver Goldsmith. Outside there is the lonely strath and the peaceful river, perhaps the shepherd passing from old Syre with some sheep, and above on the Altnaharra road, within sight of Ben Loyal, a stag and some hinds making a line of beauty on the hillside; and you take up a volume of Ruskin, and read what

he has to say about railways: 'You have put a railroad-bridge over the fall of Schaffhausen. You have tunnelled the cliffs of Lucerne by Tell's chapel; you have destroyed the Clarens shore of the Lake of Geneva; there is not a quiet valley in England you have not filled with bellowing fire.'

May it be long before bonnie Strathnaver is filled with bellowing fire!

SOME OLD INDUSTRIES: PIN AND CLOCK MAKING.



HERE are many instances on record of certain industries having left localities with which they have been identified. In other cases, fewer in number, when one trade has been lost another has taken its place. Coventry is a notable example of this, the manufacture of cycles having there superseded the ribbon trade. There is a third class, the occupants of which are rarer still, in which an industry, having temporarily disappeared, has been successfully revived. The ancient city of Gloucester, somewhat singularly, furnishes an illustration of all three conditions being found in one place. In the first place, its celebrated bell-foundries, for instance, have disappeared, never to return probably; secondly, its engineering works and railway-carriage and wagon works, to say nothing of smaller manufactures, added to its large corn and timber imports, have of comparatively recent years sprung into profitable being; and, thirdly, the manufacture of pins, once one of the staple industries of the city, has, after an interval of forty years, been recommenced.

Although pins were made in this country so far back as the reign of Henry IV., it was not until 1626 that one Tylsly introduced their manufacture to Gloucester. In 1837, when the Queen came to the throne, pin-making was the most important industry in the city. There were three factories, employing some fifteen hundred or two thousand hands. The wire was drawn, cut, and pointed in the factories, in which horse-power was utilised; and the heading or knobbing was done in the homes of the workers. The introduction of solid heads, which required more elaborate machinery, and necessitated the work being done entirely in the factory, probably caused the decline of the trade. At any rate, the last of the three factories was removed to Birmingham about 1855. It is an interesting fact that in 1830 the Queen, then the Princess Victoria, on the occasion of a visit to Gloucester with her mother, the Duchess of Kent, inspected one of the factories, and carried away specimens of the pins made there. Where are those pins now? If they shared the fate of their kind they have probably been irretrievably lost!

From 1855 until some five or six years ago no pins were made in Gloucester; but a firm then commenced the manufacture of these indispensable adjuncts of daily life in an unpretentious way. So rapidly did the business grow, however, that a large factory had to be built last year. Here a considerable number of hands are engaged, night and day, and seven tons of hairpins alone are being turned out every week. There is practically no limit to the scope for a business of this sort; since millions of pins are made and lost every year, the demand is large and constant.

Dean Tucker, of Gloucester, had very exalted notions of the pin-making craft. He said that a pin-maker was a more useful and valuable member of society than Raphael. This assertion drew down upon his head a rebuke from no less a personage than Sir Joshua Reynolds, the great painter, who condemned the very reverend gentleman's observation as that of a narrow mind—of a mind that was confined to the mere object of commerce, that saw with a microscopic eye but a part of the great machine of life, and thought the small part to be the whole; whereas commerce was the means, not the end, of happiness or pleasure, the end being a rational enjoyment by means of the arts and sciences. It was, therefore, foolish to set the means higher than the end, and equivalent to saying that the brick-maker was superior to the architect. Whether the dean retorted this deponent knoweth not. There is this to be said for his view, however: the pin is much more universal in its uses and applications and much more widely appreciated than a Raphael or any other 'old master.' It can stir the most evil passions that slumber in the breast of man, and when put to legitimate uses (if it is to be found when wanted) can invoke the sweetest blessings of peace that mortals can desire to enjoy. Its potentialities are enormous; its power to move men most marvellous. We can live and die without ever hearing of Raphael; but we need the pin from the cradle to the grave. Even Sir Joshua Reynolds admitted that Raphael was an acquired taste; Michael Angelo was always the highest incarnation of art to him, and it was only after long study that Raphael's great qualities conquered his early disappointment.

Although cloth-mills still flourish in the Stroud valley, and Cotswold sheep are still, of course, in the front rank, the wool trade is not so extensively carried on in Gloucestershire as was once the case. It is said that many of the churches which abound in the county are monuments to the munificence of wealthy wool-merchants of the Middle Ages. Camden says that the wool of the Cotswold was held in much esteem on the Continent; Drayton in his *Polyolbion* praises the abundance and whiteness of the Cotswold fleeces; and Rudder, the historian, remarks that it was Cotswold sheep which Edward IV. presented to the Spanish monarch, and that there is a tradition that the animals to which Spain was indebted for her wool trade were procured from the Gloucestershire hills.

The manufacture of clocks is another industry of which Gloucester was once and is no longer an important centre. Washbourn, Peyton, Thackwell, Miles, Higgins, and Weight were all Gloucester clockmakers, whose names may still be seen upon 'grandfather' clocks. Henry Weight made upwards of a hundred church and public clocks, which are scattered over ten different counties. He made the clock presented to English Bicknor by the Queen in 1842. His foreman, William Greening, and one of his apprentices, Henry Bloxsome—the latter's brother drove the coach from Gloucester to London for nearly fifty years—were both subsequently engaged by E. G. Dent, and were with him when the Westminster clock at the Victoria Tower was made; and Greening, while with Messrs E. Smith & Sons of Clerkenwell, constructed the large clock by order of the Government for Bombay. It is related of Henry Weight that he put the chimes on the clock at St Nicholas Church, Gloucester, in forty minutes from the time in which the tune 'Minerva' was written for the purpose by the assistant-organist of Gloucester Cathedral.

A son of Mr Weight carried on business in Gloucester, where he was one of the city councillors, until his death some six months ago, when he was succeeded in turn by his son. He was full of information on the subject of old clocks and clock-faces. The Finemores, of Birmingham, who made a speciality of painted clock-dials, were a Gloucestershire family. Some of these dials are works of art, and of late years have fetched as much as £15 each. The elaborateness of the painting depended upon the quality and price of the dial. The commonest was the familiar one of bluish white, with flowers in the corner and a bird over the centre. Then there was the eight-day dial bearing an eagle and the motto 'Tempus fugit,' or Mercury on a hemisphere. The next best quality dial had the seasons of the year in the four corners—spring represented by a shepherd or shepherdess; summer by hay-field scenes; autumn by sheep-shearing, harvesting, or sportsmen; and winter by a stick-laden labourer returning through a snowstorm to a cottage in the

distance. The arched dials of this quality had David playing before Saul, a pastoral scene, or Britannia with shield and trident, accompanied by a lion, the eyes of which in some cases moved. Finemore's *chef d'œuvre* depicted 'The Fall of Man,' Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Adam plucking an apple, while various birds and animals looked on from the surrounding foliage. This kind of dial has been made scarce in this country by the purchases of Americans. Other dials had ships passing to and fro, and moons which moved so as to give the rising and setting of that planet. The most remarkable dial that ever came under Mr Weight's notice was that of a relative named Lea—a miller and millwright between Malmesbury and Somerford. This represented a water-mill in full work, revolving glass tubes simulating the flow of water. At the mill-pond was a horse which went through the motions of drinking and moved its tail. Near at hand a man turned a grindstone at which another man ground an axe, and by the side two sawyers plied their calling. Adjacent was the village church, with a small clock which kept time with the large one; and in the background was a windmill with revolving arms. The clock also played twelve tunes. On another clock-dial were twelve blacksmiths who struck the hours upon an anvil. The introduction of cheap American clocks in 1849 knocked the 'grandfather' clock 'out of time,' and clocks are now mostly made in factories by men who are put on to section work, and could probably not turn out the entire article.

As already indicated, Americans are addicted to buying up the old 'grandfather' clocks. The possession of one does not prove that your fathers came over in the *Mayflower*, but it gives an air of respectable antiquity that does not suggest a passage in the steerage of a modern liner. One of Peyton's clocks, which belonged to Robert Raikes, still stands in the office of the *Gloucester Journal*, of which paper the Sunday-school pioneer was the proprietor. An American gentleman recently offered a fancy price for it; but though 'going, going'—and keeping very good time—the relic is not yet 'gone,' nor is it likely to change its present quarters.

LET THESE THINGS BE.

RONDEAU.

LET these things be, O Time! whate'er befall:
The memory of corn-fields by the sea,
The tender evening light shed over all—
Pale gold and gray—a sombre symphony,
And the weird music of the curlew's call.

Such sights and sounds as hold the soul in thrall—
That other scene of Spring-time's mystery,
The budding mayns, fields pranked with lilies tall,
Let these things be!

So, through Life's darkened chambers I may see
These old sweet pictures dimly on the wall,
I shall not find the long, still evening pall.
Let these things be!

CONSTANCE FARMAR.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

BOGUS ANTIQUES.

THE passion for collecting antiques is now a widespread one. The number of old curiosity shops has, however, grown out of all proportion to the increase in the ranks of the buyers.

That so many of these shops should survive is astonishing, for the articles they sell are, at the best, desirable superfluities. The contents of the average old curiosity shop are, however, by no means desirable. The fact is, they do not depend for custom upon the true *virtuoso*. The man who studies his hobby is a scant source of profit. In the first place, he knows the real from the false; in the second, he will not pay exorbitant prices. It is the people who buy to be in the fashion who are the best customers. They fill their drawing-rooms with incongruous articles, which have often neither beauty, quaintness, nor historic associations to recommend them. Their antiquity even—to many a sufficient attraction—is often more than doubtful. Many were unquestionably made but the day before yesterday.

These people may be divided into two classes. First, there is the person who will not buy anything which is not highly priced. It is the only test he knows; he would disdain a masterpiece if it were to be had for a few shillings. Secondly, and inversely, there is the man who will not buy unless the article is ridiculously cheap. This man, the bargain-hunter, has the little knowledge which is so dangerous a thing anywhere, but especially in the old curiosity shop. He makes the fatal blunder of thinking that the dealer does not know his business. He believes that rarities are frequently to be bought for an old song. He mistakes the exception for the rule. Though he knows the value of the genuine article, he has not sufficient experience to distinguish it from the imitation. The less scrupulous type of dealer, a keen judge of human nature, recognises this class of dupe at sight. He prepares to play his part; his ignorance and obtuseness are admirably feigned. He will commit himself to nothing; he knows nothing. He has been told, he says, that the

article is very old or very rare. It was, he believes, in the possession of a certain family for a great many years, and they valued it highly. The bargain-hunter thereupon sees only a huckster, without knowledge or taste. He makes the purchase, and goes out of the shop with a look of ill-concealed satisfaction. He has got the best of it. The dealer is well satisfied too; he has sold a bogus antique for, perhaps, ten times what it cost him.

There are plenty of old curiosity shops where it would be difficult to find an article which is what it pretends to be. The persistent credulity of their customers must be a sore temptation even to honest dealers. Of old curiosity shops in general it may be fairly estimated that forty-five per cent. of the objects offered are spurious; expressly manufactured for sale, or 'faked' in some way. The ingenuity of the forger is unlimited. Furniture, prints, china, pictures, plate, armour, ivory, bronze, and tapestry—all are successfully imitated. 'Antique' armour and metal-work of all kinds are made in Birmingham. Spurious antique china comes from France, Holland, and Germany. The spurious print is perhaps the commonest trap of all. 'The craze of the coloured print' is just now with us, and the demand for examples of the celebrated engravers of the eighteenth century exceeds the supply a hundredfold. They are exceedingly scarce; consequently the market is flooded with reprints and reproductions. Several firms are engaged in producing them, and they cost the dealer in 'objects of art' from seven and sixpence to a pound apiece. Usually the paper is manipulated to give it the appearance of age, or the print is put into an old frame. It is certain that countless numbers of them are sold as originals. A reprint has this excuse, that, though subsequently 'touched' by a more modern hand, it is an impression taken from the original copper plate; but it cannot, of course, be compared with original prints from the graver of Bartolozzi, Ward, Schiavonetti, Valentine Green, Cipriani, or John Raphael Smith. A reprint, however, still contains some of the original lines. A reproduction is

merely a copy, every line of which, aided by photography, has been traced by a modern hand.

Most of the imitations of the antique are clumsy enough; though this is not always the case. The experts of our national museums have more than once been successfully imposed upon. The British Museum bought a Palissy plate for fifty pounds. Whilst an attendant was handling it one of the seals fixed to the back of the plate—attesting its genuineness—became detached, disclosing the mark of a modern French potter. Two terra-cotta figures of Isis and Osiris, bought for the same institution, and which cost a thousand pounds, have been discovered to be composed of modern clay. Antique china, a leading attraction of the old curiosity shops, is a fruitful source of fraud. From the extreme fragility of the material, even where intricacy of design or ornamentation was not superadded, the majority of the works of the early potters were doomed to speedy destruction. The forger is, as a rule, fortunately unable to reproduce the marvels of glaze, colouring, and decoration, of which in many cases the secret has been lost. Yet the windows of these shops are filled with spurious examples of Chelsea, Lowestoft, Dresden, Wedgwood, Worcester, Italian, or Limoges. Imitations even of the coarse Staffordshire figures of the Georgian and early Victorian period find a ready sale. Quite two-thirds of them are spurious, and are turned out by the gross from certain modern potteries. They are allowed to remain on the shelves of the curiosity shop until they have accumulated sufficient dirt and dust, the bottoms are rubbed upon some hard substance so that they will show signs of wear, and they are then ready for the first gullible purchaser.

There is scarcely any object of art which is not imitated to a greater or less degree. The speciality of one forger is old leather jacks, at ten shillings each; of another, horn-books at five shillings apiece. The price charged varies; but it may be set down at about a thousand per cent. profit on the cost. The writer not long since inspected a specimen of a 'mummy servant'—an effigy, in a plastic material, such as the Egyptians buried with their dead. A close examination proved it to be made of putty! It was the work of a very clever forger.

The trade in spurious works of art is by no means confined to this country. A writer in the *New York Herald* of January 22 and May 12, 1899, tells us that Rome, once the recognised centre of art, is now a huge emporium for forgeries. These are not only manufactured on the spot, but come from Paris, Munich, Egypt, Greece, Asia Minor, and this country. 'Buy, for instance, if you are not an expert, a specimen of old Dresden or Capo di Monte porcelain. You will most probably be the possessor of a statuette or group manufactured in Paris or Munich, instead of an authentic piece from the palace of a Roman prince. . . .

'The statuettes and Egyptian scarabees, cameos and antique gems, Greek and foreign jewels of gold, the bronze or silver coins and moneys, the antique terra-cottas, weapons, Florentine Renaissance marbles, Tanagra figures and the fine figures from Asia Minor—all these interesting antiquities are the work of skilful contemporary workmen, very often excellent artists, capable of creating works of their own if they only had a little encouragement from those whom they cheat for the benefit of unscrupulous dealers. . . .

'To-day artistic Rome is invaded by wealthy and powerful syndicates of dealers in statues and pictures, in league with guides and couriers, and with copyists often fraudulent. The audacity of some of these cheats, who keep shops largely advertised, has known no limits. When dealing with the foreigner, who is often too confiding, they sell false antiquities as guaranteed originals, which are mere copies from the masters. This trickery is practised at the expense of artists of talent. A foreign sculptor recently caused to be seized a dozen reproductions of models stolen from his studios during his absence from Rome; and an artist of great talent, recently returned from the United States, had seen arrive at one of the largest museums packing-cases containing antiquities purchased in Rome at enormous prices. These were such gross imitations that the curator of the museum refused them admittance into the department reserved for antiquities.'

Referring to this same subject of forging antiquities in Italy, some interesting details are given in the twelfth chapter of a small work recently translated into English (*Memories of an Old Collector*: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1898). The author, Count Michael Tyskiewicz, a noted collector and judge of antiques, tells us that from earliest times men have been occupied in forging antiquities, and that no metal lends itself so easily to forgery as gold. Etruscan jewellery has been largely manufactured in Italy; but in Syria the forgery of gold works of art is most extensive. Forgers have also attempted to manufacture ancient silver plate, but their efforts have been very unsuccessful. The Count tells an amusing story of 'a great silver cup in Rome that purported to have come from some secret excavations in Sicily. It was ornamented with a circular bas-relief representing—Could any one believe such a thing!—the frieze of the Parthenon! In the height of his innocence the forger had given the frieze in its present ruined condition. The cup obtained an immediate success—of shouts of laughter!'

Moved by the numerous complaints and claims of visitors, and the absence of special laws against forgery in Italy, an association has been formed to put an end, if possible, to this state of things. It consists of artists, dilettanti, collectors, and conscientious dealers who have long protested in vain. In the interests of the travelling public we wish their praiseworthy efforts every success.

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER II.—THE OPEN DOOR.



WHEN my senses woke, slowly and not too clearly, 'twas to the consciousness of a very different scene.

At first, indeed, my only feeling was one of overpowering weakness.

My wits were still befogged, and I had no curiosity. Gradually a pleasing sense of ease and warmth crept over me, and caused a vague wonder; then, all at once, the fog lifted to the memory of my misadventure; and therewith came the knowledge that I was not lying on the frozen, moonlit road, but on a couch in a well-warmed room—and also the knowledge, as I turned upon my side, of a sharp pang in my wounded shoulder. Even in my new position, however, I could see nothing save a small square table upon which a single candle burned. It held likewise a bottle and glass and some strips of linen, and the firelight was reflected from its polished sides.

Presently I strove to raise myself upon the couch; but so great was the agony that, against my will, a cry escaped me. It brought no response. Plainly, I was alone in the room.

For a time I lay still, contenting myself with vague speculations. Where I was, what had happened subsequent to my fall—these were points to which I could find no answer, and I might have troubled my mazed brain with them longer (and to the same purpose) but for a noise that suddenly smote my ears. Beyond doubt 'twas the sound of men's voices, mingled with laughter and the clink of glasses; and although it lasted scarce a moment—for such a space, say, as might suffice for the opening and shutting of a door—it served to rouse me to action. I felt that the question of my whereabouts must be resolved incontinently.

So, clenching my teeth, I managed to struggle to a sitting posture. The effort left me dizzy and sick with pain; but after a minute I was able to look about me. I learned little; the couch and table, set in front of a glowing fire, were cut off from the rest of the room by a screen. For myself, I was swathed in blankets; and, throwing them off, I found that I had been stripped of coat and waistcoat, and that their place was taken by a light wrap tied round my shoulders.

My next step was to pass the screen, and in my state of weakness this was a task of infinite difficulty. At length, somehow, I did so. Beyond, the room was almost in darkness. But the door was slightly ajar, and here a narrow shaft of light struck against the wainscoting of the wall. This light seemed to draw me; I had eyes for it alone, yet hesitated to advance; and, while I halted irresolute, another burst of sound came to

me from without. Before it had died away my determination was fixed.

Slowly and most carefully, resting often to steady my swimming head, I felt my way along the wall to the door. Reaching it, I stopped to listen. Now I heard only a low hum as of a single voice—that and nought else. So I made haste to pull the door open, and glanced out into a passage dimly lit by a lamp upon a bracket. There were several other doors, all closed, and opposite mine a staircase descended. Still there was no sound save the low hum, and presently it too had ceased. I waited while one might count a score; then, moved by the dead silence, I stepped across the passage to the stairhead. And as I leaned against the banister and looked over, this is what I saw:

On the other side of the little hall below, a wide-open door showed me a well-furnished, well-lit room and a table covered with bottles and glasses; a group of men standing together, as if they had just risen from their wine; and, a pace or two within the door, another man who stood apart, with his back towards me and his face to the others. These were four or five in number; and, if the fashion of their dress and their air did not belie them, they were people of some quality. For the moment, their whole attention seemed to be claimed by their companion at the door. He, in turn, was a man of good height and figure, albeit with a slight stoop of the shoulders that hinted of middle age; he was heavily cloaked, and was the only person in the room wearing a hat.

So much had I grasped, when the cloaked gentleman spoke. The tones were low, but so clear that I missed not a word.

'I thank you again, gentlemen,' said he. 'But I assure you it is needless. My good host is escort enough.'

Apparently this was taken as the final answer to some request; for his companions bowed deep, as to the command of a superior. Then ensued a strange scene. One by one the men came forward, each with an air of profound deference that (surprising as it was) could not be mistaken. In the ear of each a few words were whispered; each bent low, and *kissed the hand of the cloaked one!* I could perceive their faces as they fell back in succession—there was not one that was without some trace of emotion. But here followed the most significant incident of all. Suddenly five swords were drawn as one and brandished, while their wearers (I was assured in my own mind) would instantly have given voice to some cry had not a raised arm restrained them.

'Not here, gentlemen!' I heard. 'You know

my wishes. So—not now, if you would please me!’

My brain was whirling once more. I could scarce believe the testimony of my eyes, nor (above all) could I imagine what all this portended—the marked and unwonted respect of these gentlemen, the dignity with which it was received, the solemnity of the whole ceremony. Meaning it must have—such regard was not paid without cause. I had an overmastering anxiety to behold the face of the mysterious personage who had thus called it forth.

The swords had been sheathed at his word, and now he spoke again.

‘It must be farewell, my friends—for the present,’ said he. ‘Or, let us rather hope, *au revoir*. But first, Sir Charles’—

He turned half-round, and in a second my desire would have been fulfilled. But Fortune willed it otherwise. In that second a touch fell on my unwounded shoulder, and I wheeled with a start—to see at my elbow a maiden of perhaps twenty years, and to hear her voice. I had been too intent on that which was passing beneath to notice her approach.

‘Are you mad, sir—after such an accident?’ she said, almost in a whisper. ‘Come, you must return to your room at once!’

The tones were those of gentle breeding yet of sufficient authority. But I did not move—I could not. I was held perforce by her rare and winning beauty. Here I may not describe her, and at the time, in truth, I saw little more than the womanly pity in her wistful, eloquent eyes. Luckily I realised not the sorry figure that I myself must have cut.

‘Surely they did not leave you alone?’ she asked after a moment. ‘But you must not stay here. Come!’

She laid her hand on my arm, and somehow, curiously, I had no resistance to offer, but permitted her to lead me back to my room; and just as we entered it this cry rose from the hall:

‘Kitty! Kitty!’

Saying not a word, she directed my steps towards the couch, and had done so as far as the screen, when, without warning, the effect of my late efforts overtook me. I felt my strength going, and clutched wildly at the screen; and doubtless it would have fallen with me had I not been caught by these ready hands and deftly guided to my old place. The last that I recollected was a repetition of the call:

‘Kitty! Kitty!’

I was in bed in another room when I came to myself again. I was conscious of a faint perfume as of lavender; my head seemed clearer; and, strangely enough, my earliest thoughts were of my adventure on the Bath road and the polite highwayman. Then I was aware of voices.

‘Is he better?’ asked one.

‘Oh, he’ll do famously now,’ said another. ‘But he is lucky—the least thing lower and ’twould have been through his lung. As it is, he has lost a deal of blood.’

‘Poor young gentleman!’

‘He is young enough to be able to spare it. A day or two—and your nursing—will bring him round.’

At first it did not strike me that it was of myself they were speaking, until an arm was slipped beneath me, and I was propped against the pillows.

‘Now, Mrs Herbert, the glass—quick, if you please.’

Opening my eyes, I saw that two persons were by the bedside, a man and a woman—she a gentle-faced, elderly lady in a marvellous cap, and he a clean-shaven man of middle age, quietly garbed in black, yet with an air that (even at a first glance) was unmistakably military. He it was who had spoken, and was now regarding me with kindly, alert eyes.

‘Where am I?’ I asked.

‘So you’ve come to!’ said he cheerfully. ‘Gently, sir! You must not move; your wound has just been dressed. Rest assured you are in good hands.’

‘You are the surgeon?’

‘I am yours, for want of a better. . . . Now, drink this and go to sleep. You will be more fit for talk in the morning.’

‘But—the highwayman?’ I persisted, still groping in the dark.

‘The highwayman? Oh, I’ll warrant he’s in safety long ago. But come, sir!’ he cried, holding the glass to my lips, ‘you must drink off your medicine.’

That, at least, was not difficult of accomplishment; for the medicine (so-called) had a delectable smack of old sherry; and presently it had its proper effect, and with a sense of the utmost rest and comfort I slipped into the oblivion of sleep.

But this was only at first. After a time my slumber was broken by a disturbing medley of dream-images—or so they seemed to me. My host, and the highwayman, and the party which I had overseen, all changed places in these feverish visions with an amazing inconsequence. Now it was my host who knelt beside me on the broad stretch of the Bath road, and I had no fear. Again I was in bed, and ’twas the masked pal who bent over me, and with mocking laughter held his point to my throat; and thereat I could have called out in terror, and mayhap did so. Other scenes there were; but ever and always, at the moment of danger, the face of a girl interposed, and the hateful phantoms were routed. Need I say whose face it was? Afterwards I could recollect every feature and expression; and all night it rose between me and my terrors like the face of an angel, and in the morning the im-

pression was still so vivid that, waking, I half-hoped to see it before me. But the only face that I saw was the placid, motherly countenance of the old gentlewoman, Mrs Herbert.

She was standing by the little window, looking out. A frosty ray of sunshine straggled through, but was no rival to the warmer light that gleamed from the fire and was reflected from the dark oak wainscoting of the chamber.

For a little I left her undisturbed, and lay quiet, idly recalling the events that (as far as they were known to me) had followed my encounter. That, to be sure, was vivid enough in my memory; but so shadowy and confused were my later recollections that, just then, I could scarce decide how much was real and how much was the fruit of uneasy dreams. But these considerations were soon driven forth by one more clamant. I remembered my mission, and its urgent importance; and while the doubt as to what had befallen Joseph—whether he had escaped scot-free and fulfilled his errand, or whether his pursuer had overhauled him—remained unsettled, I had a duty that permitted no rest. So:

‘Good-morning, madam,’ said I.

Mrs Herbert, returning the greeting, approached the bed. ‘You have had a restless night, but I hope you feel better,’ said she.

‘So much so,’ I replied, ‘that I am thinking of rising.’

‘As to that, sir, you must see Mr Morell. Just now I will get some breakfast for you.’

‘First you will tell me where I am?’ I pleaded as she turned to go.

‘This is the Dower-house of Langbridge Hall.’

‘And how did I come here?’

‘Mr Morell found you lying wounded on the road. He was riding home from Devizes with a friend—Mr Kennett of Langbridge—when they saw you, and brought you here as being the nearest house. Now, if you will allow me, sir,’ she said, ‘I will tell him you are awakened.’

She went off in some haste, but came back presently with a tray containing such dainty viands as might tempt an invalid; to which I was able, to my gratification, to do full justice. I was barely done with the repast, and feeling all the stronger for it, when my host appeared. I would have thanked him for his great courtesy, but he refused to listen to a single word until my wound was examined. In the interval I had good opportunity to study him, and, as the result, was confirmed in my over-night estimate; there could be no doubt of his quality, nor that he had seen service. In other respects I had a curious, vague idea that he was (or should have been) not altogether unknown to me, yet for my life I could not trace the notion.

At length his task was finished.

‘There! that’s right,’ he cried. ‘It is healing beautifully, sir; you will be out of bed to-morrow,

and in three days will be ready for the saddle again.’

‘Three days!’ I repeated, aghast. ‘But I must be riding to-day!’

‘Neither to-day nor to-morrow,’ said he. ‘Why, ’tis utterly impossible! There was snow in the night, and it threatens more; and, to be frank, ’twould mean your death.’

‘Still, I must go. There is my duty’—

‘And there is mine as your surgeon, which is to keep you here. Be sensible, man!’ Smiling: ‘At the worst, you don’t propose to ride without your small-clothes?’

In truth, as a glance assured me, my garments had been removed; and, notwithstanding my impatience and chagrin, I could not resist an answering smile at his little conceit. Yet he seemed to read my thoughts.

‘Come, let us make a bargain,’ he continued. ‘The clothes will be restored in due time—say at noon—if you will promise me to rest content so long. After that you must decide for yourself. Honestly, you will be none the worse for a few more hours’ sleep.’

‘But I could not sleep when’—

‘Oh! I have a magical elixir that will ensure it. Now, what is it to be?’

He had the whip-hand, and I must needs accept; and, besides, his manner was so brisk and friendly, and my debt to him so great, that ’twould have been churlish to stand out. So I gave in—handsomely, I hope—and even tried to find words for the proper acknowledgment of his rescue of me on the Bath road. But there he cut me short.

‘’Twas only what any gentleman would have done,’ said he. ‘Think no more of it, I pray you. But I should like to hear, if it would not weary you, how you came to be in such a pass?’

I told the story as briefly as might be, hiding nothing save the nature of my mission. He listened without interruption.

‘Just as I thought,’ he cried. ‘The pad was Craddock, beyond a doubt—Squire Craddock they call him hereabouts, because of his grand manner and some tradition of gentle birth. You would know him again?’

‘I am sure of it,’ I returned. ‘He was masked, of course; but I could not mistake his figure and voice.’

‘Ah!—After all,’ he went on, ‘he is a bold rogue, and I have a fancy to meet him. What do you say, sir, to a hunt after him together when your shoulder is better? A turn with such a swordsman would be a pleasure! . . . And your servant escaped?’

‘That is what I must learn as soon as possible. Much depends upon it.’

‘So? Well, for our part, we must have disturbed him at work—my neighbour, Mr Kennett, was with me. Indeed, we heard his horse’s hoofs

in the distance as we came up. Doubtless 'twas the sound of ours that alarmed him. But I am sorry to tell you he had found time to clear you out most effectually. I took the liberty of searching your clothes later on, and your pocket-book, watch and seals, all your valuables, were gone—everything except your sword, which my friend picked up on the road.'

Even that was something, for the rapier had belonged to my grandfather; and for the rest, having expected it, I cared little if only the papers in Joseph's charge were safe. In any case, my trinkets were of small account in comparison with my life. 'And that, sir, I owe to you,' I said. 'But for your charity, the frost must soon have completed Craddock's work.'

He shook his head. 'Now, I am not so certain,' said he. 'The man has some good; your wound was roughly bandaged, and why should he have done that had he intended you to freeze? You were unconscious—probably he would have made means to get you to an inn or somewhere. Not that the half-mile hence that we brought you across my saddle was too little! And so you are here,' he said; 'and here, at your pleasure, is another draught of your medicine. Drink it—and sleep!'

I did both, the latter almost instantly; for truly the stuff, whatever its ingredients were, seemed to have a wonderful potency. It was fully an hour past midday when I was awakened by Mrs Herbert. Dinner was by my bedside, and there also my clothes were laid out, with clean linen—my coat brushed and neatly darned, and everything in readiness. I felt a new man, and my appetite did not belie the feeling, much to the pleasure of the good lady who attended to me.

'Mr Morell will be up presently,' she said as she retired.

But I was too impatient to wait. I rose at once, made shift to begin my toilet without assistance, and, in spite of sundry difficulties, had nearly completed it, when my host entered.

Rallying me on my haste, he helped me to add the last touches. Then he opened the door for me.

'Now, if you are ready'—

'Thank you. But I'm afraid I must walk slowly. My legs are still somewhat unsteady, I find.'

'Quite naturally. If you will take my arm—so!'

We passed out as he spoke, and then I pulled up with a start; for we stood upon the landing from which, on the previous evening, I had witnessed such a remarkable scene. The whole incident recurred to my mind in a flash, and I knew that it had been no dream.

'Don't fear to lean upon me,' continued my host, misapprehending my action. 'The weakness will soon go.'

So we descended the stair, thoughtfully on my part, on his with a flow of advice and encouragement. At the bottom, in the hall, he stopped and said:

'By the way—you will pardon my remissness, sir—but I do not think I have your name.'

'The blame is mine,' I replied, and gave it.

He turned to me, as if in surprise. 'Not of the Holroyds of the West Riding, surely?'

'My father is Bevil Holroyd of Dunsyre.'

'What!' he cried. 'Bevil Holroyd, my old schoolfellow and companion! It can't be!' Then he broke into merry laughter. 'Why, this is famous! But come, Mr Holroyd.'

He threw open a door, and from the fireside of a small, cosy room two ladies rose to greet us. One was Mrs Herbert; the other was she whom I had met on the stair-head—and the maiden of my visions. There was a pleasing tinge of red in her cheeks as she came forward.

'My dear, I have a surprise for you,' cried my host. To me: 'Sir, this is my daughter Kitty.—Kitty, let me present to you—your cousin, George Holroyd!'

And again he laughed heartily.

SECONDARY EDUCATION IN ENGLAND.



WHEN you have been taking things fairly comfortably, confident that all was going on very well, or at least that there was nothing to worry about, and at last discover that you have been living in a sort of fool's paradise, you feel somewhat mortified and crestfallen. In any case, the discovery will have a wholesome effect; and if matters have not gone too far the bitterness soon yields to a feeling of thankfulness at having one's eyes opened in time. Many persons who have John Bull's welfare at heart have for some time past been trying to make him realise that an inconspicuous

but essential part of his domestic arrangements is seriously out of order, and is daily getting worse. At length they have gained the good man's ear. They are assuring him that, while he has made some provision for the education of his poorer dependents, the others have been left to shift for themselves; in this scramble a few come off well, but many fare badly; the process is costly and wasteful, and so faulty and ineffectual that, in this age of increasing competition, even an old commercial house such as his *must* meet with disaster unless this serious defect is made thoroughly good without further delay.

John admits that his trade is not growing.

while that of some of his rivals with fewer natural advantages is increasing by leaps and bounds. He admits there may be something amiss—something possibly within his control. But for a long time he has been doing very well on the whole—much better, indeed, than most other firms. Still, these foreigners are undoubtedly taking away some of his trade. He resolves at last, therefore, to make full inquiries of his agents abroad as to the alleged facts and their causes, and is told practically the same tale by all of them—namely, that the allegations as to trade are true, and that the causes are that at home the old firm is too slow in taking up new ideas and in improving old methods, and does not sufficiently study its customers' varied requirements abroad; in fact, that, through its insularity and its conservatism, the old firm is being beaten by houses that put more brains into their work. The old man can hold out no longer. He consults his friends, therefore, as to the education of his agents, managers, clerks, and other brain-workers whose mental alertness and attainments are impugned, and they report to him as follows.

THE VARIOUS KINDS OF SCHOOLS.

A secondary school is one in which many, usually most, of the pupils are receiving an education higher than that given in the ordinary primary or public elementary school. It is in schools of this class that the great majority of our manufacturers, merchants, managers, commercial travellers, clerks, engineers, electricians, chemists, farmers, and professional classes are educated. While uniformity is the characteristic of the primary schools, variety does and must prevail among schools producing such diverse products as the above. A future engineer requires an education which might not suit a future solicitor or a city clerk. It will be best to glance briefly at the leading types of secondary schools. First, we may note a few wealthy old schools like Eton and Harrow—'non-local' we might term them—whose connection with commerce is so indirect that we can disregard them here. It is the second class, coming below these, that claims our attention. They comprise a great variety—the old grammar-schools, large and small; the modern 'Foundation' school of our towns, the fruit of ancient endowments for charitable or for educational purposes, rendered available for secondary education by the State's provision of free primary education; the 'company's' school, provided by the wealthy city company, or by a church-schools company, or by a girls' public school company; the proprietary school, the property of a body of shareholders who hold the right of nominating boys for admission to the school; and the numerous private schools. Examples of most of these will readily occur to readers of this *Journal*. It would be hard to say in what these schools are alike, except that the standard of attainment reached is usually in advance of that of the primary school. They vary

in their form of control, in their financial arrangements, in the subject or subjects emphasised, in the age and social status of their pupils, in their aim, and so on. Their peculiar feature is their individuality: each school stands by itself, is a law to itself, is judged by itself. With few exceptions it is not adjusted with reference either to the primary schools below it, other secondary schools about it, or to the local industries. Indeed, so many different interests and callings are represented in a secondary school, especially if it is the only one in the district, that, except for the highest classes of a good school, a *general* education seems the only course available, as it is undoubtedly the best.

THE SUPPLY OF SCHOOLS.

The number of schools is doubtless equal to the demand for places. This is easily explained. The country districts and the older towns are fairly well supplied with the old endowed grammar-schools; new districts possess many of the other public schools mentioned above. But where these are wanting, and even close beside them, private schools are found. Indeed, the latter schools have done good service to the community: they often prove more congenial to a delicate boy than the public school, and they adapt themselves to the needs of their *clientèle* in a way the endowed school refuses to do. They serve as the training-ground for very many of the teachers in the public schools, and they have supplied many districts with the only secondary schools they possess. There is always a considerable number of assistant-masters and mistresses, or of other less qualified but enterprising persons, keeping a sharp lookout for any opening for a private school; partly from a desire to become one's own master, partly from the insecurity of an assistant's tenure in most public schools. And in a good district, where fairly high fees can be obtained and there is no endowed school to compete with, a private school may do tolerably well—both for pupils and teachers. But when a district deteriorates, or an endowed school is established at low fees, or a higher grade school at moderate fees, the private school is doomed to painful extinction. This process is now taking place in many districts. The impecunious public school is in much the same position. Its endowment, perhaps, has declined through agricultural depression; the railways now take away to distant schools the pupils of its richer patrons; the free Board school satisfies the poorer pupils; and possibly the more enterprising parents find in a neighbouring town a newer school, equipped with all modern improvements, well staffed, well graded, complete in every respect. Hence the master of the poor grammar-school finds his position a very anxious, possibly a ruinous one, for frequently enough he 'farms' his school, taking all and paying all. But the latter school usually has buildings of its own

and some endowment, however small; and being a 'public' school—that is, under the control of a body of governors—it has this advantage over the private school, that it is eligible to earn and receive grants of money from the Science and Art Department and the County Council. A private institution, however good, is refused all recognition by the State. Now, if it be borne in mind that hundreds of our secondary schools are small country grammar-schools, having small endowments, and unable to charge more than a moderate fee, depending largely on the supply of boarders, it will be seen how great is the temptation to go in for the business of earning 'grants,' by giving instruction in science subjects, to the neglect of the other work.

Fostered by these grants from the Science and Art Department, the teaching of science has developed enormously in the poorer schools during the last ten or fifteen years. The literary side of education, to which more value used to be attached, has suffered; the schools, as a means of training character, have suffered; nor does it appear that there is an equivalent gain. The change was made, not because it suited a particular district, but simply and solely because it 'paid'! Presumably to meet the allegation that non-science work was being crushed out, the Science and Art Department now recognises and inspects a school as a whole, taking account of all its work, provided it devotes a certain number of hours per week to certain subjects—science, mathematics, drawing, and manual work. The grant is assessed on the general character of the work. This is the 'School of Science.' Probably the arrangement was made for the special benefit of poor schools in manufacturing districts; but, of course, the poverty of other schools where a scientific course was not needed drove them to accept the scheme. The small, poor schools in country districts, however, cannot avail themselves of this help: they must look to the County Council, which, under the Technical Instruction and other Acts, may assist schools out of its share of the 'whisky money,' and may levy a special rate for this purpose, though it seldom or never does so. This assistance usually takes the form of an annual grant for or towards the payment of a master for science or drawing, or a grant for buildings or fittings. As a condition it claims a voice in the control of the school. Many small schools receive a little help in this way, but not enough to enable them to pay well-qualified teachers. Large schools get substantial help from the same source, at the same time that they may be earning other grants as mentioned above. Thus, while a large school, by sacrificing its curriculum to science, may benefit to the extent of seven or eight hundred pounds a year, the small, poor school is left to make the most of its 'salubrious situation' and the 'unlimited diet' provided for boarders. Well-endowed schools are free from this ignoble and

degrading struggle for the means to carry on their work; they are free to adopt the most suitable curriculum without restriction; they can afford to pay highly-qualified teachers, to give them small classes, and to provide the necessary appliances; they can offer them fair salaries and a pension: in short, the well-endowed schools, and they alone, can carry on the business of secondary education in an efficient manner.

Mr Bryce, M.P., lately ventilated his opinion as to the prevailing tendency to substitute physical science for literary and humane subjects, which he thought had gone too far, and was becoming a serious danger to the future education of the people; 'for,' said he, 'the substitution of a scientific education for the teaching which had led to the highest thoughts and ideas of mankind would produce a hard, dry, gritty, unfertile type of mind, as compared with the results which literary studies ought to produce.'

TEACHERS' PENSIONS AND SALARIES.

I have gone into some detail on this part of the subject because it lies at the root of all reform and reorganisation. Secondary education cannot be done on the cheap if it is to be well done. Given land, premises, and fittings all in working order, the cost per pupil cannot be reduced below eleven or twelve pounds a year—except at the sacrifice of efficiency. For there is one costly peculiarity to bear in mind here—namely, that teaching, when a man puts his heart into it (and without that it is a sorry thing), is exceptionally wearing work. In spite of apparently short hours—*school* hours are not long—and quite exceptional holidays, the dominie, in a town school at least, has lost much of his buoyancy and vivacity and energy at fifty-five. He is getting out of touch with the active young spirits he ought to guide and lead. 'Crabbed age and youth cannot live together.' The schoolmaster's work never becomes one of routine, never tends in the slightest degree to do so, and never can so tend, simply because the material with which he has to deal is composed of individual units of which no two are alike; and no sooner has he managed to acquire some knowledge of the dispositions and abilities of one set of pupils than he loses them and has to begin again with another. No matter how long a teacher remains at his work, it never becomes appreciably easier. In a pension scheme for assistant masters recently established by the Incorporated Association of Head-Masters in England, fifty-five is the pension age adopted. It would thus appear that in the case of teachers exceptionally liberal pension arrangements must be made unless we are willing to see them retained in schools after they have ceased to be efficient; and that this applies specially to the case of town schools, where the classes are large. It should be borne in mind in this connection that it is the hardest workers who break down soonest. The Superannuation Act for primary teachers

passed last session fixes the pension age at sixty-five; but possibly this is a temporary arrangement.

Now as to the salaries paid in secondary schools. Those of the head-teachers in large town schools are good; in the country they depend largely on what is not school work at all—namely, the management of a boarding-house. So important is this element that I have known of a hotel-keeper who was at the same time proprietor of two (private) boarding-schools, the minor department of the business, of course, being left to a paid head-master! As to assistant-teachers, they are, except in the case of comparatively few schools, paid very badly, whether compared with head-teachers or with educated people in other walks of life. It might be more correct to say the salaries are very low, the well-qualified teachers being greatly underpaid; the many of mediocre qualifications probably earning as much here as they would anywhere else. I could furnish some interesting but painful figures on this vital point—for it undoubtedly is the vital point in the whole question of secondary education. We may make grants and build palatial premises; we may co-ordinate our schools and prevent overlapping and undue competition; we may draw up syllabuses and compile curricula for various types of schools. But it will all be as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals unless we realise that these are but the husk and not the kernel, the house and not the home, the body only, not the spirit. *A school is made by its teachers, and by them only.* Good books and apparatus being taken for granted, nothing else is really necessary besides scholars and teachers. In our desire to show what we are doing, or to satisfy the unthinking, or to dignify the work, we erect a palace and call it a school. Formerly it was called a *school-house*. What a world of mischief may be wrought by a word! Is it not the popular notion that when you have got your handsome building the thing in the main is done? As for the teaching, why, anybody can do that. For the wages of a mechanic you can get a Master of Arts; a German or a French master for those of a house-painter! The thing is simple enough, it would seem. But how can we secure an efficient teacher? As the best schools do now—that is, by offering a fairly liberal salary. Having got him, how can we secure his devotion to the school? Identify him with it; make his life's interest centre in it; make him, in his sphere, as zealous as if he were the head; make him give, not so many hours per day, measured on the clock, but himself—his best energies, his best thought, his active endeavours for the real good of every boy entrusted to his care, recorded in the characters and lives of the hundreds of grateful men who shall have passed under his care.

How can this be done? As it is done in the best schools now—namely, by assuring a man of the

security of his position so long as his work is good; by periodical increases of salary according to his efficiency and zeal: the first will make a teacher feel at home, settled, recognised, appreciated—it will bring out the best in the man; the second will secure the school his constant interest and all his teaching energy. So long as a man feels that he is grossly underpaid, and that good work cannot avail to secure him in his position, the man is working, so to speak, at low pressure. He does not respect an office which is rated so lightly. He has to eke out a livelihood by taking clerical work, by taking evening classes, by private teaching, and so on. This, of course, is bad for the school. On considering these things one can hardly be surprised at the prevalence among assistant-masters—ladies are more enthusiastic—of a peculiar apathy and want of interest with regard to their work; nor at the small proportion of graduates in secondary schools—public schools as well as private. One remedy for the latter evil has been suggested in the form of a register of teachers qualified to teach in secondary schools, so that parents may know 'who's who.' What care parents about the teachers' qualifications if the school passes among their circle as a good school? In choosing a doctor, who inquires about his diplomas? All doctors, practically, are qualified. Are they all good doctors? There is only one way to obtain good and well-qualified teachers, and that is to offer a sufficient inducement.

THE INSPECTION OF SCHOOLS.

What assurance have we that a school is doing its duty by our children? None whatever. True, when the child is about thirteen or fourteen he may be entered for some outside independent examination, such as the Oxford or Cambridge Locals, by way of test, if the school course corresponds thereto. But such a method is not feasible. And, moreover, discovery would come too late. The only safe plan at present is to have the pupil tested periodically, which is tantamount to saying that a thorough, complete, independent, and impartial inspection—sanitary as well as educational—ought to be compulsory on every school in the land. We are compelled by the law to send our children to school; we are therefore entitled to demand that Government shall make schools efficient, or close them. But thorough inspection means more than an annual visit; it must be kept up throughout the year. A good school will welcome inspection; a bad school cannot have too much of it. Scholarship is not the chief requisite in an inspector. What is essential is to have had considerable experience in teaching in these schools, and to be perfectly familiar with every question involved in the working of a school. Would a professor of the abstract principles of mechanics make a competent inspector of the complicated engines and machinery in our men-of-war? In our primary schools inspection is

admitted to be essential. Is human nature different in secondary schools?

CONCLUSION : OUR NEEDS.

To adapt our schools to our needs as an industrial and commercial nation, we want (1) the means to pay well-qualified teachers; (2) Government inspection, educational and sanitary, of every school; (3) local authorities over large areas to

(a) prevent wasteful competition, (b) settle the aims and curricula of schools with reference to the needs of the district, and (c) appoint head and visiting-teachers; (4) a strong central authority, controlling and harmonising primary, secondary, and technical education through the local authorities, and appointing inspectors; and (5) as a basis, a supply of preparatory schools for children of seven to nine.

SECRET DESPATCHES.

CHAPTER II.



BEFORE long I awoke to the fact that both windows of my compartment were open, and that the evening had turned unaccountably cold. My fur-lined overcoat was lying where I had placed it when I took it off; and having arranged the windows to my liking, I proceeded to put it on. While in the act of buttoning it, a slight protuberance of the breast-pocket attracted my attention. Inserting my hand into the pocket, I drew from it a long, narrow envelope, fastened in the usual way, the contents of which seemed to consist of one or more documents, and which certainly was no property of mine. I stared at it for some moments in a maze of perplexity. Why had the packet been put there? To whom did it belong? Then, perceiving that there was something written on it in pencil, with the help of my *pince-nez* I managed to decipher the following words, here translated, which had evidently been scrawled in a great hurry:

'Mr Simkinson is earnestly entreated to deliver the enclosed papers unread to'—

That was all.

And then in a flash everything became clear to me. The packet had been put where I had found it by Mdle. Dufarge during my absence from the carriage. Something had led her to suspect that she was about to be arrested, and rather than allow the papers to fall into the hands of the police, she had determined, on the spur of the moment, to entrust them to me for delivery, but had not had time to write either the name or address of the person for whom they were intended. That was indeed unfortunate. I would gladly have obliged Mdle. Dufarge—for whose arrest I was sincerely sorry—so far as it lay in my power to do so; but, in lack of the requisite information, I was altogether helpless in the affair. I turned the envelope over and over, but there was no other scrap of writing on it.

What was to be done?

In the papers themselves something would most likely be found which would furnish a clue to the missing information, but in face of the request that the envelope should be delivered in-

tact, I not unnaturally shrank from opening it. Still, I must either disregard the injunction or be saddled, willy-nilly, with a batch of documents of undoubted importance to somebody, which would never otherwise reach the person for whom they were intended. Of the two courses open to me which was the more advisable one to take?

For some minutes I sat in a brown study, debating the question this way and that. At length I ended the matter by taking my pen-knife, slitting open the envelope, and extracting the contents.

These proved to consist of three separate documents, apparently written by different persons. Although couched in what to me was to a certain extent enigmatic language, there could be little doubt, from the point of view of the powers that were, as to their treasonable tendency. But the sole point which concerned me was that in none of them could I find any trace of an address at which to deliver them; while, in place of proper names, initials only were given. It was a most embarrassing position in which to find one's self, and I wished most heartily that Mdle. Dufarge had found another messenger.

We were now approaching Abbeville, so I crammed the confounded things back into my pocket, and buttoned my coat over them.

At Abbeville my compartment was invaded by a stout, elderly, genial-looking Frenchman, who, with his tightly-buttoned frock-coat, his carefully waxed moustache, and gold-rimmed spectacles, had the appearance of a man of substance and standing.

The stranger seemed of a talkative disposition, and before many minutes were over we were in the midst of an animated conversation. I hardly know what impelled me to do so, but after a time I told him about the Amiens incident in connection with Mdle. Dufarge. I was, however, careful to make no mention of the mysterious packet of papers. My companion listened attentively, but when I had come to an end he merely shrugged his shoulders and said, 'Persons who are so foolish as to risk their liberty in an attempt to subvert the government must pay the penalty of their rashness;' and

therewith he turned the conversation into another channel.

By-and-by I offered him my card—my business one, I mean—for I never miss an opportunity of pushing the firm's sparkling bottled ales. He returned the compliment by proffering me his own pasteboard, on which, however, was merely inscribed the words, 'M. Legard, Abbeville.' He was going through to London, he gave me to understand, where he had a sister who was lying dangerously ill. At Boulogne we shook hands and parted. I had some customers to call upon both there and at Calais, and would not be able to cross before the afternoon boat next day.

It had been dark some time, and was raining fast when I reached the Charing Cross terminus by the seven thirty-five boat train the following evening. Hardly had I set foot on the platform before I felt a tap on my shoulder, and on turning found myself, immensely to my surprise, face to face with M. Legard. He proffered his hand as an old acquaintance might have done, and greeted me effusively. He had been waiting purposely for me, he went on to observe, in the hope that I should arrive by the evening train (I had mentioned incidentally the day before that Charing Cross Station was the one nearest my home), adding that he had every reason for believing he had secured for me what would prove to be a very valuable order for export bottled ales.

On hearing this I did not fail to prick up my ears, neither time nor place mattering a jot to me so long as I can do a profitable stroke of business. Only, M. Legard proceeded to remark, I must go with him at once and be introduced to his friend if I wished to secure the order, as the latter was due to leave London at six o'clock next morning, and would not be back for some time to come.

Having thanked M. Legard for the trouble he had taken on my behalf, I intimated my willingness to accompany him as soon as I had deposited my portmanteau in the cloak-room. A few minutes later the Frenchman and I were rattling through the streets in a four-wheeler.

I took little or no heed of the way we were going; indeed, so smeared were the cab windows with the heavy rain that everything seen through them looked blurred and unfamiliar; besides which, my attention was pretty well taken up by my companion's animated flow of talk, which politeness demanded that I should not altogether ignore. However, our ride did not last much longer than a quarter of an hour, at the end of which time the cab drew up with a jerk.

The Frenchman was the first to alight, and while I was following his example he ran nimbly up a short flight of steps and knocked what might be termed a double postman's knock on the door opposite which we had drawn up. Hardly had his fingers left the knocker before the door was opened from the inside, as if by some mechanical agency, no one being visible. I had followed Legard up the steps, and he now turned to me. '*Entrez, s'il vous plait, monsieur,*' he said as he stood aside to let me pass. I at once complied, and he followed close on my heels, and shut the door behind us. A moment later I heard the cab drive away. Evidently the driver had been paid his fare in advance.

Before me stretched a passage of some length, dimly lighted by a small oil-lamp on a bracket fixed against the wall. It seemed to me rather an unlikely sort of place in which to find a customer for my ales. But there was no time for thought; for Legard at once led the way along the passage, with a polite request to me to follow him. I did so without hesitation. Opening a door at the end, he ushered me into a room of considerable dimensions, lighted by a single gas-jet, the sole furniture of which was a couple of chairs and a small table. A click of the door caused me to turn quickly, only to find that I was alone. Legard had vanished without a word. Still, I felt no uneasiness. Advancing to the table, I placed my hat on it, drew off my gloves, unbuttoned my overcoat, and sat down. Then it was I first noticed that a long dark curtain was drawn completely across the lower end of the room.

'PENNY-IN-THE-SLOT' GAS-METERS AND THEIR USERS.

By CANNING WILLIAMS.



TWELVE years ago the first gas-meter designed to supply gas in exchange for coin was patented, the description of the apparatus extending over eighteen closely-printed pages, and being accompanied with twelve sheets of drawings. Since then many different patterns of 'penny-in-the-

slot' gas-meters have been placed upon the market, each claiming to have some special point in its favour.

The measuring and registering portions of pre-payment gas-meters do not differ from those of ordinary meters; but, in order that the supply of gas may be shut off when the quantity prepaid has been used, the meter is provided with

apparatus which automatically closes a valve for this purpose. The closing of the valve is a process which occupies several minutes, the gradual lowering of the light warning the consumer that his illuminant is about to be cut off unless another coin is inserted in the slot. At the side of the meter is a box, under lock and key, which receives the coins. This box is periodically emptied of its contents by an official of the gasworks.

The inventor of the original 'slot' meter—Mr Brownhill, of Birmingham—lost no time in bringing his appliance under the notice of some prominent gas engineers; but the general feeling among them was that it was doomed to fail. It was ingenious but impracticable; clever but clumsy. A brighter view of the future of the meter was taken, however, by a Mr Marsh, who canvassed every gas manager in the kingdom on its behalf, and iterated and reiterated a thousand times the virtues of the mechanism. But his eloquence, energy, time, and money were thrown away. Gas managers listened to him with that air of amused interest with which people hearken to the words of enthusiasts, and that was all. But Mr Marsh was resourceful as well as enthusiastic; so, banishing the disappointment which his unavailing tour had created, he proposed to the South Metropolitan Gas Company that a hundred of the meters should be fixed under his guarantee to remove them and pay all costs and damages that might ensue from their use if they proved to be unsuccessful. To a proposal so practical and confident the directors of the company could not well demur; so the meters were fixed, and after a sufficient trial pronounced to be a success. Then the general body of meter-makers, who had previously stood aloof, and quietly enjoyed the difficulties of the parent makers, 'rushed into the field to annex some of the spoil,' as Mr Marsh graphically puts it, and 'so-called prepayment meter inventors became as plentiful as mushrooms in season.'

As to the immense strides which the 'slot' meters have since made in popular estimation, the following words of the secretary of the company above referred to bear convincing witness: 'We began very humbly in 1892'—a considerable interval seems to have elapsed between the experimental installation of the hundred meters and the practical adoption of the system—'and for the first six months our receipts from the meters amounted to £172; in 1893 they were £6300; in 1894, £29,600; in 1895, £73,300; in 1896, £119,300; in 1897, £158,100; while last year the amount was £183,600—all in pennies' (*Journal of Gas Lighting*, February 14, 1899). He also stated that at the end of last year they had no less than 80,000 'slot' meters in use in their district of supply. The London Gaslight and Coke Company, whose district is much larger than that of the

South Metropolitan Company, has an even greater number of the meters in operation; and, what to the gas companies is the most satisfactory feature of the business, the great bulk of their prepayment consumers are additional users of gas. At a moderate computation, pennies to the value of £400,000—96,000,000 coins, weighing over 800 tons—were removed from the London 'slot' gas-meters during the year 1898. Taking the whole of the United Kingdom, the figures would probably double those given for London—truly a most marvellous result of a small beginning.

It is not surprising that this wholesale use of copper coinage should have necessitated a great increase in the quantity minted. The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to this in his Budget speech in 1897, when he said that more than three times as many copper coins were struck during the year 1896-7 as in 1895-6, a large proportion of the additional pennies being no doubt required for prepayment gas-meters.

It is the practice of most of the gas companies and local authorities who supply 'slot' gas-meters to also lay the house pipes and provide and fix the gasfittings and a gas cooking-stove, a satisfactory return on the outlay being obtained from the extra rate for gas charged to the consumers under the prepayment plan. This arrangement, having removed all the old obstacles to the use of gas among those whose means do not permit of the purchase of gas apparatus or the payment of a quarterly gas bill, largely accounts for the great success which has attended the system.

It is interesting in this connection to hear that the bakers in the East End of London have experienced a falling off in their business owing to the great number of gas-stoves which are now used in conjunction with the 'slot' meters in the artisans' dwellings in that district. Cooking by gas is so simple and expeditious, the gas companies would probably say, that it is now no longer necessary to seek the assistance of the professional baker.

One very material good which has resulted from the extended use of prepayment gas-meters is the diminution of fatalities, fires, and minor accidents, caused by paraffin-oil lamps. A few years ago it was stated in a report of the Metropolitan Fire Brigade that the number of notified fires in the Metropolis due to lamp accidents was something like four hundred and fifty a year, the number of lives lost being thirty-three. A vast number of accidents from this cause must, however, have occurred which did not find insertion in the registers of the Fire Brigade.

On the other hand, the meters have been the unfortunate means of increasing the number of petty thefts—robberies from them being of almost daily occurrence in London and the larger towns. The *Daily Telegraph* referred to this in September 1898, in the following words: 'It would seem that the "penny-in-the-slot" gas-meter, rapidly as

it has made headway among a certain class of consumers, and satisfactory as it has no doubt proved to the gas companies, has much to answer for as an encourager of crime.' The prosecuting solicitor in the case which called forth the above comment stated that hundreds of robberies had been committed since the meters had been introduced into London; in many cases the consumers themselves had been tempted in hard-up times to break open the coin-boxes, but oftener the robberies were the work of practised thieves, who, aware that the meters were frequently placed in the coal-cellar or pantry in the front area, went in the night and forcibly despoiled them of the coinage they contained. At another time two boys were charged with stealing money from the meters. The bench ordered them each to receive six strokes with the birch-rod, whereupon the aunt of one of the boys requested the magistrates to 'lay it on thick,' and this, adds the report, 'was done in the course of the afternoon.' In a similar case tried at Manchester it was stated that about ten out of their 26,000 'slot' meters were robbed every week. The moral which should be drawn from these thefts is that the meters should be fixed in positions of greater safety, and be provided with superior padlocks, many of the locks used being of the commonest description.

During the past few years the 'prepayment system' has been to the fore at meetings of British and Irish gas managers. Several papers have been read on the question, and much discussion has followed them. The papers are interesting, and the discussions even more so, the reports of both enlivening the usually almost painful seriousness of the pages of the technical press which is devoted to the gas industry. At a meeting of Irish gas managers a member said that he had had a good deal of trouble with his prepayment consumers as to how long the pennyworth of gas should last; one saying that he obtained six hours' light for a penny, another six and a half, and so on. He was also told by some of them that unless they were supplied with meters similar to So-and-so's, which gave light for two hours longer than theirs, they would discontinue the use of gas. On investigating the matter, he found that these alleged grievances had their origin in false reports

circulated by a few of the consumers in order to annoy those who were inclined to be discontented. The same gentleman remarked that the consumers were often surprised at the number of pennies which were found in the boxes, and one can easily imagine the envious eyes which many a poor Irishwoman would cast upon the coins which the collector removed. Another manager informed his colleagues that he adopted the system of having a separate bag for each 'slot' consumer, into which the collector put the money straight from the box, afterwards counting it at the office, naively adding that 'he thought this a very good plan, because the consumers might think they were using too much gas if they saw how much money there was.'

The same meeting was told by one of the speakers that he had supplied a shoemaker with a 'slot' meter, and that the wily old man obtained pennies by saying to his customers, 'Just put a penny in this slot, and you will see a bird come up and sing.' But this was a very mild form of deception compared with the trick of a Lancashire man. This individual bored a neat hole in a penny, inserted in it a piece of string, and dropped the coin into the slot. He then endeavoured to draw it out again for future use; but, much to his discomfiture, he could neither obtain his penny nor the gas, which made things a little awkward for him, especially when the collector sternly demanded an explanation of the affair a few days later. Many other instances might be given of misapplied ingenuity (not to use a more serious word) practised with the object of persuading the meter to give a pennyworth of gas in exchange for a piece of tin or iron, a beaten-out soda-water capsule, or a metal 'check.' These things might be placed in automatic machines at railway stations and in the streets without much fear of detection; but when they are dropped into the slot of a prepayment gas-meter, a day is bound to come when these 'tricks that are vain' will be laid bare. An equally interesting, but far more creditable, fact in connection with the meters is that they are not infrequently used by the consumers as savings-banks—florins being inserted in them instead of pennies, and the balances either claimed or put back in the boxes when the collector calls.

FEUILLETONS.



At the corner of some of the more populous and busy thoroughfares of Paris you will sometimes see a man surrounded by a little knot of bonnetless girls and women, to whom he is distributing broad-sheets from a large bundle he holds in his arms. If you hold out your hand he will give you one. One side of the sheet is gaudily illustrated in red

and black. The picture represents, in nine cases out of ten, a distracted-looking damsel, into whose breast the dark-browed villain of melodrama is discharging the contents of a six-chambered revolver; while on the ground the dead body of a murdered infant lies weltering in its gore. Turn the sheet and you will find the first chapters of the latest thing in blood-and-thunder romances which the editor of the *Petit*, or it may

be the *Grand Menteur*, is publishing in daily instalments. The distribution of the brightly-coloured sheet is the time-honoured method for reminding the porters, cooks, and workgirls of the capital that the section of the press that specially caters for them is as solicitous as ever of supplying them with the sort of mental pabulum for which their souls are supposed to yearn.

Of the making of the interminable romances that slowly unfold themselves at the foot of the halfpenny journals of France numberless stories are told. The vast majority of the readers of these papers know little and care less for the great questions that may be convulsing the civilised world at the moment. Provided the *feuilletons* be sufficiently stuffed with exciting episodes, they are prepared to swallow, with closed eyes, whatever enormities are printed in the other part of the paper.

For Millaud, the founder of the famous *Petit Journal* of Paris—a 'largest circulation in the world'—the *feuilleton* was everything. When he got hold of something that struck him as suitable his joy was boundless. No 'sacrifice' in the way of bold advertisement dismayed him. When it was a rival paper that got hold of a good thing Millaud fell into the lowest depths of despair. One day he learned that a competitor for the favour of the public was about to commence a *feuilleton* having the sensational title of 'The Man with Four Wives.' 'By the shades of Paris!' he shouted 'we must be equal with them.' Without losing an instant he despatched messengers all over the town with injunctions to bring into his presence, drunk or sober, a certain writer whose literary talent he held in great esteem.

'Look here,' said Millaud, 'I must have something as good as that. Sit down there and write me out the first chapters now.'

'Impossible, my dear sir! At the present moment I have not an idea in my head.'

'What, sir! You dare to call yourself an author and are not ashamed to admit you have no ideas. I will teach you, sir. Sit down; we will do the thing together.'

What went on exactly behind the closed door is uncertain; but at the end of three hours the first two chapters of a story that warmed the cockles of Millaud's heart were ready for the printers. The publication, it was decided, should be delayed for a day or two, in order that the curiosity of the readers might be properly whetted. On the following morning, at the head of the first column of the paper, this notice was printed in large type:

DEAR READER!

Invent, imagine, suppose;

Ransack your brain, leave no corner unsearched;
Seek some fatality that will blind you with horror—
Something undreamed of, mad, too horrible for words;
Concoct some dreadful poison; discover some abyss
Blackier than Crime, deeper than Folly:
Never, never will you come near my subject.

The foregoing, which is a very slightly parodied version of the celebrated tirade in *Ruy Blas*, was followed by the words, 'which, tomorrow, the *Petit Journal* will commence to treat of, under the title of "Death by Laughing."' The success of the story was tremendous, and fully maintained the reputation of the paper.

Though the halfpenny journal *feuilletoniste* may not practise literature in its highest form, it is not the first-comer who can hope to excel in the art. Men who have once caught the ear of their special public can command very large sums of money for their work, and find in their material prosperity consolation for the knowledge that their names will not go down to posterity. Their traducers maintain that the whole secret consists in terminating each instalment in such a manner that the reader must wait with impatience for the continuation. Ernest Blum, the author of so many rollicking farces, publishes the full recipe in his diary: 'You may serve up whatever absurdity comes into your head, provided you terminate each instalment something in this fashion: "The assassin entered the room; the Countess shrieked. . . . (To be continued);" or this: "Suddenly, in the doorway, a man's figure was outlined. Who was that man? (To be continued.)"' Blum also gives an example of an ending that missed fire: 'The elephant seized Robert round the waist, and raised him high in the air! (To be continued.)' After reading this he waited, he says, with considerable anxiety for the morrow, as he had become deeply interested in Robert's welfare. When the next issue of the paper arrived, however, he read: 'We will now leave Robert for some time in the grasp of the elephant; the reader is already quite sufficiently acquainted with our hero's energetic character to divine that, somehow or other, he will not let the elephant have the last word in the dispute.' A good many readers, it is to be feared, like the diarist, then and there renounced all further interest in the energetic Robert.

A reproach commonly levelled at the head of many of the most renowned *feuilletonistes* of the day is that they frequently put their names to stories that somebody else has written. One of the past-masters in the art of concocting solutions of horror double distilled recently had an order to surpass himself for one of the leading Paris papers. The honorarium was a handsome one—something like two thousand five hundred pounds, it is said. On the day announced the first instalment, treating naturally of rapine, murder, and sudden death, duly appeared. Every twenty-four hours thereafter a fresh supply of horror was as sure to be forthcoming as the sun was of rising. The world of Paris domesticity spoke of nothing else. Assured of the success of the story, the author hied him off to sunnier climes to pass the winter, after first having taken the precaution of seeing

that the printers had 'plenty to go on with.' To tell the truth, not a line of the story had been penned by himself. The inventive faculties of even the most celebrated of celebrated authors are apt to feel the strain after a lifetime spent in imagining murders and robberies. The author in question was in this case a talented professor, an acquaintance of the *feuilletoniste*, who had arranged to do the story for him at the rate of fifty centimes a line, a fraction of what he himself was to pocket. His *dolce far niente* on the Riviera was rudely disturbed one day by the receipt of a telegram from the paper: 'Only enough copy for another fortnight! Send on continuation and conclusion.' It was the work of a few seconds to run to the telegraph office and send a message to the professor, urging him to put his shoulder to the wheel. No answer came; but two days later brought another telegram from the paper couched in more energetic terms. The author jumped into the first train for Paris, only to find when he reached the capital that his substitute had been inconsiderate enough to die. At the sight of her visitor's despair the widow almost forgot her own grief!

'Promise to pay me the fifty centimes a line as long as the story goes on,' she said, 'and I will tell you where the end of it is.'

'It's a promise.'

'My poor husband had no time to write himself, so he arranged with an usher he knew to do it for him at the rate of a halfpenny a line.'

'The address of that usher—quick!'

Half-an-hour later the author was knocking at the door of a cramming establishment in a distant suburb.

'M. Chatol lives here?'

'Yes, sir. At least he did until this morning, when he left to do his annual military service, and he has not left his address.'

'Take my card to the head-master, and say I would like to see him on a very urgent matter.'

The head-master was profuse in his regrets at his assistant's sudden departure. 'Best man I ever had, sir. Hardly knew how to read himself, and yet kept the boys working from morning to night.'

'Don't you think if you were to look over any

papers he may have left behind him you might be able to find his address?'

'Not the least chance, I fear. All the time he was here I never saw him once with a pen in his hand.'

The celebrated author rushed from the house feeling he was on the brink of madness. What was he to do now? Stop the publication and so lose the money of which he stood rather in need at the moment? Ask a *confrère* to help him, and thus admit his duplicity? Cut the story short by killing the hero in the next chapter? Alas! alas! With the exception of the hero's name he knew nothing whatever about him. It was a point of honour with him never to read his own works! There appeared to be only two practical alternatives: commit suicide or terminate the story himself. He chose the latter, and gloomily waded through three months of gore. When he had concluded his brain was in a whirl. Names of places and persons, murders and suicides, the dead and the living, were inextricably mingled in what was left of his mind. He made a great effort, however, and sat down to work. After he had composed a few hundred lines, he considered his revolver very attentively, and tried to recall Hamlet's soliloquy. He had not got very far, when a telegram was brought to him. Languidly he opened it. What good could possibly happen to him now? Suddenly he rubbed his glasses furiously to make sure they were not playing him false. 'Received continuation and conclusion. Splendid. Congratulations and thanks.' He gave up trying to think what it all meant. He was saved and was happy. For the present that was sufficient.

A month later, when the usher returned, the mystery was unravelled. 'Perfectly simple, my dear sir. I made my pupils do the work. Splendid mental exercise for them, I assure you. The morning I left, the thing was just finished, so I took the manuscript with me and handed it in at the newspaper office on my way to the railway station.'

The accuracy of this story in its main details is vouched for by a well-known French literary man.

Se non è vero.

CUCKOO MIMICRY.



IN the Oölogical Department of the Natural History Museum at South Kensington a collection has been formed of some sixty clutches of eggs each of which contains the egg of a cuckoo. These clutches represent about thirty species of birds, and show the extraordinary variety in the colouring of a cuckoo's egg from perfect 'mimicry' to striking

contrast. The hedge-sparrow—the most frequent foster-parent of the cuckoo—lays a turquoise-blue egg, whilst the ordinary colour of the cuckoo's egg is a dull speckled-brown, very like that of a skylark. In the Natural History Museum collection there are six clutches of eggs of the hedge-sparrow, each containing a cuckoo's egg. The localities from which they come are as follows: (1) Brighton, (2) Hayward's Heath,

(3) South-west Lancashire, (4) North-west Cheshire, (5) and (6) Hampshire. In the case of No. 1 (Brighton) the cuckoo's egg is the counterpart of the hedge-sparrow's in texture and colour, though almost twice as large—a wonderful instance of mimicry. In all the other cases (Nos. 2-6) the cuckoo's egg is the ordinary dull speckled-brown—a striking contrast. In the case of two other species—the pied flycatcher (Silesia) and the redstart (Vaalkerstard), both of which lay blue eggs—the cuckoo imitates their colour, but the egg is much larger; in the nest, however, of a Danish redstart the cuckoo laid an egg of a pale mottled-drab. In the following instances the imitative colouring is very perfect, the eggs being generally double the size of those of the foster-parent: Lesser whitethroat, mottled greenish-gray (Halle, Saxony); Orphean warbler, white, pale greenish-blue, spotted (Malaga); garden warbler, buff-speckled (Brandenburg); blue-headed yellow wagtail, gray-speckled (Frankfort-on-Oder); barred warbler, pale mottled-green (Alsace); meadow-pipit, reddish-brown (North-west Cheshire); white wagtail, gray-speckled (Germany); linnet, white, greenish spots (Germany). In the case of the red-backed shrike or butcher-bird (Marne), the resemblance between the two eggs in size and in colouring—cream body-colour with reddish cloud at the upper end—is so remarkable that in this instance one might be pardoned for imagining that there had been some mistake.

In the following instances the cuckoo seems to have made no apparent effort to effect mimicry, but to have been contented to lay its normal brown-speckled egg: wren, white, with pinkish-brown spots (Pomerania); garden warbler white, buff blotches (Warwickshire); reed warbler, white, greenish spots (Middlesex); yellow-hammer, gray, dark pencilled marks (Surrey); cirl bunting, gray, dark markings and blotches (Surrey). After an examination of the above-mentioned specimens it is somewhat difficult to arrive at any conclusion as to the instinct or method of the cuckoo with regard to mimicry. Why does a Brighton cuckoo lay a blue egg, and a Hayward's Heath cuckoo (almost a neighbour) lay a brown egg, in a hedge-sparrow's nest? Is one cuckoo gifted with more brain power (and likewise a more varied assortment of colouring matter) than another cuckoo, or are the large eggs merely double yolks of the nesting-bird, as we sometimes find in the case of the ordinary farm-yard hen. Professor Newton, when writing on this subject in his *Dictionary of Birds* (1893), says at page 121: 'But a much more curious assertion has been also made, and one that at first sight appears so incomprehensible as to cause little surprise at the neglect it long encountered. Ælian, who flourished in the second century, declared (*De Nat. Anim.* III. xxx.) that the cuckoo laid eggs in the nests of those birds only that produced eggs like her own—a statement which is, of course, too general; but in

1767 currency was given to it by Salerne (*L'Hist. Nat. Ois.*, p. 42), who was hardly a believer in it; and it is to the effect, as he was told by an inhabitant of Sologne, that the egg of a cuckoo resembles in colour that of the eggs normally laid by the kind of bird in whose nest it is placed. In 1853 the same notion was prominently and independently brought forward by Dr Beldanus (*Nau- mania*, 1853, pp. 307-25), and in time became known to British ornithologists, most of whom were sceptical of its truth, as well they might be, since no likeness whatever is ordinarily apparent in the very familiar case of the blue-green egg of the hedge-sparrow and that of the cuckoo, which is so often found beside it.' Dr Beldanus based his notion on a series of cuckoos' eggs in his own cabinet, a selection from which he afterwards figured in illustration of his paper. This collection was seen by Professor Newton, who, after dismissing the supposition that the eggs were wrongly ascribed to the cuckoo, came to the conclusion that the mimicry must be accounted for by the law of natural selection and a hereditary tendency of the cuckoo to place its egg in the nest of a particular species.

The learned professor in the course of his interesting article states that one Herr Branne, a forester at Greitz in Reuss, shot a hen cuckoo just as she was leaving the nest of an Icterine warbler. In the oviduct of the cuckoo he found an egg coloured very like that of the warbler; and on looking into the nest he found an exactly similar egg, which there could be no reasonable doubt had just been laid by that very cuckoo. This instance, assuming its authenticity, would certainly go far to prove that, by some law or instinct of which we have little, if any, knowledge, the cuckoo is able to produce an egg resembling in colour and texture that of the bird in whose nest it is to be placed for hatching.

'THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH.'

No Knight rides forth upon a summer morn
To seek adventure for a day and year,
No drawbridge falls at summons of his horn,
No wrathful foe doth prove his sword and spear,
Nor battle giveth he for maid forlorn;
No seneschal doth bid a courteous cheer.

Though the old armour rusteth on the wall,
And the good sword hath now no power to bite,
No mailed heel ring through the quiet hall,
No charger paw the ground at morning's light,
Yet may he still do work not mean or small—
Still may he be a 'perfect, gentle Knight.'

Still lives the high ideal; still the strong
May help the weak, may succour the distressed,
Lighten the burden that the age's wrong
Lays on the wretched; still may he invest
His soul with knighthood, though no minstrel song
Greet his emprise or glory in his quest.

C. J. GRIFFIN.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



THE PROOF-READER.

By MICHAEL MACDONAGH.

THE REV. JAMES PYECROFT, in his little-known work entitled *Ways and Words of Men of Letters*, relates an amusing story told him by a printer.

'Really,' said the printer to him, 'gentlemen should not place unlimited confidence in the eyesight of our hard-worked and half-blinded readers of proofs; for I am ashamed to say that we utterly ruined one poet through a ludicrous misprint.'

'Indeed! And what was that unhappy line?'

'Why, sir, the poet intended to say:

See the pale martyr in his sheet of fire!

Instead of which, he was made to say:

See the pale martyr with his shirt on fire!

The reviewers, of course, made the most of so entertaining a blunder, and the poor poet was never heard of more in the field of literature.'

The proof-reader—who in this anecdote is held responsible for having nipped in the bud the promise of a rising young poet—is a personage who, though little known, perhaps, to the general public, fills an important and responsible position in all newspaper, publishing, and printing establishments. His duties may be briefly explained.

According as sections of a book or the articles and reports of a newspaper are put into type—or 'set,' to use the technical term—by the compositors, proofs of the matter are printed, and sent to the reader, who goes carefully through them, in search of wrongly-spelt words, mistakes in punctuation, ungrammatical expressions, turned letters, omissions of words, and other errors of a like nature, unwittingly perpetrated by the compositor in the hurry of the operation of putting the 'copy' into type. But that is not all. The proof-readers are also expected to see that statements of fact—historical, scientific, geographical, political—are correct, and to verify literary allusions and quotations.

In newspaper offices the proof-reader has to

bear the blame for what is popularly known as 'printers' errors.' The compositor, as a rule, follows rigidly the 'copy' given him to put into type. It is, of course, no business of his to verify the doubtful statements of a contributor or a reporter. But he is not even held responsible should any of the typographical errors which inevitably occur in the process of setting pass undetected into the printed newspaper. It is the proof-reader who is called to account by the editor for these incongruous and laughable misprints, of which the Rev. Mr Pyecroft gives an amusing illustration, and which are originally due to the compositor. For instance, some years ago the following apologetic explanation for a compositor's blunder appeared in a leading weekly literary journal published in London:

'In our last number, as we discovered unfortunately too late for correction, we announced that Mr John Stuart Mill's inaugural address lately delivered before the University of St Andrews had since been republished by him "in the form of a five shilling elephant." Even the most ardent believers in Mr Mill's powers among our readers will probably have received this announcement with some incredulity. The fact is that by an error of the press the word "elephant" was substituted for "pamphlet;" and the mistake—although the proof was read and re-read—unluckily escaped the corrector's eye.'

A proof-reader needs to be intelligent and widely read, diligent and painstaking, and possessed of a sharp, keen eye. He has often to discharge his onerous duties amid unfavourable and uncomfortable surroundings. The proof-reader's 'room' is generally some small and obscure closet off the composing-room. On the walls are pasted old proofs containing curious printers' errors underlined with blue pencil, and some pictures from the illustrated papers. The only book of reference in the room may be a well-thumbed dictionary. The readers—two, three, or four in number, according to the size and im-

portance of the newspaper—sit at desks or tables, with proofs before them, each with a boy—the well-known ‘printers’ devil,’ his clothes smeared with ink, oil, and paste—reading the copy from which the matter in the proofs has been ‘set’ by the compositors. Some of these boys acquire from long practice an amazing facility in deciphering even the most crabbed handwriting, and they race through the copy at so fast a pace that the readers are often sore pressed to keep up with them. But, worse than that, others of the boys gabble over copy, murdering the pronunciation, travestying the meaning, to the distraction and bewilderment of the proof-readers, who are filled with fear and anxiety lest an error should pass undetected. The jumble of voices as the boys rattle through their copy—leading articles, political speeches, advertisements, police court reports, descriptions of disasters, fashionable intelligence—produces effects that are often very amusing. Something like this may be heard through the long night in the proof-reader’s room:

‘We tell the Government that at the next General Election they will be overwhelmed by’—‘the waves, rising mountains high, swept the decks of the ill-fated ship; and the passengers in their wild terror’—‘will sell by auction at their Mart the well-appointed furniture and culinary effects removed from Bracebridge Hall’—‘after which the right hon. gentleman, the Leader of the Opposition, with characteristic elephantine attempts at humour, waxed depressingly merry over the announcement by the Prime Minister that’—‘a marriage is arranged, and will take place at the end of October, between the Hon. Robert Heron and Lady Mary Betty’—‘They were both sent to prison for twelve months, with hard labour.’

In the case of monthly magazines and weekly journals, proofs of contributions are sent to the authors; and ambiguous phrases, incomplete sentences, bad grammar, and errors of statement are queried by the proof-reader. His note of interrogation (?) on the margin of the proof opposite a doubtful point often saves a writer from that deep vexation which follows the discovery of an error too late for correction. But these measures of precaution are impossible in the case of a daily newspaper, for there are early trains and posts to be caught; and thus the gaiety of nations is contributed to by such startling and ludicrous renderings as made so sad a mess of Thomas Moore’s ‘Ode to the Spring:’

When I talk’d of the ‘dewdrops from freshly blown roses,’
The nasty things made it ‘from freshly blown noses’!
And once when, to please my cross aunt, I had tried
To commemorate some saint of her clique who’d died,
Having said he ‘had tak’n up in heav’n his position,’
They made it, he’d ‘taken up to heav’n his physician’!

But these blunders are not infrequently due to the bad writing of authors, and occasionally, too, to slips for which they themselves are responsible. Macaulay was very particular about his proofs.

He ‘could not rest until the lines were level to a hairbreadth, and the punctuation correct to a comma,’ as Sir George Trevelyan tells us. But he was once caught napping with disastrous consequences to his peace of mind. In attacking in the *Edinburgh Review* Gleig’s *Life of Warren Hastings*, he observed, through a slip of the pen, ‘that it would be unjust to estimate Goldsmith by the *Vicar of Wakefield*, or Scott by the *Life of Napoleon*.’ Macaulay, says his biographer, could imagine no greater calamity than to ‘pose before the world for three mortal months in the character of a critic who thought the *Vicar of Wakefield* a bad book.’ What the famous critic meant to condemn was Goldsmith’s *History of Greece*. He felt the slip so keenly that he actually wanted Macvey Napier, the editor, to publish a special edition of the *Edinburgh Review* to set him right with his readers; and his request being, of course, refused, he passed a miserable three months until the next issue of the ‘blue and yellow’ quarterly appeared with the correction.

Another curious slip of the pen of a similar character was made by Sir Archibald Alison in the passage in the *History of Europe* where he describes the funeral of the Duke of Wellington. In the list of pall-bearers appeared the name of Sir *Peregrine Pickle* for that of Sir *Peregrine Maitland*. When Alison read the proof he was furious with printer and proof-reader, ascribing the blunder to them; but the manuscript was looked up, and lo! the mistake was the historian’s.

Dean Stanley, who wrote a bad hand, confessed that when he got his proofs he felt ashamed of the infliction he imposed on the ingenuity and on the patience of the printer and proof-reader. ‘Nothing,’ said he, ‘enlivens an author so much when plodding through the weary pages he has written as the ingenious conjectures made by the printer to decipher what he has penned.’ He once got a proof of an article, in which he had made an allusion to a merchant of the Elizabethan era whose name he had forgotten, with a note from the proof-reader on the margin opposite the blank suggesting correctly that perhaps ‘So-and-so’ was the person referred to. ‘It showed,’ said the Dean, ‘that those to whom the pages are committed are not the mere mechanical interpreters of what is written.’

In the new edition of *Who’s Who?* the Bishop of Oxford confesses that ‘correcting proof-sheets’ is with him a ‘recreation.’ Indeed, his lordship has given as an excuse for publishing his *Lectures on Mediæval and Modern History* that ‘the love of correcting proof-sheets has become a leading passion with the author.’ To the professional proof-reader this declaration will hardly appeal with the note of absolute conviction. He, at least, finds little ‘recreation’ in his wary and watchful pursuit of compositors’ errors through columns upon columns of matter. And the worst of it is that he cannot leave behind him in his working-room this feverish anxiety to ferret out errors of the press. He is

so possessed of it that even at home he cannot read a newspaper or book with any degree of comfort. An old proof-reader told us once that, though he may be reading merely for pleasure, he finds himself searching for printers' errors to the neglect of the sense of the matter. 'It only needs a comma

or a semicolon to be omitted,' said he, 'a letter to be dropped or transposed, or even an "s" to be inverted—one of the most difficult mistakes to detect—to set me fumbling for a pencil in order that I may mark the mistake on the margin.'

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER III.—A PROSCRIBED JACOBITE.



I CANNOT describe the effect of my host's announcement, but assuredly it gave him sufficient ground for his mirth. To me 'twas both astounding and incredible; it seemed not less so to his daughter; and the pair of us could but look at each other and at him in puzzled amazement. For a minute he enjoyed our surprise, and then went on:

'Mrs Herbert you know already, Mr Holroyd; she is good enough to take care of this wilful child, and I dare say has her work.' He turned again to his daughter, still laughingly. 'But what is this, Kitty? Am I to apologise for a cold greeting to a kinsman?'

Thereat she advanced, her eyes downcast, and proffered me her hand. 'I am glad to see you so much recovered, sir,' she said in the low-pitched, musical voice that I remembered so well.

I took her hand, and was raising it to my lips, when Mr Morell interposed.

'Fie, fie! "Sir" to a cousin?' cried he. 'And your hand—is that convent schooling, Mrs Herbert? Your cheek, girl!'

She stole a swift glance, while the red deepened; and, for me, I confess that 'twas with an unwonted but most agreeable sensation that I availed myself of the paternal injunction to her, and lightly brushed her cheek. If this were one of the privileges, be sure I had no objection to my new relationship!

None the less were we still in the dark, and my host was in no hurry to enlighten us.

'Even yet you both appear to be rather doubtful,' quoth he, quizzing us.

'The fact itself is one with which I have no mind to quarrel,' said I. 'I am only wondering how it comes about.'

'Simply enough: two of your respective grandmothers happened to be sisters.'

'But—Morell?' To my certain knowledge, I had no relations of that name.

'A little disguise that may be dropped among friends! I have given you the lead, Cousin George. Surely I have not changed so greatly since our last meeting?'

The hint had set my mind working; the sense of something familiar in his handsome countenance and gallant, debonair manner returned to me with added strength; and suddenly the recollection

came. 'Twas that of a late autumn evening fourteen years back, when a long-legged boy had swung on a branch in a well-loved beech avenue up in Yorkshire, and waved an envious adieu to a cavalier as he rode away from the gates of Dunsyre House.

'Sir Charles Hollingworth!' I cried.

'Otherwise Dare-devil Charlie, you would say—Jacobite and proscribed rebel that is—exile that should be? Well, you have hit it, cousin. There is five hundred pounds on my head—and I am at your mercy.'

Now I marvelled that I should ever have failed to recognise him. My father's cousin and near neighbour, he had been the hero of my boyhood; I had seen much of him, and heard more. The byname was that of the Riding, and had been earned by a hundred wild escapades long before the chief of all—that by which he had lost title and estates and the right to breathe his native air. For, brave to a fault, he had been one of the few English Jacobites to take arms in the affair of the '45. After proclaiming James III. at the cross of our market-town, he had ridden at the head of a little band of tenants and servants to join the Young Chevalier at Manchester on his southward march to Derby, had cut his way through a company of dragoons that tried to intercept him, and had fought throughout the campaign that ended at Culloden. Thereafter he had made a daring escape to France, whence rumours of his doings had reached us from time to time. His wife had died in these early days of banishment, leaving one little girl; I could recall her as an imperious mite of four or five, with whom I had sometimes condescended to play. For the rest, such was the reputation of Sir Charles as an able and fearless conspirator that his name had been excluded from the Act of Indemnity lately passed by the clemency of His Gracious Majesty.

And now the exile was back in England, and by the strangest chance we had been brought together—to what end? At that moment Sir Charles's object did not trouble me, little likely though it were to be friendly to the monarch whose servant I was. Just then all my thoughts were of the past.

'Fourteen years ago!' I said. 'Yet I should not have forgotten you, Sir Charles. I tried to

ride your gray mare while you were indoors with the *pater*!—

'Twas the last time I saw dear old Bevil! And so you remember the gray?'—

'She almost threw me, and would have done so had you not come out and called to her. I was sent to bed in disgrace, but stole out and climbed the great beech by the gates to see you ride off to join the wild Highlandmen.'

'Brave days, lad! Poor Bride was killed under me at Culloden, and I—well, I had many a weary mile to trudge afoot before my neck was safe.'

So we ran on in the friendliest fashion, and none of us (save perhaps Mrs Herbert, who was placidly knitting) was unmoved by these old-time memories. Meanwhile we had drawn together round the fire, where I was comfortably seated in the warmest corner.

'But Cousin Kitty here,' I said presently—'her I have had the happiness to meet since then.'

She cast me a quick, meaning look—was it of warning or entreaty? 'Why, certainly,' said she. 'I was not too young to remember the great boy who played the tyrant over me, and made me cry by telling me that my father would be shot by the Duke, and at other times was good and taught me to ride his pony. I have been trying to find the likeness between you.'

'There is none,' I replied gravely. 'My nature, thanks to unceasing efforts, has entirely changed.'

'For the better?'

'It has been my hope. But I was not thinking of ancient history. I have seen you more recently, cousin.'

Again the same look from her eyes, while a shade of anxiety crossed her face; and I could not doubt that, for some reason, she wished to hide the fact of our meeting on the stair-head.

'Surely you are mistaken?' she suggested.

'Then I must have dreamt it—that last night you were one of my nurses.—Was it not so, Sir Charles?'

She had a pretty trick of blushing, and her rising colour told me that my guess was a good one—and also, if I were not in error, that my evasion did not displease her.

'Right, egad!' cried my host, with his engaging laugh. 'And a deal of nonsense you talked, too!'

'Truly? Well, my cousin must believe me that it is quite against my habit,' I said.

The afternoon sped as we sat there by the fire, conversing agreeably of old friends and familiar places in the kindly north-country, and latterly of the exile's adventures. They had been many and varied; he had undergone every vicissitude of fortune, from the highest court favour to neglect and the cold shoulder, and from responsible military commands to sharing a garret in the Luxembourg quarter with a brother-refugee; he had fought and intrigued in half the capitals of Europe; and I read the man wrongly if he had not comported himself through it all, good and

ill alike, with the same courage and imperturbable cheerfulness. Once only could I detect a trace of bitterness in his tone, and that was when he spoke of an enemy through whom he had lost the favour of Versailles and been deprived of his command.

'It would have mattered less had the fellow not been a Yorkshireman, too,' he said. 'But 'twas an old score between us, and he took advantage of his position to pay it in full. He was English ambassador to Paris then. To-day he holds a greater office.'

I could not but recognise, not without regret, that he must mean my chief, Lord Kynaston. It could be no other; indeed, I had myself been first recommended to my lord by my Yorkshire blood; and now I minded me of the bruit of some ancient rivalry, not unconnected with love, between him and my kinsman. Presently I had confirmation from Sir Charles.

'Yet I should not grumble,' he went on. 'After all, the score betwixt us is fairly even. I beat him in love; so far, he has beaten me in war. And perhaps the account is not closed. Who knows?'

Here, it may be, I should have mentioned my official relation towards my lord. The point was one of honour; there were reasons to the contrary; and before I could make up my mind the conversation had changed. As it befell, 'twas of small consequence in the upshot.

Hitherto, in truth, we had seemed to avoid (by design or otherwise) all reference to the curious situation in which chance had placed us. A little later, however, this reserve was broken by my host himself.

'Confess, George, that all this time you have been wondering why I have ventured back to England,' he said.

'Assuredly it seems foolhardy,' I admitted.

'A chance to mend one's fortune is worth some risk. And I have business on hand that promises so much. If it fail—why, there is always New England or Canada for Kitty and me!'

'But the danger?'

'Pooh! Danger has been my bedfellow for twenty years. Then this house—it has been lent to me by my good friend Mr Kennett—'tis quite secluded, and who is to suspect the rebel and outlaw in Mr Morell, a peaceable and retiring gentleman?'

I shook my head, unconvinced.

'Besides, to speak truth,' he continued, 'France is scarcely more healthy for me than England just now. La Pompadour—bless her!—is pleased to object to my manners. Come the worst, I don't know that I should not choose a quick exit on Tower Hill to the living death of the Bastille. Well, *vogue la galère*,' cried he, laughing, 'you will not betray me, Cousin George?'

My eyes sought those of Kitty. 'There can be no question of that betwixt Holroyd and Hollingworth,' said I.

'I did not doubt it for an instant, lad,' said he. 'As to yourself, you will not now refuse

to share our retreat for a few days—until, at least, you are quite better?’

‘Believe me, there is nothing I should like more,’ I assured him, and meant it. ‘But my business—already, indeed, I should be on my way to Bath.’

‘Tis not to be thought of in your present state,’ he said with decision. ‘You would never reach it, and Kitty and I could never forgive ourselves for any mishap. To-morrow, perhaps—or we might even find some means of sending a message for you, if that would serve.’

The proposal commended itself (at first sight) as a good compromise betwixt inclination and duty, but at this point its discussion was interrupted by a sudden clamour without; and next moment the door was thrown open, and a man, cloaked and booted for riding, entered hurriedly and not too ceremoniously.

‘The horses are waiting, Sir Charles.’ Then, seeing us, he broke off. ‘Oh! I crave pardon. Give you good-day, Mrs Herbert.—Your servant, Miss Kitty.—Yours, sir.’

The new-comer and I regarded each other with interest as Sir Charles introduced us in due form. He was a tall, well-favoured young fellow, with a countenance that expressed honesty and some obstinacy; and, as I had conjectured at once, he was the Mr Kennett of Langbridge whose name I had already heard. I hastened to render him my thanks for the great service that he had done me on the previous evening.

‘I cannot be too grateful to you and Sir Charles,’ I added.

‘The credit is wholly his,’ he returned, bowing.

‘Our meeting with Mr Holroyd was doubly fortunate,’ explained my host, ‘in that he proves to be a near kinsman of mine, and an old play-mate of Kitty’s.’

He showed some surprise, but made no remark; and then, with a word of apology, Sir Charles and he drew aside to the window and conferred together in a whisper. I seated myself again beside Kitty, who was deep in thought. After a little she leaned to me.

‘You will do me a favour, Cousin George?’ she asked in my ear.

‘Why, surely,’ said I.

‘Tis that you say nothing to my father of—of what you saw last evening,’ she went on hastily. ‘There are reasons, but I cannot explain at present. You will do it?’

I nodded my assent: her eyes appealed to me too eloquently to permit of hesitation. Yet I could not help wondering what the reasons were. Other and stranger fancies began to clamour for foothold in my brain in the few minutes that followed; but before I had leisure to sift them Sir Charles addressed us.

‘I am glad to find I can serve your purpose myself, George,’ said he. ‘We must ride to Bath at once—Mr Kennett and I—and if you care to

entrust me with a letter or a message, I can promise its safe delivery. Now, what say you?’

To be frank, the offer was not too welcome. You will understand my dilemma; for any message must be to my Lord Kynaston, and was bound to give Sir Charles an inkling of the truth; and thus the question of our relative positions, which I should have preferred to avoid until I could choose my own time and company, must be faced forthwith. True, I might forge an excuse for declining the present proposal. A moment’s consideration showed me that in honour I had no alternative save to accept it—and its consequences.

I did so with a proper assumption of eagerness. ‘A letter would be the better, perhaps,’ I added; ‘and were it not for this unlucky shoulder of mine’—and I touched my sling.

‘Oh, as to that,’ interrupted Sir Charles lightly, ‘Kitty there can be your clerk. The Sisters have taught her a good hand.’

‘Then if she will be so kind’—

‘Twill be a pleasure,’ she said, and hastened to get out the ink and paper.

I had the opportunity while she was so engaged to think over the wording of the letter. I made it as simple and brief as might be, and in effect it ran thus: That, having been waylaid in that vicinity by highwaymen on the previous evening, I had tried to cover the flight of the servant, and hoped that he had reached Bath safely with certain papers for my lord in his charge; that, for myself, I had been slightly wounded in the right shoulder (whence the writing by another hand), but had been succoured in time by two gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and since then had been hospitably entertained by one of them, Mr Morell, at the Dower-house of Langbridge; that I was now almost recovered; and, finally, that I begged his lordship, if Joseph had not arrived, to send a chaise thither for me without delay.

Now all this I spoke, so that Sir Charles should not miss a word, and meanwhile, of set design, kept my eyes on the fair scribe. Presently ’twas written down—and written, too, most speedily and well—and I made shift to scrawl my signature.

‘And the address, Cousin George?’ asked Kitty when the letter had been sealed.

The moment had come for which I had been waiting, and still I did not look up as I answered in the quietest tones that I could command:

‘This, if you please—“*To the Right Honourable the Lord Viscount Kynaston, at Combermere House.*”’

My expectation was fulfilled. The pen dropped from Kitty’s fingers, and she turned to me with an expression of utter amazement; for a full minute there was dead silence; I felt, rather than saw, the telling effect of my words upon the two men; and then the tension was broken by an exclamation from Kennett.

‘Kynaston! The Secretary of State!’

And at length I looked up. For Kennett I had

scarce a glance, albeit his excitement was plain enough: I was too much startled by the change in Sir Charles. He seemed a different man; his face was harder, sterner, and almost cruel; there was a light in his eyes that I can only compare

to the glitter of steel. Manifestly his mind was not running on the Christian virtues.

'Oh!' said he. 'A friend of yours, cousin?'

Then I burned my boats. 'I have the honour to be my lord's personal secretary,' I said.

ADDER BITES.



HE adder (*Vipera berus*) is still common in our woods and heaths in most parts of the country, though rarely seen owing to the fact that it dwells among thickets of bramble, gorse, and other bushes, into the recesses of which, when approached, it generally flees so noiselessly and swiftly that the casual passer-by is not even aware of its presence. Many may be found on carefully searching in the neighbourhood of most seaside holiday resorts—among others, Folkestone, Seaford, Bournemouth, Bude, and Clovelly; while in parts of the New Forest they are very numerous. They abound also on many Scotch moors.

Before relating the effects of four bites which the writer has received from these venomous little reptiles, it may be as well to describe briefly their appearance and the mechanism of their poison-apparatus, as these may not be familiar to some readers. Adders attain usually a length of about twenty inches, very seldom reaching two feet. The writer has seen one which measured twenty-seven and a quarter inches, while one has been recorded in the *Field* measuring twenty-nine inches.

They are stoutly built; the head is flat, and broad behind; the tail is short and blunt. The reptile is of a somewhat 'depressed' form, and can flatten itself out considerably. The ground colour is usually some shade of pale gray or brown, sometimes brick-red, or even almost black. On the head is a V-shaped dark mark, or rather pair of converging lines; this, while often quoted in books as a means of recognition of the species, is anything but conspicuous. An adder may, however, always be recognised by the continuous chain of dark-brown, lozenge-shaped blotches running along the whole length of its back. This chain varies somewhat in different specimens as to breadth and vividness, but is invariably present; it is, on the other hand, entirely lacking in the harmless grass or ringed snake (*Tropidonotus natrix*). There is also a row of dark spots along each side.

The so-called 'poison-bags' are modified salivary glands. They lie behind the snake's eyes, where the head is broadest; the venom (which closely resembles the saliva of human beings and other animals in appearance, and has strong digestive properties) is conveyed by two thin tubes or ducts to the fangs. The latter are two long, slender, extremely sharp-pointed teeth, one on

each side of the upper jaw (or rather, one in each upper jaw, for the jaws of a snake are divided into two parts at the middle, the animal thus having two upper jaws and two lower ones). The fangs are hollow, and near the tip of each is a perforation. When an adder wishes to poison its prey—a field-mouse, for instance—or an enemy, it opens its mouth widely, erects its fangs (which ordinarily lie back along the palate), and plunges them into the flesh of its victim with a rapid stabbing motion; muscles compress forcibly the venom-glands, driving a tiny drop of venom down each fang, from the tip of which it is squirted into the wound through the above-mentioned perforation. The blow is given and the head withdrawn with such swiftness that one's eye cannot follow the action. The bite may be delivered from a distance equal, at the most, to half the snake's length. The venom attacks chiefly the nerve centres which govern respiration; and if the victim be a small animal it undergoes a process of suffocation until it dies.

The English adder—or, as it should be called, the northern adder, for it ranges over the north of Europe and through Siberia to the eastern extremity of Asia—has not such strong venomous powers as some other species of viper of its own size in hot countries, such as *Vipera aspis* (the southern adder), *Vipera cerastes* (the horned viper), and the deadly little *Echis carinata* (or carpet viper); but its bite occasionally causes death. Five cases of this have been recorded in print during the last forty years, and others have occurred. The effect on a healthy adult is, however, though severe for some hours or days, usually transitory.

The writer has been bitten four times by adders within a period of thirteen months; the effects were in all cases confined to the ensuing week, and no after-effects whatever have been felt.

On August 16, 1897, while I was enjoying a picnic with some friends in a field near Alfriston, Sussex, on the verge of a wood, a fine adder was discovered basking in the sunshine a few yards from our party. This one, a very handsome specimen, of a pale-yellowish hue, with well-defined black markings, and a quiet individual, I placed in a small tin without difficulty. After the feast was over I strolled along the wood's edge in the other direction; I had not gone ten paces when another large adder lay at my feet. It was of a dingy hue, and I did not

perceive it among the dead leaves and dry grass until it commenced to retreat. I essayed to place this one with the other, but the tin would not hold two. I then tried to tie it up in a handkerchief—a feat which I had once managed, by dint of careful manipulation, to perform successfully; but the present specimen was of an unusually truculent disposition, and, my hand slipping, struck me on a finger. As the reptile fell from my hands it bit me again on the knee. I scarcely felt these minute puncturings, but was a little alarmed, for in similar cases of which I had read the sufferers had fainted within a few minutes, and were laid up with fever and delirium for from one to three weeks.

However, recollecting old Gilbert White's advice, I caused a handkerchief to be tied very tightly round the upper part of the arm near the shoulder, and, repairing to a village shop, anointed the wound on the finger (after having sucked it well from the moment of the bite) with salad-oil, drinking also half-a-pint of that nauseous fluid.

I then walked home, a distance of five miles, the hand and arm swelling meanwhile to a huge size. During the next three days this swelling gradually subsided. I was otherwise perfectly well from the moment of the bite till the recovery of the affected member, being able to take long walks. The bite on the knee had no effect whatever, not having been delivered on a fleshy part.

I suffered much more severely on the next two occasions, especially on the last one, when no treatment could be adopted until some time after the accident.

On October 12, 1897, while handling a couple of newly-caught adders at a dealer's establishment, my attention was drawn away from the reptiles, and I received a bite on one of my fingers. This time I did not follow White's advice, which I had heard ridiculed by a doctor as a sort of 'old mother's remedy,' and discarded oil. By the advice of a well-known naturalist I ligatured the finger itself, instead of the higher part of the arm as before. The finger quickly became so black and swollen that the binding had to be loosened.

I walked briskly for half-an-hour, but then began to feel 'queer,' and retired within doors. Violent vomiting then set in, and recurred at intervals for about four hours. Breathing became difficult; my voice lost power, becoming very faint and wheezy; and my whole body was cramped and pained. About two hours after the bite I became quite prostrate; within four or five hours I began to recover rapidly, and on the third day was able to go for a short walk. The arm and hand subsided to their normal size within a week. They had, as on the previous occasion, swollen considerably.

The doctor who attended me this time forbade lively motion for two or three days, lest blood-clots should be released from the affected limb and

enter the body, and caused hot-water bottles to be applied to my feet. His treatment included also the employment of various drugs; but the natures and uses of these it is not for a layman to explain.

It has been ascertained that a man may, by injecting into the system a very minute quantity of snake-venom, and repeating the operation frequently, the quantity being slightly increased on each occasion, render himself proof against the effects of the bite of the species, the venom of which he employed; but I have been told by a high authority on the subject that when a full dose has suddenly entered the circulation, as in the case of a chance bite, the effects of a future bite are not in the least degree mitigated.

On August 31, 1898, I was walking along a hedgerow in a valley not far from Seaford, Sussex, looking for specimens of the harmless grass snake, when I heard a small snake glide swiftly through some long grass into a bush. The hedge being in a low plain, intersected by numerous water-courses—a locality in which I had seen many grass snakes previously, but not a single adder—I supposed that it was a young *natrix*, the latter species frequenting low situations in the neighbourhood of water (in which it delights to bathe, and obtains the frogs and fish on which it subsists), while the adder prefers, as a rule, higher and drier situations. I therefore waited for a few minutes, and then crept quietly to the spot again. Once more I heard, but could not see, the escaping reptile; but with the over-confidence bred of much experience in snake-catching, I made a quick grab through the undergrowth, and managed to seize the snake. On withdrawing it from the herbage I discovered, to my surprise, that I was holding a lively little adder, about a foot long, by the middle of its body, and ere I could drop it its fangs pierced my thumb.

This time there was no one near to assist me, so that the arm had to remain unligatured. I hoped, however, that by vigorous walking I could reach a village a mile away. In a few moments I felt uneasy, and had a presentiment of severe effects to ensue. Before I had walked a hundred yards an unpleasant burning or smarting sensation spread over the skin of my face, surrounding objects swam before my eyes, and I could hardly keep on my feet. I fell down, but rose and tried to continue walking; I fell a second time, and rose again, but could only proceed a few paces; yet a third time I repeated the attempt, but in vain. Being now quite helpless physically, I stretched myself across the road, in order to attract the attention of passers-by—knowing well that a horse will not willingly pass over a prostrate man. I was presently picked up and taken home in a cart.

A doctor who was called in failed to hear my heart beating with a stethoscope, nor could he feel any motion in my pulse. I was, in fact, on

the verge of a fatal collapse of the heart's action. Sight was quite gone for the time being. Yet, though I was incapable of any motion, and apparently insensible, my mind was during all this time clear, and I understood where I was and what had happened; I could also hear fairly distinctly. Brandy was administered in small doses forcibly, in order to stimulate the heart's action. Vomiting was not nearly so violent or prolonged on this occasion as in the case of the previous bite. The hand and arm became swollen in a similar manner, subsiding within a week.

From the above prostrate condition I recovered rapidly; on the third day I was able to crawl half a mile; the next day six miles, though with difficulty, the heart being still very weak; on the fifth day I was so far recovered as to be able to walk twelve miles over hilly country without resting.

I would give the following advice to any one unlucky enough to get bitten by an adder: (1) Enlarge the wound by making two cross-cuts with a sharp knife, and suck hard. The venom does no harm when taken into the stomach; it is only when injected into the circulation that it is injurious. (2) If the wound be on a limb, tie a ligature as tightly as possible above the wound—that is, nearer to the body. (3) Apply to the wound some crystals of permanganate of potash. (4) Drink some sal-volatile, or, if this be not to hand, brandy or whisky may be used, taken in *small doses at intervals*. On no account give large quantities of these latter, in spite of the popular notion to the contrary.

With regard to the common idea that alcohol taken in excess is an antidote to snake-venom, the case of a working-man who was bitten several years ago by an adder in the Warren, near Folkestone, and died in two hours, is worthy of note. The doctor who attended him stated that the man's blood was in a very bad state, owing to excessive indulgence in alcoholic stimulants, and that this was why he succumbed so quickly.

Although a few adult persons have died as the result of adders' bites, such a consequence is not at all usual. A great many cases have occurred

of children being bitten in the hands and feet, and completely recovering from the effects in a few days. When an adult has died, he or she has probably been in very poor health at the time.

I have never been able to observe the effect of a captive adder's bite on small rodents, for the simple reason that these reptiles will not feed in captivity, but will starve until they die. They are by no means of a fierce or malevolent disposition, as a rule, and only use their fangs either to procure food or in self-defence. I have known of four mice (white) which lived for a fortnight in a cage, kept at a high temperature, containing seven adders, without being bitten; the rodents, never having seen snakes before, felt no fear of them, but ran over them, and burrowed in the earth beneath them, provoking only an occasional hiss of displeasure. The death of a bitten mouse is most probably as quick and painless as that of a rat or guinea-pig bitten by a six-foot rattlesnake in the reptile-house at the 'Zoo.'

In conclusion, it may not be amiss to offer a word of warning to those amateurs of snake-keeping, of slight experience, who desire to keep and make pets of adders—I have known of several such. Not only will adders refuse to feed (on this point all observers are in accord), but they cannot be depended upon not to bite their owner. Many specimens will, it is true, after a few days of captivity, lose some of their natural timidity, and even allow themselves to be handled gently; but at any moment a quick motion may alarm them, or some accident may cause them to be roughly handled, when they will bite one in self-defence. Their bite cannot be foreseen, and it cannot be evaded; it is far too swift and sudden. The extreme timidity characteristic of them is owing to the fact that they have in the wild state, especially when young, many enemies in the form of carnivorous animals, such as badgers and hedgehogs, upon whose tough, gristly noses, or thick covering of hair or spines, their tiny fangs are of no avail, and of birds, which kill the reptiles by breaking their backs with a blow from bill or wing. Pheasants in particular relish very young adders.

SECRET DESPATCHES.

CHAPTER III.



WAS wondering in an incurious sort of way what there might be hidden behind the curtain, when the door opened and a stranger made his appearance. 'My customer that is to be,' I remarked to

myself as I stood up.

'Mr Simkinson, I believe?' he said, with a bow, as he shut the door and came forward. He spoke with scarcely a trace of a foreign accent.

'The same, sir, at your service,' I replied as I returned his bow.

He was a tall, thin, rather distinguished-looking man, with a keen, resolute face, black deep-set eyes, prominent brows, and a square jaw—evidently a man of marked personality and of considerable force of character.

'Pray be seated, sir,' he said as he waved me to the chair from which I had just risen and drew up the other for himself. Then leaning forward a

little way, with a hand planted on either knee, and, as it were, pinning me to the spot with his piercing eye, he said, 'If I am not mistaken, sir, you are the bearer of certain papers which were entrusted to you yesterday by a young lady who found herself under the disagreeable necessity of having to break her journey at Amiens. Is it not so?'

So taken aback was I that for a few moments all I could do was to sit and stare at him in tongue-tied amazement.

When at length words came to me, all I could find to say was, 'It may or it may not be as you say. But what then?'

'Merely this: that I shall feel obliged by your delivering the papers in question into my hands.'

'In the first place,' I replied, 'I have not admitted my possession of any such papers as you refer to. In the second, supposing them to be in my keeping, what proof have I that you are the person to whom they should be given up? But all this has nothing to do with the object which brought me here. Where is Monsieur Legard, and where?'

'—is the customer he professed to have found for you?' A faint smile lighted up his fallow visage. 'I at once admit that there is no such person, and that, in point of fact, you have been made the victim of a harmless ruse. All we want from you is the packet of papers of which we are well assured you are the bearer, and which, I give you my word of honour, would have been delivered into my hands twenty hours ago had not our emissary's journey been so unfortunately interrupted.'

As it seemed impossible any longer to doubt that he was the man for whom the packet was intended, I made no more ado, but inserting my hand into the breast-pocket of my under coat, drew it out and handed it to him with a bow.

He took it with another bow, remarking as he did so, 'A thousand thanks. I shall remain your debtor as long as I live.'

A moment later he gave a violent start. 'Ah! the envelope is broken!' he exclaimed. 'Is this your doing, sir?'

His tone had suddenly changed to one of stern inquiry, almost of menace. His heavy brows had come together, and his keen black eyes, like two points of polished steel, were bent full upon me, as if they would fain read me through and through.

'No fingers but my own have touched the packet since it came into my keeping,' I said coldly. The abrupt change in his manner had nettled me.

'Have you perused the contents, may I ask?'

I bowed gravely. 'If you will read the remark on the envelope, which the writer evidently had not time to finish, it will be manifest to you that if I was to deliver the packet to the person for whom it was intended, I had no option save

to open the envelope and seek inside for the missing address—which, however, I failed to find there.'

'But these despatches are of the greatest political importance, and contain secrets which'—

He stopped abruptly, as if afraid of saying more than might be advisable.

'That is no concern of mine,' I brusquely remarked. 'The confounded things were thrust upon me without my consent being asked, and I have already explained my reason for glancing through them.'

I was not sure that he was attending to me.

'Were their contents to become known the Cause might suffer an irreparable blow, and more than one reputation would be irretrievably shattered.' He seemed speaking less to me than to himself.

'I beg to remind you, monsieur, that I am an English gentleman,' I said stiffly, and with that I turned a shoulder towards him.

He got up abruptly, and remarking, 'Your unfortunate action, Mr Simkinson, has placed both yourself and me in a very awkward position,' crossed the room and disappeared behind the curtain of which mention has been made.

Following on this, a minute later, came a confused murmur of several voices, also from behind the curtain, of which, however, I could not distinguish a word. Annoyed at the trick which had been played me, and feeling that the sooner I got away the better, I rose and crossed to the door on tiptoe, but only to find, on trying it, that I was a prisoner. The knowledge came upon me with a shock, and I went back to my chair with a feeling of uneasiness such as I had not experienced before.

By this time the murmur of voices had ceased and all was silent. I was still wondering what might be hidden behind the curtain, when a bell rang somewhere, and on the instant the curtain divided in the middle, the halves being drawn apart by some invisible agency, and then to my startled gaze was revealed a scene which haunted my dreams many a time afterwards.

In the space which the curtain had hidden, and seated on chairs behind a long baize-covered table, were seven men—figures I ought perhaps to call them, seeing that the face of each, from forehead to mouth, was covered with a black crape mask, with orifices to see through, and that the form of each was shrouded in an ample robe of black serge, corded at the waist. The president of this singular assembly, who had three of his colleagues seated on either hand, and who alone wore no mask, was the man with whom I had held the brief colloquy recorded above. In the interim he had donned a robe similar to that of the others, in addition to which he wore a crimson scarf fastened over his left shoulder. On the table in front of him lay

two crossed daggers with long, narrow blades. The room was lighted by half-a-dozen candles stuck into a hoop pendent from the ceiling.

All these particulars photographed themselves on my brain in a few brief seconds. I had started to my feet at the instant the curtain parted, and there I stood, staring like the utterly dumfounded being that I was.

While I stood thus, and before a word was spoken on either side, a strange question put itself unbidden to me.

At the date to which this narrative refers, the name of a certain notorious personage, now some years dead, was very much in the mouths, not of Frenchmen only, but of all interested in public affairs throughout Europe. The person in question, together with his celebrated black charger, had taken a strong hold on the imagination of his compatriots, and at one time it seemed not unlikely that, by means of an audacious *coup d'état*, he might have carried the army with him, and have landed himself on the giddy pinnacle of a dictatorship. In any case, it was a well-ascertained fact that he had confederates in most European capitals, London, of course, included. Was it *his* cause, I now asked myself, which I had unwittingly aided and abetted in acting as the bearer of certain despatches of which the French police had made such a determined attempt to obtain possession? I could scarcely doubt that it was so.

Rising in his place, the president now addressed me, speaking in French, to which language what subsequently passed between us was confined.

'I have explained to my colleagues, monsieur,' he began, 'under what circumstances the packet of which you were the bearer came into your hands (although to more than one of us the facts of the affair were known a number of hours ago), and also for what reason you were led to break open the envelope and peruse the documents enclosed therein. After consideration, the decision at which we have unanimously arrived is, to administer to you the oath of secrecy which is sworn to by every one who affiliates himself to that noble Cause to the furtherance of which we have devoted our lives, and which we are prepared to advocate *à la mort*, should the need for doing so arise. The oath in question once taken, the penalty for an infraction of any of its provisions is death.'

I had resumed my seat by this time. What-

ever perturbation I might feel—and I admit that my knees shook a little under me—I was not going to let it be seen. Clearing my voice after a few moments, I said, 'But supposing I object to take the oath in question, what then?'

'In that case, monsieur, we are likely to have the pleasure of your company for an indefinite time to come. We cannot, of course, compel you to take the oath; but, provided you do not see your way to do so—*eh bien!* here you are, and here you will have to remain. We cannot afford to let you go. You will have to stay as our guest, whether you like it or not, till it suits our purpose to set you at liberty; and when that will be no one here can say.'

Although he spoke in such quiet, level tones, there was that about him which drove home the conviction that he fully meant everything he said.

Here was a pretty kettle of fish! As a married man, with an expectant wife at home, and as a business man with four important appointments booked for the morrow—leaving the future out of question—the prospect might well appal me. And the worst of it was that I saw no possible way of helping myself. I had walked blindfold into the net which had been spread for me, and I must perforce remain where I was till it should please my captors to let me go. I should be missed at home and from my customary haunts, and presently there would be a hue-and-cry after me. But what could the police do in such a case? They would be without the slightest clue to work upon. Doubtless the cabman who had brought me there was in the pay of these masked scoundrels. Although shut up in the heart of London, I was as far removed from help as if cast away in the midst of some tropical desert.

But, on the other hand, all that was asked of me in order to bring about my release was to bind myself by a certain promise; and, however much I might object to doing so in the abstract, the peculiar circumstances in which I found myself surely rendered such a step not merely justifiable, but absolutely imperative on my part. First of all, however, it would be needful to satisfy myself that my taking the oath would involve me in no ulterior responsibilities, nor serve to identify me in any way with the particular cause, whatever its nature might be, with which my jailers seemed so closely identified.



SOME MARVELS OF 1900.

By Mrs J. E. WHITBY.



AMONG the many astonishing sights which the visitor to the Paris Exhibition of 1900 will enjoy, not the least surprising will undoubtedly be those of the Sea Palace and the Maréorama.


The Palace of the Sea—a title, perhaps, a little too suggestive of Margate and the Hall by the Sea—was imagined by Monsieur I. Françon, and will be executed from the plans of the architect Charles Finot, made from the sketches and designs of that well-known painter, Paul Simons. This immense building, capable of holding six thousand persons, will contain a sheet of water nearly four hundred feet long by about two hundred, upon which will manœuvre a fleet of French men-of-war of the cruiser class, and of the latest design. This squadron will go through various evolutions—bombarding the coasts, attacking and defeating imaginary enemies, escaping from destruction, and representing, in short, all the details of a naval combat. It will easily be understood that it is at present impossible to give complete particulars, or, indeed, to explain by what mechanical means these men-of-war, sixteen feet long, will go through their evolutions automatically, pointing their electric projectiles and firing their guns. We must be content, for the time being, to know that the inventor intends to make good use of torpedoes and submarine mines, and that ships will be burnt and sunk in such a way as to give a complete illusion of reality. Thanks to a cleverly managed optical deception, this tank of only a few thousand square yards will present to the onlooker the semblance of a limitless ocean, the eye being so tricked that it will fail to see the opposite crowd of spectators.

But this sheet of water, with its burden of floating war-engines for defence and destruction, will not be the only attraction to be offered to the public. It is, indeed, only the ceiling, so to speak, of a second floor, where greater marvels will be prepared to surprise and astound the sightseer. By means of an ingenious arrangement of the diving-bell the visitor will descend underground to a depth of twenty feet, when he will find himself in an enormous glass receptacle with transparent sides, covered and filled with water. Here he will probably be conscious of the mixed sensations of astonishment, fear, and delight, for he will find himself apparently at the bottom of the sea. All around him will spring, in its fairy-like fantastic form, that luxuriant and unknown vegetation which ocean conceals in its bosom. He

will be able to feast his eyes on forests of beautiful seaweeds; to examine, with a curious mind, madrepores and corals; and to watch and inspect an infinite variety of fish and different forms of marine life. Into the depths of this admirably simulated representation of the real ocean divers will descend from time to time to show their methods of working; and pearl-fishers, specially recruited from the East, will take their graceful plunges as though really at their hazardous task of exploring the sea's profundities for the jewels for beauty's adornment. These subterranean glass galleries will be lighted by electricity, and the spectacle should be both instructive and interesting.

The Maréorama is an extremely ingenious and clever application of the panoramic principle, only in this case the idea is greatly developed and given a certain amount of life. The inventor, Monsieur Hugo d'Alesi, does not content himself with simply showing the sea to the public; he takes them on it, contriving to give a perfect illusion of a sea-voyage, the route taken being *via* Marseilles, Sfax, Naples, Venice, and Constantinople. The visitors—or, rather, the travellers—are to be placed on an extremely well-represented steamer, fitted with masts, rigging, and smoking funnel, and furnished with a crew, who will carry out the imaginary necessary manœuvres. After the supposed bustle of departure, the panoramic pictures will unroll themselves before the supposititious tourists, giving all the impression of passing scenery. These pictures are forty-six feet high and over three thousand feet long. Every one knows the phenomenon that the movement of an object which completely fills the field of vision gives the motionless spectator the impression of personal movement; and it is thus that the Maréorama gives a perfect illusion of a real sea-voyage. Various incidents have been arranged to occur on the imaginary journey to give a still further air of realism. Thus, the steamer will meet and pass through a naval squadron, and there will be many occurrences to impart local colour. At Sfax there is to be an embarkment of the harem of a rich Eastern potentate, with an accompaniment of slaves of various countries; and at Naples the traditional boatmen will come on board to sing and dance the *tarantella*. To make the expedition complete, there is even to be a storm at sea. It only remains for those possessed of more imagination than their fellows to suffer the usual ill consequences of a sea-voyage to render the enterprise exact in all its details.

THE RED FLAG.

‘OOD morning, Jean,’ I said, popping up my head above the wall that divided our two gardens. ‘How are things to-day!’

My neighbour, never a very amiable fellow at the best of times, scowled at me with more than his usual ferocity, and there was a triumphant note of malice in his voice as, flinging down his spade and crossing his arms over his chest, he came down to the wall, and, pushing his ugly face as near mine as he could conveniently get it, growled out, ‘Better to-day, *nom d'un chien*. At last our *sacré* Government has made up its mind. The Territorials are called out, not for the usual thirteen days this time, but for business, everybody says. And, please God, we shall soon show you English and your pig of a Monsieur Chamberlain in particular, that France is ready to avenge the insults offered to her from any quarter. So, Monsieur l'Anglais,’ he went on, ‘you had better be getting packed, for you won't have much time to waste when all you spies get the order to quit.’

This eloquent Gallic outburst did not in the least astonish me. Fashoda was on every French tongue, though we English residents took good care never to mention the name except in the privacy of our homes or when forced into discussing the matter by some bellicose Frenchman; and Jean, who came under this category, had several times wrangled with me lately over the actions of our respective countries, and the iniquities of the poor Colonial Secretary in particular, who, my neighbour insisted, in common with most French people of his class, was the real author of all the trouble. But I had never seen the good man so very wrathful or so much in earnest before, and I thought I would give him a Roland for his Oliver; though I little knew how it would all end.

Jean was a foreman painter, and lived in a cottage near my house in sunny Brittany, and, like all Bretons, he hated the English with a holy hatred; although, like the rest of his compatriots, he lived chiefly on English money, and it would have been a bad day for them all had the *colonie anglaise* departed or the trade with Southampton ceased. His little strip of garden marched with the end of mine; and every Sunday, after early mass, he did a little perfunctory digging and planting of sundry consumptive-looking flowers and vegetables, accompanied by much chatter, cigarette-making, and expectoration. It was a harmless way of spending Sunday morning, and provided much occupation and amusement for his children, who always spent the weekly Thursday holiday from the village school in scratching up everything that their father had previously planted at the cost of so much tobacco and

natural moisture. Like all good Bretons, he washed but once a week and scorned to go to bed strictly sober. We had been neighbourly enough until Fashoda burst like a thunder-clap over our part of the world; then Jean caught the war fever like the rest of the café politicians, inspired by the halfpenny boulevard rags, and he used to let off steam at me whenever he had the chance. I rather enjoyed drawing him; the wall was a good high one!

‘Bah, my friend!’ I retorted when his outburst was over, shrugging my shoulders in the most approved French style; ‘your Territorial troops are no good; few of them have handled a Lebel rifle as yet. And as to us spies, as you call your benefactors, we should be right enough; why, long before you good Bretons down here had rubbed the cider out of your eyes and discovered that war had begun, an English squadron would be off your coast, and your precious town bombarded or occupied and held to ransom. By the way,’ I continued, ‘are you a Territorial, friend Jean?’ This was too much for my ‘friend Jean.’ His eyes blazed, and he ground his teeth and hissed out words of weird abuse, of which no language is more redundant than the French. ‘Yes, pig-dog of an Englishman, I am a Territorial,’ he ended up with, ‘and I hope that the good God will give me a chance to make you eat your words, you’—But as I thought this was getting past the argumentative stage, I retired, and was soon out of reach of his deep, booming voice, that continued to roll choice curses out at me as long as I was within earshot. Nor did I hear that delectable sound again or set eyes on his scowling face for many days, and then it was under circumstances that I little dreamed of when I drew him so successfully that Sunday morning ‘over the garden wall.’

I heard, indeed, from one of his children that ‘papa was a soldier now,’ and so I knew that he was one of the thirteen hundred reservists, or ‘Territorials,’ that had been called out to reinforce the regiment that garrisoned the fort. But beyond that bit of news, which did not interest me, I heard nothing more of him, and I forgot his existence.

Marchand stuck at Fashoda, and we got out our reserve squadron, as all the world knows, and there was much warlike activity and feverish attempts to man the forts and put their coasts in a proper state of defence by the French—how unsuccessfully only those on the spot know. War was considered imminent, and the people showed their real feelings towards us foreigners in many acts of rudeness and discourtesy. So the English colony was packed and ready to flit, and kept themselves to their houses and gardens as much as possible.

Some of us, myself amongst the number, who disliked being 'cribbed, cabined, and confined,' and could not give up our country walks and roamings, took to carrying arms as a precaution, for in lonely places bands of men coming home from work were very prone to give vent to their feelings in violent abuse of any solitary Englishman they might come across, and from words to blows and knives is a short step in foreign countries; but the mere sight of a revolver scatters a band of braves like chaff when their attentions become too pressing, and it had been found very useful on more than one occasion. There was no necessity to load—the sight of it was sufficient; but I, being an old soldier and used to firearms, always loaded mine, as I held that it was no good pretending unless you were prepared to shoot if driven to it, and I lived to congratulate myself on my opinion.

Fishing of all and every kind has always been one of the great pleasures of my life; and although streams were wanting in my neighbourhood, and I had consequently to forego the pursuit of the wily trout, I made shift to enjoy myself immensely with the big bass that haunted the swirling waters round the rocky points with which the coast abounded. It was dangerous work, however, unless you were thoroughly acquainted with the ins and outs of the tide and the quickest and safest way of getting out of danger; for at certain spring-tides the water rose no less than forty feet, and came in over the rocks like a racehorse, and it was easy enough to find yourself cut off on a miniature island rapidly being covered by the water, where a few minutes before you were standing at the end of a promontory with a seemingly easy retreat open behind you by which to gain the cliffs. Add to this the rapidity with which the sea would get rough, and the long rollers on quite calm days suddenly assume huge size, and leap up and overwhelm with a torrent of creaming water places high up on the cliffs, to all appearances quite safe and out of their reach, and you have a sport not lightly to be entered upon except by those thoroughly alert and conversant with all its dangers.

One special place there was, remote from the habitations of man, and my favourite spot. It was a narrow promontory some five hundred yards or so long. It stuck out abruptly from the cliffs, and sloped gently downwards toward its extremity. It was used as a rifle-range by the troops in summer, the targets being placed in line across it at the end, about fifty yards from the edge of the cliff. It was grass-grown except the part behind the targets, which, being sea-swept at very high tides, was water-worn and bare rock. The cliff at the end was not high, and all round the base were strewn huge boulders. These were uncovered to a certain extent at low tide, and it was in the churning water round

them that the big fish loved to play. In winter it was a grand place for sport. There was no firing then, and I used to climb down and fish off the boulders for an hour or two until the rising tide drove me up over the cliff, out of reach of its hungry clutches.

French targets, I must explain, are oblong iron frames covered with white linen. The markers sit in a hole in front of them, and after each shot stop up the hole made by the bullet by sticking a piece of white paper over it, signalling its value at the same time. On the range I am describing no stop-butts were used, as there was nothing but the open sea beyond; thus the bullets swept freely down the slope, shaving the edge of the cliff in their flight, and finally losing themselves in the blue sea beyond. There was a little stone shelter on the flank and behind the line of targets. In this a lookout-man was stationed, armed with a small red flag on a slender pole. He generally sat with his back to the wall, dosing in the sun. His duty, I believe, was to wave his flag if anything happened to stop the firing, such as a fishing-boat coming within range, or anything of that kind; but this was of rare occurrence, I imagine; there were too many reefs and treacherous, sunken rocks round the point to make it a fashionable resort for boats. The lookout post was a sinecure, and, in consequence, much in request with those good soldiers of the Republic who preferred repose to their more active duties, and they were not in a minority.

This shooting took place in spring and summer, however; in winter the bleak headland, with its out-of-date fort—curiously placed at its wrong end, and thus useless even had it been of modern design—was deserted. Then the gulls hovered and screamed and fought over some dainty bit of offal, and the cormorants and divers fished in peace, undisturbed by noisy rifle or ringing bugle.

Except the birds, there was not a living thing to be seen as, in the early morning some ten days after my dispute with Jean, I made my way along the range, past the empty holes wherein the markers sat when the targets were up, to a spot in the cliff where I could clamber down what is called by alpine climbers, I believe, a 'chimney,' and thus gain the uncovered rocks below. This chimney was the only difficult part of the business, for, though it was not very high, it had no nice iron staples by which to descend, as in a fashionable and self-respecting chimney, but merely awkward knobs and cracks in the walls, which afforded very poor holding to a man encumbered with rod and basket, and wearing sea-boots and heavy coat, as I of necessity was in winter. However, I got down safely, as usual, and clambered over the rocks until I reached the water's edge.

The sea was calm, as it generally was at low tide, but I knew from its colour, and the sullen roar that came from the reefs and islands far

out, that there was a heavy swell outside, and that I should have to retreat in good time if I did not want to be caught napping and be swept away into the boiling surf that would assuredly replace the present deceitful calm when the tide rose.

I had fished for about an hour, when, to my amazement, I heard a bugle-call sound, and before I had quite grasped the meaning of it, there came ominous whistlings over my head, followed almost instantaneously by the crackling of rifles—not the ordinary shots of a rifle-range, singly, or in twos and threes, but a regular fusillade, as if from machine-guns or magazine-rifles. Who the dickens was it, I wondered, that could be shooting at this time of year? The regiment, I knew, had finished their musketry practice long since; and for the life of me I couldn't think what was the meaning of this bombardment. My conjectures were pleasantly interrupted at this point, however, by a fish taking my bait, and running sixty yards of line straight off the reel in his first rush; he then—— But no, no, I must really refrain. Suffice it to say that I killed him—seven pounds if an ounce.

When I had safely basketed him, I perceived that things were turning out as I had foreseen. The tide was beginning to rise rapidly and drive me up from rock to rock towards the base of the chimney. Indeed, the big rollers were already gaining in size and force, and surged up now and then in close proximity to my legs; and now that the excitement of playing my fish was over, and I could attend to other matters, I began to ask myself what the reader has doubtless been cogitating over ere this—not having a bass to play—how I was to get away over that bullet-swept slope at the top of the cliff. It must be a regular Dargai, I felt. The rattle of musketry was incessant, completely drowning the whistling of the hundreds of slender Lebel bullets that I knew must be combing the air above my head. I saw, too, that the rollers, as the tide came up, would beat against the chimney, even to its very top, and over—not lightly and sprayfully, if I may coin a word, but in sullen rushes of heavy water that no man could withstand; and to be either torn from my hold, swept away and ground into pulp, or riddled with bullet-holes if I attempted to leave the shelter of the cliff, seemed to be my certain and unavoidable fate. The perspiration began to gather, and for the first—no, the second time in my life I found myself in a very tight place indeed. Suddenly I remembered the lookout-man; he was sure to have been posted, whoever and whatever was the cause of the firing. Fool that I was not to have thought of him before, and saved myself some anxious moments. I had nothing to do but put my head up above the edge—and I remembered a chunk of rock that lay there which would just give sufficient cover for that part of me—and hail him,

and all would be well. He would wave his flag and stop the firing, while I walked away out of danger. I smiled as I pictured his astonishment when he heard my shout and saw my head bobbing about on the cliff-edge, and with what vigour he would wave his red rag; and I'd give him a franc as I passed—blowed if I wouldn't!—he would deserve it.

Much relieved in mind, and only slightly anxious as to the size of the stone I counted on as cover for my head when necessity compelled me to stick it up, I leisurely began to pack up my rod; and, all being snug, and the waves having driven me nearly to the foot of the cliff, I began the awkward ascent. The firing was as fierce as ever, and it was not without a certain amount of hesitation that I gripped the edge at last, and drew myself up until my head was above the friendly shelter. As I had anticipated, the piece of rock lying in front a foot or two from my head gave me slight protection; but the bullets were simply raining down the slope, ricochetting and spluttering in all directions and on every side of me; and, in spite of the bit of stone, it was a most jumpy position to be in. I was thankful, however, to see the lookout-man sitting in his shelter away on my left, with his flag on the ground beside him, and his hat tilted over his nose to keep out the sun that streamed on him, late in the year though it was.

I felt certain that I should easily attract his attention in spite of the row from the firing, which I now saw was no ordinary musketry practice, for the range was crammed with men pouring in a continuous and furious fire. There was no marking, of course, and it dawned upon me at once that these men were the 'Territorials' getting rid of their ammunition as fast as they could. I knew the dodge. Every man had sixteen rounds to fire, and the whole lot only half a day to do it in; hence, the only possible way of getting rid of the cartridges was to draw the men up in lines across the range, and tell them to blaze away for all they were worth, no time for aiming or marking being possible. This accounted for the furious storm of balls that swept the air and ground round my devoted head. Although all this takes time in the telling, you may be sure it was not two seconds before I was yelling at the lookout-man; and, to my relief, he at once swept his cap to the back of his head, seized his flag, and, jumping to his feet, gazed wonderingly in my direction. As he caught sight of my head he appeared to grasp the situation at once, and was in the act of raising his flag, when he paused, stared hard at me, and then, to my amazement, deliberately sat down again, took out his tobacco-pouch, and began to roll himself a cigarette. This was too bad. What did the fellow mean? I knew he had both heard and seen me, and his conduct was past understanding. Stay! What was there familiar to

me about the man? Something, I felt sure. Ah! I have it; that peculiar action of his when he rolls his cigarette—where had I seen it before? Great heavens!—Jean! Yes; in spite of his dirty and ill-fitting uniform, his monstrous *kepi* and unshaven chin, I recognised my neighbour Jean; and as I remembered our last meeting and his wild words and rage, the whole horrible business became clear to me. This was his revenge. It was incredible, but it was true. I was to be shot or drowned, whichever I chose, and he would not raise a finger; he would be both blind and deaf. If I was shot, well, I came over the cliff without warning, and before he could raise his flag; if I was drowned, he couldn't see the base of the cliff from his post. He would be held clear of blame, even if the authorities bothered about it at such a time of tension; and as to the consul taking up the matter, why, there was no likelihood of that; the man was a mere figurehead. He would never take action. It was a devilish plot, and a clever one. I must try again. And try I did, all I knew, to get the man to hoist his flag, but without avail; he remained stolid and immovable. There was one thing I didn't do—I didn't beg to him. He shouldn't have that pleasure, and I believe it was just what he was waiting for. Finally I gave up trying; and, finding my fingers cramped and my toes numbed with so long holding to my chimney, I went down it again and rested a while at the bottom and pondered. I thought of many things to aid me, but none were feasible. Even if I could wave a coat or handkerchief above the cliff, the long row of closely-set targets would prevent them seeing from the firing-point. Only Jean would see, and he would gloat. I scanned the sea. Not a boat was to be seen. 'Why should there be?' I groaned. Boats avoided La Garde—that was the name of the point; it was a place of evil ways. No; turn and twist the trouble as I would, I could find no way of escape.

Meanwhile the sea rose higher and higher. Every now and then a wave bigger than the others swept with a roar up to my very feet, and I saw that I should have to take to my chimney very soon if I did not wish to be carried away. I had just grasped the first knob of rock preparatory to beginning to climb, when, above the roar of the surf and the rattle of musketry, I heard the notes of a bugle. Could I believe my ears? Yes, it was the 'Cease fire;' and as the last note died away, the crackling of the rifles followed suit, and in a few seconds the hoarse voice of the sea was all that broke the stillness. Here was an unexpected chance, and one which somehow or other I had never thought of when racking my brains for a way out of the difficulty. Simple as it was, it had never occurred to me that something might happen to stop the firing for a few moments. A few moments! Ah, yes! it might be, and probably was, only but for a minute or

so that the deadly hail would stop; some changing of those firing that would take no time to speak of. And as this fact dawned upon me I began to scramble frantically up the chimney to gain the edge and salvation. Alas for my hopes and my haste! I had barely got half-way up when my basket, as fishing-baskets have a trick of doing, shifted round from my back to my front and got between me and the rock. Here was a pretty fix! I could not let go with either hand in order to right it, and I could not go up higher without serious risk of being pushed out and falling on to the rocks below. I did try; but the basket was big and bulky, made to carry big fish and heavy tackle, and I saw at once that I must go down again and leave it behind next time. Even the descent was a matter of huge difficulty with the great thing hanging in the awkward position it had assumed. It hung like an incubus round my neck, blocking the view below me, so that I couldn't see where to place my feet; and it was simply a matter of luck that I reached the bottom in safety. It did not take me a moment to slip the strap and begin the climb again, quicker than ever this time, as may be imagined; and even as I did a huge wave swept round my legs, nearly carrying me away with the basket, which it whirled off to a watery grave as easily as a cork. Up, up I went; the top was nearly reached, when—oh, horror!—I heard the shrill bugle once more. No need for me to listen to its notes now. I knew well enough what call was beginning to sound, and though I made a frantic and despairing effort to gain the top, it was too late; ere I had grasped the edge above me the storm of bullets had broken out again. My heart fairly died within me; and such was the revulsion of feeling that, for a few seconds, I nearly lost my precarious hold and fell back into the boiling cauldron below. When I recovered myself and looked down with calmness once more, I saw that the supreme moment must soon come when I would be compelled to leave my shelter and make a run—a run into certain death, it seemed. Still, it was better than the cruel waves; for now the tide was running with its full force, and every minute the hungry water rose, leaping up at me, like a dog at a bone hung out of his reach.

Meanwhile what was my enemy doing?—that enemy more pitiless than sea, rocks, or bullets. I drew myself up and looked. Heavens! could I believe my eyes? The man was looking anxiously for my reappearance, it was evident, and when he saw my haggard face his own quite lit up, and he smiled at me cheerfully and encouragingly. Had he relented? I anxiously asked myself. Surely he had. Yet why didn't he hoist the danger-flag? Ah, yes! he was going to do it; he had never really meant murder after all. I saw it all now; his sole intention was to give me a good fright. Well, he had done it, and no mistake. 'There, he has

begun to raise the flag ; soon it will flutter above the top of the shelter, and I shall be saved. How slow he is ! Go on, man, go on ! Merciful powers ! what is he doing now ? Why is he scowling again so fiercely ? Ah, you scoundrel ! you double-dyed villain !—the flag drops to earth again. You mean murder after all. This was your fiendish plan, this the cause of your anxiety. You feared your victim had been washed away, and that you would be balked of the pleasure of torturing him with false hopes of safety. Oh, fiend in human shape, villain and'— But madness and despair seized upon me, and I raved and cursed at him until the water found me, and a monstrous wave swept up and covered me to my waist, and tore and hauled at me so that I could barely keep my hold. However, it steadied my nerves, and I ceased my useless ravings ; and as it passed and left me I leaned against the side of my chimney to rest and gather strength for the final effort that I saw could be no longer delayed, but must be made before the next big wave came and overwhelmed me. As I rested something in my coat-pocket pressed uncomfortably into my thigh between me and the rock, and I put my hand in to shift it. As I felt it in my hand, and realised what I held, a thrill of joy and hope ran through me. I still possessed a last argument, and one that might be most effectual with Jean ; and I drew forth my revolver, the very existence of which I had forgotten. I lost no time in trying its effects. 'Jean,' I shouted, 'look here'—and I pointed the pistol at him as well as I could without exposing myself to the hail of bullets that still swept past—'if you don't hoist your flag at once I'll fire at you ; and it's odd if I can't hit you in six shots.'

Jean started as he saw the revolver with my wild face backing it, and as he heard my shout he seized his flag and made as if to hoist it in earnest, but the hatred in him conquered his fear ; the distance was long for a pistol, and though he could not get out of danger from me without running into worse from his comrades, he fancied himself fairly safe, which in reality he was, looking at all the circumstances against accurate shooting on my part. So he still defied me ; the old mocking smile came back to his lips, and he shouted back at me, 'Die, dog-pig ! What do I care for your toy ?' and he shook his flag at me in hate and derision. But it was no toy he had to face, but a good English 'Bulldog ;' and though I had little chance of hitting him, cramped as I was, and it would not have helped me, either, if I had put a bullet in him, I hoped that I should go near enough to the brute for him to hear the whistle of the ball or the splash of its striking the wall behind him, and so put a holy fear of the next shot into him, and bring him to reason.

So without more words I loosed off at him, and just in time ; for as I fired I heard a roar behind me, and I had barely time to drop the pistol and cling to the edge like a limpet, when a crushing

sea reared itself against me, as it seemed, and covered me with a deluge of water and foam. I had an indistinct and momentary vision of Jean's arms in the air, with a splotch of red above, and then the hissing water shut out everything. But, thanks to the purchase afforded by the sides of the chimney, and the good hold the rough edge of the cliff gave, I still clung on ; and when the wave had passed I was still in the old place.

When I had got the water out of my eyes I looked for Jean, and behold ! he was lying stretched on his face, a few feet in front of his shelter, his hands still grasping his flag, but motionless and still ; but yet more wonderful, the firing had ceased, and I saw several officers running down the range towards me. I hastily scrambled up and went towards my late enemy. I say late, because he was as dead as a door-nail, with a bullet through his heart.

There is not much more to be said. I explained that I had been fishing, and had been caught by a wave as I climbed up the cliff to give the signal to the lookout to hoist his flag, and thus let me pass. They at the firing-point knew nothing but the fact that a sharp-eyed officer had seen the red flag wave violently for half a second above the shelter, and, thinking it odd, had used his glasses and seen what he thought was a leg or arm lying on the ground beside the wall. The firing had been instantly stopped ; and they came up to see. It was evident that the poor wretch had incautiously exposed himself and got a bullet in his heart for his pains, though they wondered why the wound was in front ; and that in his death-spring he had waved the red flag so opportunely for me. It was his own careless fault, and so they buried him without fuss or inquiry, the regimental sawbones not even troubling to probe for the bullet that caused his death. *Luckily for me.*

So they built a bigger shelter and the Republic lost a soldier, while I—well, I lost a basket and fine fish, a revolver, and a neighbour.

LOVE.

O LOVE ! what art thou, Love ! A glorious Star,
A living Light on its own brightness feeding,
No kindling fires from other sources needing,
That burns and glows across our prison-bar :
A Voice more soft than wandering south winds are ;
A mighty Stream on whose full waves, unheeding
Whither its deep, impetuous flow is leading,
The strongest swimmer may be swept too far !

Thou art the only Angel left on Earth ;
The whole of Heaven in a melting sigh ;
The one bright thing that knows not how to die.
Immortal seal to Man of his high birth,
Thou art the life of Life, its pulse, its breath ;
Thou art the Dream that waits us beyond Death !

ADA BARTRICK BAKER.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



POACHERS AND THEIR WAYS.

GENERALLY speaking, the poacher is a cowardly ruffian, who, too lazy to work, prefers stealing to earning an honest livelihood. But there are exceptions. There is the country-bred man whose innate love of sport has started him on the illegal pursuit of game, also the old Highlander who believes there is no shame attached to stalking a deer; for both of these the genuine sportsman must feel sympathy.

The successful professional poacher is a fellow of keen observation. He has a complete comprehension of animated nature, of woodcraft, and of how changes in the weather affect the customs of his quarry. Discarding the gun, which has the disadvantage, unless it be an air one, of betraying his presence, he chiefly relies on nets and his dog. The breed of dog—commonly a cross between a greyhound and a collie—is called ‘lurcher.’ In addition to having the speed of the one parent and the ‘nose’ and intelligence of the other, a lurcher has more stamina than a greyhound, never gives tongue, and will usually retrieve. In frosty weather a lurcher bred from a staghound is preferred, as it has harder feet than a dog of the greyhound breed. The terrier lurcher, being apt to bark, is of little use to the poacher. The training of these dogs is of a very high order, as upon it almost entirely depends the poacher’s success, and often his safety. Here is an actual incident. A poacher on the hunt for hares had set his net at the gate of the field. Motioning his dog to range, he was surprised at its refusing to do so. Growling, it crouched at its master’s feet. His suspicions aroused, the poacher, glancing back, discerned the burly figures of two keepers stealthily creeping up behind the hedge at the opposite side of the road. Seeing they were observed, the keepers sprang over the hedge; but, thanks to the timely warning of his lurcher, the poacher, making good use of his legs, effected his escape minus his poaching implements. On account of the use to which the lurcher is put it is looked upon with reproach,

yet this creature is often a perfect model of animal beauty, and in intelligence and capability is inferior to no other breed.

To thoroughly acquaint himself with the estate which he intends to work is the poacher’s first move. A common way of getting information is through an accomplice. This man, who is never seen in the company of poachers, will quietly stroll, sometimes reading a book, through the fields. He marks where the coveys settle for the night, where the hares feed, draws diagrams of the fields—showing positions of gates and other egresses—and, what is even of more importance than all these, learns exactly the rounds and movements of the keeper. Many are the devices practised to get the keeper out of the way. A favourite plan is for one of a gang of poachers to fire several shots some distance from the place where the raid is to be made. This attracts the keepers to that portion of the estate, leaving the poachers hard at work netting hares or rabbits. Another dodge is to put a hare in a snare, which will be seen by the keeper on his evening round, and cause him to watch for the poachers’ return. Of course they never come back. A case of this sort lately took place. As soon as the poachers saw the keepers secrete themselves beside the fake, they went straight to a field of Swedish turnips, out of which they netted nine hares.

Many stories are told of how gamekeepers have been outwitted. The following incident which took place in Selkirkshire will show how crafty the poacher can be. Three poachers, ferreting rabbits, were surprised by a keeper and a county policeman. The former succeeded in capturing one of the men, while the other two bolted through the wood, pursued by the constable. Suddenly the captive appeared to be very ill, and exclaiming, ‘Oh, my heart!’ sank in a fainting condition on the ground. Alarmed at the state of his prisoner, the keeper went in search of water with which to revive the suffering poacher; but on returning he found that the sick Nimrod had made a rapid recovery and taken advantage of his captor’s short absence

to escape. But sometimes poachers are tricked by the gamekeeper. A common though somewhat unscrupulous ruse is for the keeper to put a rabbit in the snare, then, hiding himself, to await the return of the poacher, whom he thus captures red-handed.

Moonlight nights are avoided by the poacher, not only on account of his being easily seen, but because netting hares on a clear night is dangerous, for if these creatures have once been in contact with a net they will on seeing it again immediately commence squealing. Hares pay the poacher best, and this is his method of capturing them. As soon as a field of corn—barley with young grass being preferred—is cut the poacher gets to work. Over the outside of the centre bar of the gate he hangs the net, which extends the whole length between the posts, the lower part resting loosely on the ground. The net is kept in position by two small stones. Ranging the field, the lurcher drives the hare into the net, which, carried away from its light supports, completely entangles the animal. The net is reset, and so on until all the hares are taken from the enclosure. In the writer's recollection so many as eleven hares were in this manner taken from one field by two men with a couple of dogs. Purse-nets and snares are also used. These are placed at tunnels or openings in hedges through which the hare is accustomed to run. Purse-netting, which is a very deadly affair, has the great advantage of rendering the poacher independent of assistance—even of that of a dog. Hanging these small nets over all the egresses, he, entering the covert, drives out the hares, which, bolting through their customary runs, are caught in the nets. In ferreting rabbits purse-nets are much used. As rabbits, unlike hares, rarely squeal when caught in the net, this is a silent and successful mode. A class of vagabonds not generally suspected of poaching are pedlars, who—with a ferret and a purse-net in their pocket—sell bootlaces and rustic-made baskets. In their impudence lies their success. They inquire at the keeper's cottage whether he is at home; if he is, permission to gather a few young ferns to place in the baskets is asked. Leave obtained, the rest is simple. If the keeper happens to be from home so much the easier for the pedlar.

The wholesale way of catching rabbits is by means of a long net from seventy to one hundred and twenty yards in length, and two feet in height. Having noted the part outside a wood where rabbits feed in the evening, the poachers, choosing a warm, dry, dark night, when rabbits feed a long way out from their burrows, take off their boots, and noiselessly and quickly, with slight stakes or pins, set the net between the feeding-ground and the covert. One of the men, making a *détour*, gets in front of the rabbits, which, rushing homewards, are caught in the diamond-meshed net. In this manner as many

as two or three hundred rabbits are taken in a single night. One night last autumn one hundred and forty couple were taken from a well-known Scottish estate. As an illustration of the boldness of poachers, the same gang during the same week took a hundred couple from another property almost adjoining the estate from which they had taken the first haul.

Of game proper, pheasants pay the poacher best. A silent and effective way of catching these birds is by holding lighted brimstone beneath them whilst roosting. Stupefied with the fumes, they drop helplessly to the ground. One of the most deadly but cruel tricks is the following: Dried peas or beans are placed in warm water until they are soft enough to be easily pierced with a needle. Then through the pea is threaded a bristle, such as is used by shoemakers, the ends of which project about a quarter of an inch. In order to attract the pheasants the poacher will sprinkle *bond fide* peas for two or three mornings. Then he substitutes his lethal bait, which either at once chokes the birds or sets up such a violent irritation in the gullet that they are picked up from under the hedges in a half-dead condition. Partridges are taken with a net about forty-five yards long and fourteen feet in breadth, a cord running through the topmost meshes, while attached to the lower part are light lead weights. The net is usually made of silk, which makes little noise when being dragged over the ground, and it can, when not in use, be compressed into very little bulk. Having accurately marked where the partridges have settled for the night, as soon as it is dark the net is dragged over that ground by two men. On feeling the rearmost edge of the net the birds attempt to fly, but the net is promptly dropped and the whole covey captured. Grouse are taken in like fashion. The poacher's method of catching wild-duck is very simple: ordinary fishing-hooks, baited with tripe or a slice of onion, are fastened by a piece of salmon-gut about a foot in length to small stakes beside the loch.

Such are the ordinary methods of the poacher. Of course the gun is also used; only, however, when it can be fired without danger of being heard. But poaching has been reduced to a woodland science, and the successful poacher is generally a specialist. If his specialty be hares, he will cut open the insides of his captures in order to find out on what they feed; he will watch evening after evening their customary paths; he knows exactly the height to set the snare, as hares jump higher in wet than in dry weather; he can tell, when the frosty season comes, where the hares from the hills are likely to be found; and what he does not know about their habits is not worth learning. This type of poacher usually works with only the assistance of his lurcher, knowing well the unreliability of his genus; for the ordinary prowler is wanting in astuteness,

and his drinking habits make him babble secrets which lead to his own and his companions' apprehension.

When surprised, the rule of the poacher is to give the whistle of alarm and then to run to the centre of the field. There is thus no chance of mistaking an accomplice for a keeper; and, also, the force against them is at once seen. Disposing of game is usually the poacher's greatest difficulty. In this, the man who poaches on seashore estates has a distinct advantage over his rural brother. He sails his boat along the coast until a favourable spot presents itself alike for poaching and for sending away his plunder. Generally watching the land entrances, the keepers leave the approaches from the sea unguarded.

With regard to the recent trials of bloodhounds on the Yorkshire moors, which were witnessed by many gentlemen interested in the preserva-

tion of game, a word as to the ability of the bloodhound as a tracker of poachers may not be out of place. In many quarters there exists a superstition that when the hound has brought his human quarry to bay he will attack him. This is entirely wrong. The animal is quite content on overtaking his quarry to bark until assistance comes. In the busy thoroughfares of a town the scent of a criminal must either be obliterated or mixed with other scent; but in the country a well-trained bloodhound should have little difficulty in tracing his fugitive. If constables, in certain districts where poaching is rife, were allowed to keep one of these man-hunting dogs there is little doubt that poaching would rapidly decrease. The mere fact that a bloodhound was kept in the district would deter many men from embarking upon a 'fur' or 'feather' expedition.

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER IV.—MY COUSIN KITTY.



HAD fired my mine: the explosion was quick to follow. With another ejaculation, that sounded not too polite, Kennett took a step towards me.

'A Hanoverian jackal!' he cried. 'And here! Is it a joke, Hollingworth? But, joke or none, Kynaston shan't have *that*, by heaven!'—and therewith, before I could prevent him, he had leaned forward and seized the letter.

Now, I had not reckoned upon violence, and at the best of times my temper needs no spur. Jumping up, I confronted him.

But Sir Charles interposed. 'What's this, Kennett?' he demanded sharply. 'Surely you forget that Mr Holroyd is my guest and kinsman?'

'But the whole plan will be ruined if he'—He broke off suddenly, reminded by a look from Sir Charles that his tongue was wagging too freely. 'I mean—I am thinking of you, Hollingworth—that it's as good as signing your death-warrant to let Kynaston know your whereabouts. And this gentleman'—

'Is, as I have said, my kinsman.'

'And also Lord Kynaston's secretary, as he boasts. What assurance have we'—

Hitherto I had perforce been silent, but here I thought it proper to interrupt him. 'That, sir, rests between Sir Charles and me,' said I, meeting his eye fairly. 'He asks no assurance that I am neither spy nor informer: I hope he needs none. The only danger to him, in this case, can lie in the mention of the Dower-house—and of that Mr Kennett must be the best judge.'

'I am glad that you allow it, sir,' said he, sneering.

'As for the letter,' I went on, turning to my

host, 'you have heard it read. I leave it to you, Sir Charles, to decide what is to be done.'

At this point we were all on our feet, and, for one, I had no idea what the upshot would be. That there was something beneath the surface was, of course, quite evident: Kennett's heat could not be explained otherwise. But it was also evident that the issue depended not upon him, but upon Sir Charles. The latter did not keep us in suspense. He had recovered his old air of cheerful urbanity, and his attitude was in no doubt.

'Here's an ado about nothing!' cried he. 'Certainly I'll take the letter. Why not? Give it to Kitty, Kennett, and let us be off—we've delayed too long already.'

The other still hesitated. 'Not until we know'—

'Nonsense, man! I'll go bail myself for Mr Holroyd, if you like.' His tone was more pressing, and Kennett gave in, albeit with not too good a grace. 'That's right! I don't promise to deliver it in person, George, but you have my word that 'twill reach my lord. . . . Ready, Kitty? To horse, then!'

Apparently he was now eager to be gone, and allowed Kennett no time for further objections, and himself little for adieux. But at the last moment, his companion having preceded him, he turned back for a word with me.

'Remember, cousin, my liberty is in your hands—perhaps even more,' he said, clapping me familiarly on the left shoulder. 'I trust you most fully. You will await my return?'

'Or the chaise,' said I.

'Oh, I'll be back before it comes. I may be to-night—at the latest to-morrow. Good-bye till then!'

Thus was the situation saved, and I was left alone with the ladies. I may confess that, looking back at the events of the twenty-four hours, I was not altogether satisfied. I had arrived at an explanation with my host, indeed; it had passed not badly; but, as the result, I had formed some conclusions that gave food for the gravest thought. These you shall hear in time; for the present, there was nothing for it but to make the best of the circumstances. And, reflections apart, the duty was not likely to be other than agreeable.

Kitty had attended her father to the door, and her hair was powdered with white flakes when she returned to the room. For some reason, she seemed to be in wonderful spirits.

'Snowing again!' she said. 'Cousin George, acknowledge you are better indoors on such an evening, after all!'

'How can I deny it? But Sir Charles will have a cold journey. You must be greatly concerned for him sometimes, in these absences?'

She took me up briskly. 'Because of the weather, you mean?' she asked.

'I was thinking rather of his safety,' said I. 'There may be people in Bath who have known him, and surely it is not too wise to run such a risk of being recognised?'

'When he has a purpose in view, 'tis the last thing he has ever considered. Of course I am anxious, as'—laughing a little—'a soldier's wife or daughter may be anxious. I have been educated so, Cousin George! Besides, he never ventures by day.'

So he was in the habit of going to Bath!

'Still, if only for your sake'—

'For my sake, be sure he will omit no precaution that is possible,' she said softly; and then, as if the subject were ended: 'But now Mrs Herbert will brew us a dish of tea. After that, sir, you must tell me of London—to think that I have never seen Hyde Park and the Mall!—until 'tis time to send the invalid to bed!'

We were not yet, however, finished with serious matters; for when good Mrs Herbert went off presently to do her ward's bidding, she seized the chance to recur to our overnight meeting.

'I have to thank you for your promise,' she said, not without embarrassment. 'I saw that you were surprised by the request'—

'Somewhat,' I admitted.

'I did it for the best. I cannot tell you why, but I forbore to mention it last night—there were certain reasons—and afterwards I thought 'twould be easier for dad if he knew nothing about it. You would not understand, but'—

On the contrary, I believe that I did understand—enough, at the least, to be certain of her motives. And there could be no question on whose side lay the balance of gratitude due.

'But, all the more, the responsibility is mine,' she continued; 'wherefore, Cousin George, I have another promise to beg of you.'

'A score if they are as easy to grant,' said I.

'You must hear it first.' She paused for a moment or two, puckering her brows. Then: 'I want you to keep what you saw a secret from everybody—not only that, but whatever you may see or hear while you are in this house. 'Tis much to ask, but otherwise—well, for me, I should feel that I had been in the wrong, and never cease to blame myself if anything untoward befell.'

Now, I was not a free agent; I had my duties to my office and the king; and although I could not foresee all that such a promise might involve, I had already realised that I was wading in deep waters. Yet a feeling new to me was pleading my cousin's cause against reason and conscience, and I am not sure that I could have refused even had I known what the morrow was to reveal. Her hand was on my sleeve, her eyes held mine, and—and, in a word, I promised. Rightly or wrongly, I promised. To this day I cannot decide whether it was rightly or wrongly.

Then the tea was brought in, the curtains were drawn and the candles lit, and we disposed ourselves, with an exceeding content on my part, for a cosy evening around the fire. That evening remains in my memory as one of the most happy and pleasant of a long life, and will so remain (please God) while recollection lasts. I am not to write here of that which above all else made it so. Let it suffice to say that betwixt Kitty and myself the talk was that of dear friends who had long been separated. In a hundred ways, as we conversed without constraint of many things—my own career, her convent schooldays and later wanderings with Sir Charles—the girl revealed the sweet and gracious nature that was hers. To me the ending came all too soon. Every woman is a tyrant *in posse*, wanting but opportunity; Mrs Herbert, who had hitherto proved herself the discreetest of dragons, was pleased to remember my state of health, and, backed by my cousin, packed me upstairs at an hour ridiculously early. Against the pair my protests and appeals availed me nothing.

Nevertheless, as you may imagine, I did not go to bed at once. I had now leisure to think out my position, and did so fairly over a pipe of Sir Charles's tobacco. At the best, I could not hide from myself that the result did not make for comfort.

To be fully understood I must recall the circumstances of the time. The war with France was raging on two continents: we had just passed through the bitterness of a great parliamentary struggle for office. Now, for some months, and particularly since a rumour concerning the king's health had gone abroad, we had been receiving warnings from our foreign agents of activity among the exiled Jacobites; and the latest reports—they were no other, indeed,

than those which I had been carrying to my lord when I was intercepted by the pads—had brought us news still more serious. From divers sources we had heard of the simultaneous departure from their wonted abodes of many noted malcontents, and their disappearance beyond the ken of our spies. The same intelligence came from Rome and Ratisbon, from Geneva and The Hague; the movement was too widespread to be accidental; and, in short, it could leave one in no doubt that a new conspiracy was on foot.

In itself, this was perhaps not altogether unexpected; for my lord, in whose charge lay such affairs, was the last man to be taken unawares—and his experience was great. Nor was it a matter to be feared overmuch. Thanks to our recent victories by sea and land, the whole nation was behind the Government and the throne: there remained not even the embers of Jacobitism to be fanned into flame. An attempt, if it were made, could but cause annoyance and trouble—more or less. Wishing neither, 'twas our present object to prevent rather than to punish.

And now? Well, I had left London with information that might guide my lord; and here, by a marvellous chance, I had fallen on certain discoveries that were infinitely more important. For I did not blink the truth. Sir Charles Hollingworth was one of the chiefs of the Jacobite interest, and his presence in England (that alone) was significant. But I had been led to suspicion by other facts, and especially by the scene that I had witnessed from the stair. I have described it: the inference that I was forced to draw from it may be guessed. There could be but one.

You will now perceive my dilemma. On the one side were the claims of gratitude and kinship, and perhaps a stronger feeling—above all, my promises to Kitty. So far, at least, my hands were tied. On the other side, to do and say nothing was to be a traitor to my principles and the bread that I ate. Was ever man of honour caught in such a plight?

Consider as I might, I could see no way of escape. Every step had its difficulties; but as the situation was like to become the more intolerable the longer I stayed at the Dower-house, I prayed that the chaise from Bath might arrive before Sir Charles returned. This was in cold blood; I doubted if I should think the same under the witching eyes of Miss Kitty.

In the end, having wisely decided that my future course must depend upon events, I gave up the problem and went to bed; and, notwithstanding my troubles, I slept long and soundly.

The next morning found me eager for action. My wound was almost healed and the pain gone, and otherwise I was quite myself again. When I descended to breakfast, however, 'twas to learn

that nothing had happened in the interval. No carriage had come for me, and Sir Charles was still absent.

The forenoon tasked my patience to the utmost. Probably I should have felt the tedium less had I seen more of Kitty, but apparently she had other duties; Mrs Herbert, among her good qualities, had not the gift of conversation; and I spent my time in wandering from fireside to window and back, and in hoping vainly for something to turn up. At length, as the last resource, I resolved to venture out and have a look at the surroundings of the Dower-house. It might be of service later.

Presently, then, I made my way into the open air. Snow was on the ground to the depth of a couple of inches, and in the clear, frosty atmosphere and the pall of white, everything stood out with a marvellous distinctness and beauty. The house was a quaint, many-cornered, ivy-covered building, of no great size; and on three sides was a large garden, bounded by wood—that, as I was to discover, of the park of Langbridge Hall, which itself was half a mile distant. On the fourth side—in front, to be precise—the trees grew close up to the walls, entirely screening the house, and thence a winding avenue led to a quiet byroad. What struck me chiefly was the solitude of the place. I knew that, besides the ladies and myself, the only occupants were two serving-maids; and, for certain purposes, no better spot could have been chosen for the refuge of a returned exile and conspirator.

My temper, which had been somewhat improved by this diversion, was sorely tried as the morning passed without incident. Kitty remaining invisible, all my wishes were for the appearance of the chaise. It came not; and, provided that my lord had received the letter, I could not understand the delay. Lacking other occupation, I had no peace from the old doubts.

But even the longest lane has its turning, and in due time (to change the metaphor) the knot was cut—and that, too, in a manner most surprising. This was early in the afternoon. The midday repast was over; Kitty, avoiding my reproachful eyes, had again disappeared; Mrs Herbert was dozing by the fire; and, for me, I was about to resign myself to despair, when, looking up, I happened to perceive a slight, lissome figure in a scarlet cloak passing the parlour window towards the garden. In a moment I had taken my resolution. Slipping out, I donned my own cloak and my hat, and followed.

Although I had lost not more than a minute or two, the red-cloaked figure was not in sight when I gained the garden. But this mattered little; her course was plainly marked on the snow-mantled ground. Now, I had no purpose save to overtake my cousin—none, assuredly, to spy upon her—as I pursued her track. It went straight across the garden to the boundaries of

Langbridge park ; and there, if I had thought, I might have paused ; but as I cut through the fringe of coppice that divided the two, I had a glimpse of scarlet a hundred yards in front, and hurried on.

The park dipped gradually to the banks of a little stream, and hereabouts was fairly well wooded ; and thus Kitty was again hidden from my view until I was within thirty yards. Then, rounding a clump of holly, I saw her just as she stepped upon a narrow foot-bridge which spanned the water. And, at the same instant, I saw something else that caused me to pull up dead.

Baldly, 'twas this. A man approached from the other side of the stream, and met her in the middle of the bridge. By his salutation, the encounter was no chance one.

My first impulse was to retire incontinently, with what feelings it may be wiser to leave untold. I had turned to do so, indeed ; but a second glance over my shoulder sent me instead to the shelter of the holly-bush. For it showed me that the man's appearance was not unfamiliar ;

that, unless my eyes deceived me, he was no other than the cavalier who had been the central figure in the strange episode in the hall of the Dower-house !

But this was not all. You will remember my overpowering desire to see his face, and how it had been frustrated. Well, in that backward glance I had seen it at last—and instantly the inclination for retreat had gone, and I was standing behind the holly with beating pulses, and the premonition that I was on the verge of a momentous discovery. Every feature was known to me, but the knowledge was not that of a personal contact. For a second the truth eluded me. 'Twas only for a second. Then the recollection of a score of portraits and medallions rose to my mind, and—

And, all at once, I realised that here in the heart of England, within a few yards of me, was the arch-plotter against the peace of the realm—he whose courage and daring had, thirteen or fourteen years back, shaken the throne to its foundations—Charles Edward Stuart himself.

MID-OCEAN SHELLS.

By C. PARKINSON, F.G.S.



THE glare of a tropical sun beating down with pitiless rays upon the glassy sea drives most pelagic life from the surface of the water to a depth of several feet until the heat of the day has passed away. The fiery orb then dips beneath the horizon, revealing for an instant those remarkable green rays which are seldom or never seen outside the region of the torrid zone. And then the sea-creatures, impelled by a certain instinct, once more seek the surface, to hold grand carnival throughout the wondrous brilliance of the starry night. As the light of day fades rapidly away—there is little twilight near to the equator—myriads of spheroid bodies, like so many bits of scintillating glass, career madly in the translucent ocean, the gyrations being distinctly visible to the naked eyes from the deck of a passing ship. The observation of such infinitesimal things alone renders a prolonged calm at sea endurable to those confined on board a sailing-ship ; for there is grace, poetry, and a living interest attached to everything that moves in the vast abyss of ocean space ; and the beauty of the organisms surpasses the creations of the wildest imagination. The glittering particles of animated matter are, in reality, floating shells which belong to the 'wing-footed' group of the mollusca ; they are distributed chiefly in mid-ocean, and are, consequently, little known in the tidal regions of the sea-coasts. They occur, in

varying form, in every clime. Nansen, when imprisoned in the Arctic seas, cut holes in the ice in order to obtain a series of the northerly species, such as *Clio borealis*, and the writer has collected many kinds in every latitude, from Kerguelen in the south to the region of the Western Isles in the northern hemisphere.

The Indian Ocean, perhaps, has the maximum development of the Pteropoda, or wing-footed mollusca ; and there they swim in countless millions at the fall of eventide. The strange thing is that a regular succession of different species rise in the water with unflinching exactness, following each other in orderly sequence from sunset far into the darkness of a tropical night. Thus, at about six o'clock a shell known to conchologists as *Cavolinia trispinosa* appears at the surface, followed an hour later by *Cleodora tridentata*. A few of each may possibly be taken together during the day, but the greater number rise separately towards night. We have only to improvise the bag of a surface-trawl in order to capture hundreds of these vivacious little creatures for a closer examination on board ship. A bucket of sea-water forms a handy receptacle, in which the attractive little animals pursue their interrupted evolutions once again. A specimen of *Cavolinia*, if placed in a glass trough such as is used for living objects on the microscopic stand, presents a singularly beautiful organism as it swims to and fro in the water. The semi-

opaque valves—barely the third of an inch in diameter—are joined together into a single shell, with slits for the head, feelers, and the lateral 'wing-feet,' used in fan-like propulsion. Each shell resembles a miniature rounded purse, coloured with milky-white, tortoise-shell hues and a rim of deep crimson. The characteristic spines project before and behind. As the fleshy head of a mollusc appears through the terminal slit, the long tongue can be seen ejected at intervals in search of particles of food. In the meantime the propellers at either side wave vigorously with incessant and rapid action. The shapes and sizes of these floating shells vary considerably; but the movements of the one kind serve to illustrate those of other genera. *Cleodora tridentata*, which appears later, has a more rounded shell, about the size of a large pea, mottled brown and yellow in colour, with a spine recurved over the orifice. The shell is remarkably striated. Another group have simple conical tubes, pointed at the apex, with circular or oval vent common to the head and wings. Some disport themselves without any shells at all, the bodies resembling compact fragments of india-rubber, with lobes for the wings, and but slight indications of the head.

A very beautiful rose-coloured pteropod, *Styliola rosea*, found in profusion by day in a latitude four hundred miles south of Madagascar, deserves more than a passing comment, not only for the microscopic perfection of the fully-developed creature, but also for the wonderful series illustrative of the embryonic and larval stages that we were able to cultivate in our cabin. The fragile shell is needle-shaped, barely the sixteenth part of an inch at the aperture, and the sixth of an inch in length, tapering to the sharpest point, which readily pierces the hand. This shell is quite transparent, so that every detail of the internal structure can be duly studied with a lens. The mollusc is visible within the tube, coloured a delicate rose-pink from the lowest extremity to the wings and mouth. The incipient ovules are clearly seen, together with the circulatory and digestive organs. On a specimen being placed in water beneath the microscope, the wing-feet slowly expand and the mouth is extended. In full animation this tiny mollusc constitutes a beautiful object, well-nigh impossible to describe in the elegance of its movements. The embryo—which took a week to surely identify—is a free-swimming body, propelled by cilia at the rim of a small cup. This hard and glassy substance contains the embryo, to be detected as a pink nucleus within, capable of slight motion independent of the theca, or cup. In the observation of upwards of twenty specimens, the gradual elongation of the cup into a spinous tube was carefully noted, the larval embryo giving evidences of a corresponding development until the perfect mollusc duly appeared. These transitions proved

of surpassing interest to officers and passengers alike, even where the knowledge and appliances of a *Challenger* Expedition were lacking. Off the Cape of Good Hope the net was simply laden with another species of *Styliola*, with the sheath upwards of an inch in length, but extremely fragile and finely pointed as a needle. It contained an animal, with the body partly yellow and partly green, and of such vitality that it could swim minus the glassy shell, disporting with uncovered body for several hours in a glass of sea-water.

Nothing is more remarkable in the region of the Cape of Good Hope than the sudden change in the temperature of the surface-water on the east and west sides of the African continent. Simon's Bay, for example, has decidedly warm waters, due to the influences of the Mozambique and Agulhas currents passing south from the tropics. Table Bay, on the contrary, is icy cold, on account of the antarctic stream which lowers the temperature of the surface-water far into the tropical seas on the west side of Africa, until it is finally lost beneath the force of the conflicting equatorial current. The general effect of this is that a definite break occurs in the surface fauna of the sea in the vicinity of the Cape; quite different mollusca thrive in close proximity, divided only by the hot and cold streams from each other. Thus, we left the Pteropoda of the Indian Ocean behind as the ship passed into the South Atlantic. A larger and wonderfully brittle shell—*Cuvieria columnella*—appeared in the net, generally with one valve wanting. The well-known purple sea-snail revels in the colder currents, and attains larger dimensions than in the tropical seas. The colour of the shell is of the richest violet, the purple fluid emitted by the mollusc giving the scientific name to the animal; it yielded the Tyrian dye of the Roman era. The contrivance which serves as a float is a veritable curiosity, consisting of many air-chambers welded together like the bubbles of froth. It can be inflated at will, according as the creature desires to sink or to swim. The apparatus also serves as a raft for the support of the ova as well as for the buoyancy of the mollusc. Another allied shell has a brown coloration, and is much smaller in size. In these cooler streams we have taken another very beautiful gasteropod—*Atlanta peroni*—extremely fragile, transparent, and almost microscopic in the dimensions of the compressed, spirally-coiled habitation. A lens is necessary to appreciate the exquisite violet hues of the animal contained within the glassy texture of the shell. The action of the dorsal gills presents a very perfect example of water circulation, and the food particles can be followed from the inflowing current of the mouth to the intestinal cavity, owing to the wonderful transparency of the organism.

Our net was for several months towed by the

side of the ship all day long and far into the night, whenever the rate of sailing did not exceed four knots to the hour. It was hauled on to the poop every hour or so, and many a wondrous medley was turned out from the bag upon the wheel-box, the great haul of the day being after dinner at 7 P.M. Nobody on board had a greater interest in the proceedings than the captain, who was solely responsible for the contrivance of the trawl itself, and, moreover, placed every facility at our disposal throughout the voyage. In striking contrast to the trim and vivacious Pteropoda floating in mid-ocean are the brilliant mollusca of the Nudibranchiata, or naked-gilled sub-order. Most of the 'wing-footed' group develop the shell during the process of growth; the Nudibranchiata, on the contrary, frequently possess shells in the larval stage of existence, which are lost before the animal reaches maturity, although the mantle is sometimes strengthened with spicula embedded therein. The soft-bodied creatures assume every variety of form and colour, crowned by, or bordered by, rows of feathery gills of most exquisite hue. A species of *Glaucus* is characteristic of mid-ocean. The elongated body is brilliant in the strong contrast of blue and black stripes, the blue-fringed gills are borne on two pairs of lateral lobes, and the head possesses a pair of feelers. Another species of naked-gilled mollusc is confined entirely to the region of the gulf-weed, on which it thrives, and has also assumed the colour of the vegetation in a corresponding tone of yellow-brown. Another free swimmer—some three inches in length—has colours of yellow and gold, with arborescent gills tipped with every shade of orange and deep red, but sluggish in movement, after the manner of all its kind. In certain latitudes the beauty and variety of the creatures contained in the net became such as to cause quite an excitement when every fresh haul was made. One could not determine a tenth part of the captures, which were rarely the same two days in succession.

The cuttle-fishes and numerous other Cephalopoda, or 'head walkers,' abound in every latitude, a class of the mollusca yielding to none in interest. One day, when the ship lay in her course some three hundred miles north of St Helena, the net contained several round bodies with purple covers—precisely like ripe sloes, the fruit of the blackthorn, in shape, size, and colour. Towards evening the young cuttle-fishes swarmed at the surface of the water, swimming to and fro at headlong speed. A basin of seawater, with half-a-dozen young ones careering madly around, proved quite an attractive exhibition. The eight short feelers encircled the head, and the long pair of tentacular arms could be retracted within the body at will. The search after food particles appears to be the main effort in life, and the rapid movements through the water, reversible in a second, are evidently dependent upon

the siphonal contrivances for the expansion of the fluid circulated through the body. The immature cuttle-fish changes its shape in a marvellous manner; sometimes it is inflated into a round ball, reverting instantaneously into the normal oval shape.

The changes of colour in most Cephalopods are very singular. A series of globules appear to rise to the exterior tissues beneath the skin. They coalesce like oil or blood corpuscles, giving a rosy hue to the entire body, like a sudden blush. These globules in turn give place to another series of slate-colour, brown, or varied tint, as the case may be; and thus transition follows transition in subtle gradation of tone. The contents of the ink-bag, which can be ejected in order to discolour the surrounding water, are distinct from the colours of the pigment-cells referred to above. A slight dissection reveals the 'cuttle bone,' the ink-bag, the jaws within the mouth, the great goggle eyes, and, above all, the tenacity of the suckers.

Very frequently we captured the partially-coiled shells known by sailors as 'rams' horns,' of pearly whiteness. It was a long time before we identified it as the internal chambered shell of a decapod cuttle-fish, strongly suggestive of a *Nautilus*. The cast-off shells are common enough at sea, the mollusc itself being exceedingly rare. More than once we had the little red animal itself, quite immature, yet possessed of the ten feelers and traces of the incipient coil of the shell within the soft parts, and visible on the ventral side beneath the microscope.

The *Spirula* is the last lingering representative of the fossil Belemnite family of Cephalopods. One or two of the cast-off specimens were infested with colonies of young barnacles in vigorous condition, with the feathery filaments of the limbs in full action. Another trophy proved to be a full-sized specimen of the beautifully ribbed and keeled shell of the paper argonaut, which, abandoned by its inmate, floats lightly on the surface of the sea. It is the external shelter of the female argonaut only, and, unlike other shells, is not necessary to the life of the organism. Sometimes the inmate becomes a free swimmer, in fact, without injury to itself. The male argonaut is violet-hued, considerably smaller in size than the female, and quite uncovered. The eight tentacles are liable to modification in a curious manner. The normal arms have the suckers placed alternately towards the edge of each one. At certain seasons a bud appears to envelop one arm in a kind of sac. This steadily develops into a prolonged tentacle with many suckers; it is finally cast off as the fully-formed organism, to be eventually seized upon by the female argonaut for the purposes of fertilisation, and the male Cephalopod once more regains its normal crown of eight tentacles. A kind of Squid that we took off the port of East

London has eight short tentacles, with two additional long feelers flattened at the extremities for the accommodation of the suckers. The head projects from a sort of tube, and the monstrous eyes are prominent. The internal pen is loosely embedded in the flesh, and can easily be extracted by making the necessary incision. A freshly caught specimen had neutral gray colours; but these change with the usual rapidity into purple, red, or brown hues. From the insides of big fish such as the Bonito, Albacore, or Coryphene we several times rescued strange kinds of Octopi and larger specimens of cuttle-fish. The largest that we captured came from the waters of Table Bay, where, in eight fathoms of tidal water, it attached itself to a deep-sea line. It measured four feet nine inches in length, and fought desperately for life. The colour of this great mollusc was a dull red, shading to a dirty gray. The contents of the ink-bag were of an Indian red hue. All the mid-ocean floating specimens were small in size.

Calms do not always prevail at sea. When the winds arise to lash the waves into a fury, and the huge rollers pass in tumultuous succession, breaking against the ship until she trembles again, we know that storms or cyclones are perilously near at hand. And yet, when the elements strive their hardest, each tiny organism that floats or swims in the ocean survives the gale absolutely uninjured. A shell that is so fragile that it will break almost with a touch survives the fiercest contention of wind and wave. If the broken surface-water is too rough, every organism is so con-

trived that it can sink a few feet until the danger is past. The whole scheme of the pelagic fauna is designed or evolved to this end. Not only do the mollusca feed on animal organisms of inferior degree and minute size, but the fauna ultimately depends upon the microscopic vegetation which abounds in every zone. The late Professor Huxley explained how the multitudes of Radiolarians possessed oil-globules within, which expanded or contracted according as the creatures desired to sink or float; and there are countless millions of minute vegetable bodies—aptly called the grass of the sea—which rise or fall according to the influence of light. It is a matter of common observation that the animals follow the upward or downward migrations of the vegetation. Thus it happens that every creature is specially adapted for sinking or swimming, according as circumstances demand; and the incessant struggle for existence involved in the pursuit of a shifting food-supply likewise tends to preserve the individual from the ravages of storm and tempest.

We have the recollection of a tropical night when the Indian Ocean gleamed with soft white lights from the vicinity of the ship to the surrounding horizon, as if the Milky-way itself had fallen from the heavens to illumine the waters of the deep. Each haul of the net revealed the shells enveloped in liquid fire of phosphorescent light. The molten particles adhered to the sides of the net, the hands, and the very deck of the vessel. It was one of those glorious displays which constitute the fascinations of tropical waters, leaving such an impression on the mind that it can never be effaced.

SECRET DESPATCHES.

CHAPTER IV.



WHILE I was turning over these thoughts the masked figures at the table had laid their heads together and were whispering among themselves. Presently the president stood up, and addressing himself to me in bland tones, said:

'We are awaiting the decision of monsieur.'

'Before I can agree to bind myself by an oath of any kind,' I replied, 'I must make myself fully acquainted with its nature and scope, and satisfy myself that I can take it with a clear conscience.'

'Monsieur has reason on his side,' he answered, with a little bow.

Thereupon he turned and spoke to one of his colleagues, on the table in front of whom was what looked like a small despatch-box. Having unlocked this, the man produced from it a folded sheet of foolscap and handed it to the president, by whom it was passed on to me, with the remark, 'Read this, monsieur, if you please.'

The terms of the document in question were

brief but very much to the point, embodying as they did a solemn pledge never to divulge anything which I might either hear or be a witness of while under that roof. Should the Confraternity have reason to believe that I had broken the terms of my oath (and they boasted that their sources of information were many and peculiar), I should have incurred a penalty of which nothing less than my life itself would be the forfeit.

After reading the document carefully twice over, I said to the president, 'There seems nothing here to which I cannot pledge myself with every confidence.'

I fancied he looked relieved.

'I am glad to find that monsieur has arrived at such a sensible conclusion,' he gravely remarked.

Thereupon he left his chair and came towards me. I rose as he drew near. 'Your right hand, monsieur, if you please,' he said. I held it out, and he took firm hold of it with his own right hand. He had been followed by one of the conspirators, carrying the brace of daggers. These

the latter now held in front of him, crossed one over the other, and our clasped hands were laid upon them. Then the president slowly and solemnly recited the provisions of the oath, his words being repeated aloud by me. By that dim light, with the five masked and robed figures seated at the table—their eyes, as I could feel rather than see, bent upon me as with one accord—and with the sixth holding the crossed daggers, while the president's words dropped one by one from his lips, the scene was a sufficiently weird and impressive one, and one which I was not likely to forget for many a day to come.

When the ceremony had come to an end the man who had held the daggers bowed ceremoniously to me and went back to his seat.

'You have done well, monsieur, and I commend your wisdom,' said the president, with his elusive smile, as he released my hand; 'and so long as you keep your pledge inviolate you will have absolutely nothing to fear. But, in order to prove to you that any infraction of it would involve consequences of the most serious kind, I will ask you to favour me with your company for the space of a couple of minutes.'

Speaking thus and signing to me, he passed out by a door at the farther end of the room. I followed him mechanically—I had gone through so many strange experiences in the course of the last few hours that the faculty of wonder seemed dead within me—and next minute I found myself in a much smaller room than the first one, rather dimly lighted by an oil-lamp on the chimney-piece.

But at once my gaze was drawn as by a sort of horrible fascination to an object which lay stretched out on a couple of boards, supported by tressels, in the middle of the floor. That object was the corpse of a man.

The body was without coat or vest, and the shirt had been torn open at the throat as if in some deadly struggle. The wrists and ankles were bound together by cords. The face was ghastly, with a sort of greenish pallor showing through the skin. A derisive smile seemed to curve the drawn lips, but doubtless that was merely an effect of light and shadow. A thin stream of blood had trickled from a wound in the left temple on to the plank below. One long breathless look was enough. I turned away sick at heart.

'This man was a traitor, and has paid the penalty of his treachery,' remarked my companion in deep, stern tones. 'He wormed himself into our confidence, and then sold his knowledge to our enemies. Such as he deserve no mercy at our hands—and they meet with none!'

'Can such things happen in the heart of London and remain undetected?' I asked myself in a maze of wonder and stupefaction.

My guide had spoken slowly and impressively, and he now paused for half-a-minute, as if to allow time for what I had seen and been told to

let sink into my mind. Then he said, 'And now, monsieur, I will detain you no longer. Follow me, if you please.'

I did as I was told, passing out through a second door, and found myself in utter darkness the moment the door behind me was shut. Then my companion blew a whistle, and presently at the opposite end of the corridor—for such the place proved to be—a man carrying a lighted lamp appeared from somewhere, who, addressing me in French, said, 'Come this way, monsieur, if you please.'

Before complying I looked round, to find myself alone. He of the crimson scarf had vanished.

The man—one I had not seen before—extinguished his lamp as I drew near. Then still another door was opened, and at once the cold night air blew upon me. Three steps farther landed me in the street, but not the same street, I felt nearly sure, as the one in which I had alighted from the cab. That, however, mattered nothing, more especially as there was the same or another cab waiting for me. The man who had shown me out of the house at once opened the cab door, and I stepped inside without a word. Then he mounted to the box beside the driver, and away we rattled through streets unfamiliar to me, till, at the end of ten or twelve minutes, the cab drew up at a corner which abutted on Gray's Inn Road. Here I was requested to alight, and complied with alacrity. Nor was I sorry to see the cab drive off and disappear in the darkness. A hansom quickly took me home.

Years have gone by since that memorable evening, and he of the black charger, who for a little while made such a noise in the world, has gone down to the tomb, a ruined and discredited man.

A few months back, as I was seated on the deck of one of the Calais steamers, a hand was laid on my shoulder, and on turning I beheld a man whom I had no recollection of having seen before. But when he smiled and said, 'Bon jour, Monsieur Simkinson; I hope I have the pleasure of seeing you well,' I at once recognised him, although he was now clean shaven. In point of fact, he was none other than the man of the crimson scarf, he whom I have termed the president of the masked conspirators. Seeing that he was known, he frankly proffered his hand, which I took as frankly. Then he drew up a camp-stool and sat down beside me.

'Yes,' he said presently, with a sigh, in answer to a remark of mine, 'our hero is dead and our Cause is now but a shadow of the past. If he had but lived and had the courage of his convictions! What glittering possibilities seemed at one time within reach of his hand! But he let the golden moment go by, and his star set, never to rise again.'

This was all very well, but I had not forgotten, nor did it seem likely I ever should, that

ghastly object in the second room which he himself had shown me by way of warning.

'You had a rather summary mode of dealing with traitors to your Cause in those days,' I said. 'Let us hope that'— I paused, for a grimly humorous smile had lighted up his dark, resolute face.

'A confession is due to you, monsieur, and I hasten to make it,' he said. 'Our enemies were many and unscrupulous, and it was absolutely essential that we should be able to rely on your secrecy. Had you revealed to those in power certain details connected with our plans which accident had made known to you, the consequences to us might have been disastrous indeed. As the readiest mode of keeping you to your promise, we determined to try the effect of what, I believe, you call in English an object-lesson. The figure seen by you was not that of a dead man, but'—

'That of a living man "made up" for the occasion,' I broke in brusquely.

'Not exactly that, but a waxen effigy, copied from life—or rather, taken after death—by one of Us.'

For a moment or two I stared at him in mute amazement. Then I said, 'You need have been under no apprehension that anything having reference to your secrets would ever be divulged by me. Honour alone would have sufficed to seal my tongue.'

'I believe you with all my heart. But we were not to know that at the time. Everybody does not cherish his honour as you do, monsieur. Further, I may whisper this: only a fortnight before monsieur's visit two traitors—yes, two! but not under that roof—met the fate they so richly merited. They paid for their treachery with their lives.'

THE END.

HUMOURS OF THE IRISH LAW COURTS.



THE Irish law courts supply many humorous illustrations of the life and character of the Irish people, of the quaint manner in which they often express themselves, and of the humour and ingenuity of counsel and judges. A short time since, at the Dublin Assizes, a man was convicted of bigamy. He had married four wives. The judge, in passing sentence, expressed his wonder how the prisoner could be such a hardened villain as to delude so many women. 'Plaze, yer lordship,' said the man, interrupting, 'I was tryin' to get a good wan.' Jeremiah O'Leary was indicted at Cork Assizes for stealing a cow. He was found guilty; and, on being asked by the judge whether he had anything to say before sentence, he exclaimed, 'The devil a word, your honour; and it's my opinion a grate dale too much has been said as it is.' In one of the Dublin police courts a labourer was sentenced to a fine of twenty shillings or seven days' imprisonment for being drunk and disorderly. 'Begorra, your worship, you flatter me intoirely,' he replied. 'Sure, I never knew before my time was worth so much.' The late Mr Isaac Butt, Q.C., M.P., was fond of relating two stories of replies given by children when asked, before being sworn, whether they understood the nature of an oath and the consequences of perjury. In a case in which he was defending a prisoner, an Orangeman, on a charge of being concerned in a party riot, a little boy was called as a witness for the defence. 'If you do not tell the truth,' said the judge, 'where will you go when you die?' 'Where the Papists go, sir,' was the prompt reply. In another case, tried at Limerick, a little girl was asked what would

happen to her if she told a lie in her evidence. 'I suppose, sir,' she replied, 'I wouldn't get my expinuses.'

Many good stories are also told in legal circles in Ireland of encounters between lawyers and judges in court. John Philpot Curran, in the early days of his struggle at the Bar, appeared in a case before Mr Justice Robinson, the author of several law-books, and, in combating some opinion of his opponent, said that he had consulted all his law-books, and could not find a single case in which the principle contended for was established. 'I suspect, sir,' said the judge, 'that your law library is rather limited?' 'It is very true, my lord, that owing to my circumstances my library is rather small,' replied Curran. 'But I have prepared myself for this high profession rather by the study of a few good law-books than by the composition of a great many bad ones.' On another occasion, before Lord Chancellor Clare, he laid down some points of law which did not find favour in the mind of the judge. 'If that be law I may as well burn my books,' said Lord Clare. 'Better read them, my lord,' replied Curran.

Some years ago the County Court Judge of Clare was a Mr William Major, who was not liked by a popular Ennis solicitor named Greene. In an action between neighbouring farmers, tried at Quarter-sessions, for damages for the loss of a sheep, which had been killed by a dog, Greene, who appeared for the plaintiff, thus examined his client: 'What sort is defendant's dog that killed your sheep? Is he a bull-dog or a terrier?' 'He is a brown terrier, sir.' 'Is he wicked?' 'Troth, he is, sir—wicked and bad enough.' 'He is a snarling cur, I suppose, and shows his teeth

when he cannot bite?' 'You may say that, sir.' 'Now, tell me, O'Brien, what's the dog's name?' added Greene. Here the witness scratched his head, and hesitated to answer. 'Don't be delaying the court, sir,' cried the judge, 'or, I protest, I'll dismiss your case.' 'Oh, then, your honour, as I must tell it,' replied the witness, 'he's a namesake of your own, for his name is Major.' This palpable hit at the Bench, to which Greene had adroitly led up, convulsed the court with laughter.

A famous barrister named Bushe was addressing the jury on behalf of a prisoner, when the judge shook his head in doubt or denial of one of the advocate's arguments. 'I notice the motion of his lordship's head,' continued Bushe. 'You, gentlemen of the jury, may imagine it implies a difference of opinion with me; but I think you are mistaken; it is merely accidental. Believe me, gentlemen, if you remain here many days you will yourselves perceive that when his lordship shakes his head there is nothing in it.'

But the judge is not always the butt in these caustic encounters between the Bar and the Bench in Ireland. A well-known lawyer, still living, defended a prisoner for horse-stealing before a judge with whom he had had some unpleasant encounters. Seeing no other means of getting his client off, counsel set up a plea of insanity. The judge, in his charge, reminded the jury that there was no dispute as to the facts of the case. 'But,' continued his lordship, 'the plea of insanity has been set up; and I charge you, gentlemen of the jury, that it should receive your very just and serious deliberation; but I must be allowed to say, for myself, that, upon a review of the whole case, I can discover no evidence of insanity on the part of the prisoner, except, perhaps, in the selection of his counsel.'

In Ireland, also, lawyers go to extreme lengths in their efforts to confuse witnesses and discredit their evidence. The great Daniel O'Connell defended two brothers named Hourigan, who were indicted, at the Clare Assizes held in Ennis, with having set fire to the outhouses of a neighbouring farmer with whom they had had a quarrel. The evidence of the Crown was that the buildings had been ignited with pitch, a quantity of which it was known the prisoners had procured some short time before the fire. At the opening of the trial O'Connell had a small pot containing pitch secretly placed on the witness-table, near the chair in which—as is the custom in Ireland—the witnesses sit during examination, and over the pot he placed his large, broad-brimmed hat, so as to effectually conceal it. The principal witness for the prosecution was a police officer, who had arrived on the scene during the fire, and, from the strong smell of pitch which prevailed, he conjectured that it had been used in the destruction of the out-offices. 'You know the smell of pitch, then?' said O'Connell, in cross-

examination. 'I do—well,' replied the witness. 'You seem to be a man able to smell pitch anywhere?' 'Anywhere I find it.' 'Even here, in this court, if it were here?' 'No doubt I would.' 'And do you swear you don't get a smell of pitch here?' cried O'Connell. 'I do,' replied the witness; 'if it were here I'd smell it.' O'Connell, lifting his hat, disclosed the pot of pitch at the witness's feet; and then, indulging in an outburst of characteristic vituperation, cried out to the astonished witness, 'Now you may go down, you perjured rascal.' The jury were so much impressed by the trick that they acquitted the prisoners.

O'Connell saved another prisoner from the gallows by a still more ingenious subterfuge. He defended at the Cork Assizes a man named Hogan, who was charged with murder. A hat, believed to be Hogan's, was found on the scene of the murder, and was a strong point in the case against the prisoner. The witness who discovered the hat, and identified it in court, was a simple-minded but voluble man, who answered questions put to him without much thought. 'You are perfectly sure,' said O'Connell, in cross-examination, 'that this is the hat which you found on the road near the murdered man?' 'Sartin sure,' replied the witness. O'Connell looked into the hat, and after a careful inspection said to the witness, 'Was the prisoner's name, P-A-T H-O-G-A-N' (spelling the words slowly), 'in the hat at the time you found it?' 'Twas, of course.' 'Come, sir, are you sure?' 'Sartin sure, yer honour.' 'You can't be mistaken?' 'No, yer honour.' 'And all you have sworn is as true as that?' 'Yes, yer honour.' 'Then go off the table this minute,' cried O'Connell triumphantly; and, addressing the judge, he said, 'My lord, there can be no conviction here; there is no name in the hat.' The jury found the prisoner 'not guilty.'

In the old days, before railways, a man was tried for highway robbery before Chief Baron O'Grady, on the last day of the Kilkenny Assizes. To the surprise of his lordship, who considered the case clearly proved, the verdict was 'Not guilty.' The judge, turning to the Crown solicitor, inquired, 'Is there any other indictment against this *innocent* man?' 'No, my lord,' was the reply. 'Then tell the jailer,' said the judge, 'not to let him loose till I get half-an-hour's start of him, for I'd rather not meet him on the road.'

Indeed, Irish juries have a 'weakness'—to use a native colloquialism—for the man in the dock. But sometimes a prisoner makes a mistake. At a Quarter-sessions held in Tralee recently, a prisoner, who had no counsel to defend him, was told by the judge that he could 'challenge' or direct to stand aside any juror whom he thought would not do him justice. Presently the prisoner challenged a juror named Michael O'Brien. 'Arrah, Darby,' said the astonished Michael,

addressing his friend in the dock, 'what do yez mane at all? Sure I'm for yez, you omadaun.'

Another simple prisoner was Patrick Mac-Namara, recently indicted at the Limerick Assizes for stealing a sheep, the property of his landlord, Sir Garrett FitzMaurice. He pleaded that he found the animal straying on the road, and was simply driving her home. 'Can you read?' asked the judge. 'A little bit, me lord,' was the reply. 'Then you could not be ignorant that the sheep belonged to your landlord, Sir Garrett FitzMaurice, as his brand G.F.M. was on her.' 'True enough, me lord,' said the prisoner; 'but, sure, I thought the letters stood for "Good Fat Mutton."'

The answers given by witnesses to counsel examining or cross-examining them are often very comical. In an assault case the prosecutor deposed that he was suddenly aroused from his slumbers by a blow on the head administered by the prisoner. 'And how did you find yourself then?' asked the counsel. 'Fast asleep, sir,' replied the witness.

An old pedagogue, named O'Doherty, of local celebrity in Donegal, was a witness in a case. During his cross-examination counsel said, 'Where were you, sir, on this night?' 'This night!' exclaimed O'Doherty. 'Oh, but you're

the larned gintleman! *This night* isn't come yet. I suppose you mane that night?' 'Well, I suppose the schoolmaster was abroad that night doing nothing,' continued the counsel. 'What's nothing?' asked the witness. 'What is it, yourself?' said the counsel. 'I'll tell you, thin,' replied O'Doherty. 'It's a footless stocking without a leg.'

In a case tried before the late Baron Dowse a refractory witness refused to answer a question put by counsel, and said, 'If you ax me that question agin I'll give you my shoe on your poll.' 'Does your lordship hear that language?' said the counsel, appealing to the judge. 'The answer to my question is essential to my client's case. What does your lordship advise me to do?' 'If you are resolved to repeat the question,' said Baron Dowse, 'I'd advise you to move a little farther from the witness.'

The politeness of the Irish peasantry is proverbial. There was a ludicrous exemplification of it at the Roscommon Assizes recently at the trial of a man for robbery and assault. An old woman named Mrs Cosgrave was the prosecutrix. On being asked if she saw in court the man who had assaulted and robbed her, she turned round, and pointing to the prisoner in the dock, said, most politely, 'There's the very gintleman, yer honour.'

SCOTCH FISHER LIFE, AS IT WAS AND IS.

Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.



THOSE who have never lived near, or been thrown into contact for a lengthened period with, the fishing population on the east coast of Scotland can have little idea of the great change that has taken place in the social condition of the fishermen within the last forty or fifty years. Among many communities, the villages of Cairnbulg, Inverallochy, and St Combs, grouped together almost on the Buchan portion of the Aberdeenshire coast, may be instanced as an excellent specimen of evolution, in respect of the marvellous improvement upon the fishermen in all matters affecting their home, in the course of the last half-century. Fifty years ago the villages were practically rude clay huts; while the men themselves were ignorant—like the most of their fellows all over the coast—thoughtless of wife and family, and, as a rule, liberal patrons of the public-house. Indeed so keen was their taste for whisky in those days that, in making their engagement for the herring-fishing with the curer, one clause in the agreement was always religiously attended to, and that was to the effect that so many gallons of whisky per week had to

be supplied to each crew, over and above the price for the herrings. The men were very combative, and under the effects of alcohol desperate fights among them were of common occurrence.

In those far-back days the fishermen lived an isolated life, practically partitioned off from the outer world and knowing little of what was going on beyond the confines of their village. Except when they went to Fraserburgh to the summer herring-fishing for a few weeks, the fishermen at the period referred to never left their native village from the time they moved from their mother's knee until they were laid at rest in the quiet churchyard. Literature was an unknown quantity, for the very good reason that only the select few were able to read.

The fishermen's houses, as already indicated, were of a most primitive kind, clay-built and roofed with thatch, with earthen floors, the most of which were as undulating as the surface of the North Sea in a breeze. The houses without exception consisted of a 'but' and a 'ben.' Much controversy has taken place in different parts of the country as to the significance of 'but' and 'ben;' and it therefore may be noted here that the rule among the fisher-people on the Buchan coast is that the 'ben' is the apartment which is in common or everyday use, while the 'but' is a

room of a rather higher status, and used on special occasions only. The furniture was confined to two or three deal chairs, a deal table, and a chest or two, with the absolutely necessary box-bed set against the partition in the house. Doors were seldom, if ever, locked at night. The villagers must not have indulged in much scandal, or been fearful of family secrets or family movements being known, for such a thing as a window-blind was never drawn. Few houses, indeed, were provided with what was considered an unnecessary piece of furnishing. To have seen a blind down would have been considered an extraordinary thing; and, in the opinion of a villager, nothing less than a corpse in the house would justify such a great innovation. The one disagreeable feature about the fishermen's surroundings was the household 'midden' or ashpit, which usually occupied a prominently convenient position at the front and only door. It was an age of utility then, and the housewife thought less of the ornamental than of the saving of trouble.

As for the laws of hygiene, if one couldn't survive the odours arising from the midden during the scorching heat of August he was not fit to buffet the wintry waves that beat mercilessly against their rock-bound shore. So far as concerns light, unfortunately nothing had yet been heard of gas, the electric-light, or paraffin; and even a tallow-candle was a modern luxury in these isolated villages. The lamp used was called an 'Eelie Dolly' by the fisher community. It was a vessel with double shells, and was a thing of most primitive shape and manufacture. A common 'rash' or rush, peeled, served as a wick, while the oil used was of home manufacture, and most commonly extracted from the dog-fish. 'Burning the midnight oil' was a caution in those days, seeing that the lamp always gave a modicum of light but an excess of smell, before which the odours of a herring-offal factory would have been immediately overwhelmed and utterly annihilated. Coals, the use of which is the hall-mark of trade development and advancing civilisation all the world over, had not found their way to the villages. The big magnates of Fraserburgh burned coals judiciously mixed with peat; but the fishermen still used, as their forefathers had ever done, peat and wood for heating and cooking purposes in the house. It was pretty well through the century before coals came into general use among the villagers.

The educational system obtaining among the fisher-folks up to nearly the fifties was simplicity itself. At the age of nine or ten years the children were sent to a dame-school, where two important regulations were laid down. The first was that the children had to wash themselves each evening at the village well before going to bed. Soap and a towel were considered a luxury fit only for the great of the land, and a good douche of cold water, left to natural laws to dry, completed the bairns' toilet for the day. The

other condition was that the children should each bring a peat daily as part-payment of the school fee. With a regular attendance for a week or two, the 'bing' of peats in the corner of the room assumed such dimensions that many times the pupils last to arrive had considerable difficulty in squeezing into the apartment, which was ridiculously small at the best. At the dame-school the children were taught the alphabet and words of three or four letters. After completing their course with Lizzie Davidson, the scholars graduated into an establishment kept by a man named Drysdale, who was half-teacher, half-preacher. The curriculum at what may be called the village 'High School' was not over-ambitious. It consisted of being able to read portions of Scripture and add very short lines of figures together. The teacher himself was not above being troubled with big words; and when he came to any he told the scholars to pass them over as 'foreigners.' At odd times there were numerous foreign words in the lesson.

Fifty years ago herring-nets were hand-made, hemp being the material used, and it was part of the children's education to learn to weave these nets. Thus they early became of considerable assistance to their parents, and were proficient hands at the work by the time they reached manhood. Net-weaving in the old days was one of the most important works in a fisherman's life, and during the winter months this task occupied practically his whole time.

From net-weaving to marriage is a far cry; but as girls were often employed at the work, many a courtship which ended in a wedding had its start when the lads and lasses were weaving the nets.

It is an interesting fact that fishermen on the northern shores of Scotland have ever married early. The marriage function has changed its character very greatly in recent times. Long ago it was made the occasion of a great feast and a bigger drink. There was hardly any limit to the invitations given, which of course were always by word of mouth; but it was a strict and honourable rule that each guest present should bring with him or her to the marriage feast eatables or drinkables of some kind.

This took the form of tea, sugar, cream, sweet biscuits, bread, jams of all descriptions, oat cakes specially made, &c., with perhaps some liquid that shall not be mentioned. The modern institution of dowering a bride with presents which the guests could not share has never found favour in the fisher-people's eyes. On the marriage morning—and this more particularly illustrates a wedding long ago—the children were treated to milk porridge, which was considered a great delicacy fifty years ago, while the grown-up people were served with an abundant supply of ale brose strongly charged with whisky. The proverbial button was placed in the brose-dish, and the happy finder was, of course, to be first married.

The marriage ceremony generally took place in the afternoon. The wedding procession through the village, with guns firing, accompanied sometimes by fiddle or other kind of music, was an indispensable part of the day's proceedings. At night a fish supper was partaken of, at which all the delicacies already mentioned were done ample justice to. The feast, as it was called, was finished in one day; but drinking went on for a week, and sometimes a fortnight, with the result that fierce quarrels arose among the men, and fighting and bloodshed turned the villages into a regular Donnybrook Fair. There were no policemen in those days to interrupt the sport, and when the carousal was over all was forgotten and forgiven.

As to fishing operations, some curious customs prevailed among these old-fashioned fishermen. For instance, when a crew was 'made up,' each fisherman brought with him his particular portion of the boat's sail, which he claimed and received again when the season's operations were over. Again, at a fishing which was called 'the great line shots,' a term now completely obsolete, each fisherman had his own particular area at sea set apart, wherein he cast his lines, and no fisherman would have thought of intruding upon his neighbour's ground.

These old fishermen were intensely superstitious, as fishermen in past ages were all the world over; and a catalogue of their beliefs in 'the uncanny' in various shapes would fill a volume. They firmly believed in the evils of cock-crowing shortly before midnight, ghosts, sounds before death, and visions of people immediately before death. Two marriage-parties meeting on the road was a certain indication that two or three of the people in the procession, or some of their relatives or friends, would die before a year had elapsed. Ministers of the gospel were held to be most unlucky, and they were most unceremoniously and most unkindly placed on a level with pigs, hares, salmon, &c., any, or any part, of which found in a boat meant some dire calamity at sea to the crew. So strongly did the fishermen feel on this point some fifty years ago that many a time a crew lying in Fraserburgh harbour, on board of whose boat the leg of a hare or a pig had been found, remained ashore for a night, or perhaps two, until the evil spell had lost its power. Many a time limbs of the much-hated animals were surreptitiously placed on board the boats by the 'wags' of Fraserburgh, who, in those sleepy days, were well rewarded by the idle crowd about the shore for raising a storm of excitement among the fishermen and a laugh at their expense.

While the men display eccentric notions of life, the women are not without their peculiarities. One interesting fact is the particular pattern of shawl or plaid worn by the women of the respective villages. The women of Cairnbulg and Inverallochy have always worn a red-and-black-striped shawl, while those belonging to St Combs

display one of blue and black. So strong is the clan feeling that one would not wear the other's colours under any circumstances. Of course, if a St Combs girl marries a Cairnbulg or Inverallochy fisherman and settles down in either of these villages she has to don the red and black, and *vice versa* on the part of a Cairnbulg or Inverallochy girl.

Funerals among the fishermen at the time referred to had pretty much the arrangements of a marriage, in so far as whisky and tobacco played an important part.

The life of these villagers, though uneventful in one sense, was not without its sad and tragic side at times. Boats, alas! many a time have gone to the fishing from the villages, and, overwhelmed by the sea, have disappeared without leaving a single vestige of them behind. When any unusual calamity of this kind occurred, the excitable and impressionable nature of the people led to displays of grief uncontrollable beyond description.

These villagers have also had troubles which comparatively few towns in Scotland have had to face. During this century the villages have been twice devastated by cholera of a most virulent kind. If they were not the only fishing-villages in the north of Scotland attacked by this terrible disease in 1847, they at least were by a long way the most severely handled. The visitation of '47 was awful, and quite turned the villages into charnel-houses. People went to bed quite well, but were dead before morning. Not a house escaped this terrible messenger of death. The people were perfectly panic-stricken, and as many as were able fled to the country, while others lived among the overturned boats that were hauled up on the beach some distance from the houses. Harrowing tales are still told of how women had, unaided, to coffin their own husbands. Others saw friends drop down and die before their eyes; while some with father, mother, sister, or brother lying dead could not, in the panic, get any one to assist in burying the dead one. In the early stages of the epidemic the victims were mostly the drunken, loose characters of the villages, and the trouble was therefore dubbed 'the godless disease.' When, however, death laid its grasp heavily on the 'unco guid,' that class quickly repented of their want of charity, and could not bear to hear the expression used. The last visitation was in 1866; but, though bad enough, the death-rate on that occasion showed a distinct diminution. Those epidemics were looked upon by many of the simple-minded villagers as a dispensation of Providence; but, though the infection was in 1847 brought to the villages by a mussel-boat, and in 1866 by a seaman, there is no doubt the unsanitary surroundings of the people greatly contributed to the spread of the disease.

After conquering their drinking habits many years ago, the villagers went in for a milder dissipation in the shape of soirees. Of these institutions the fishermen are undoubtedly the warmest

supporters ; in fact, the Christmas soiree begins to be looked forward to about the month of August. One of the fishermen generally essays to give an address or 'his experiences' at these gatherings ; and at the village soiree proper one invariably occupies the chair. The appearance of the fishermen as platform speakers—although some of them have a remarkable faculty of extempore preaching—is sometimes intensely amusing, not to say ludicrous. At one of these soirees, held in a village near Fraserburgh fully twenty years ago, a fisherman was chairman, and, addressing the meeting, he said, 'Dear brudders, we'll open the proceedings by singing the Hundreth Psalm. We all know it, and I will just repeat the first four lines :

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
In pastures green He leadeth me
The quiet waters by.'

In his excitement the poor chairman plunged, without any feelings of remorse, from the Hundreth into the Twenty-third Psalm ; and, fortunately or unfortunately, that he had made a mistake never occurred to him.

All soirees, even at the date mentioned, were not, however, so rich in amusement as the one referred to. How changed are the people now ! Education, newspapers, and contact with the outer world have revolutionised the fishermen's life and surroundings. Drink has been practically abjured by every one of them for many years back. A strongly-marked evangelical spirit now animates the people, and an air of comfort, and a contented, happy community, well housed and well cared for, has taken the place of the thoughtless, hard-drinking, and indigent population of the past. Education is far advanced, and scholars of exceptional repute are sent out from the village school, which is excellently equipped, and stands high in the inspector's annual reports.

The revival and temperance waves of thirty or forty years ago took a strong hold upon the villagers, and the effect of these may still be plainly seen. The great bulk of these fishermen are Congregationalists, and their religious feelings are so strongly marked that they ungrudgingly walk to Fraserburgh, a distance of from three to five miles away, each Sunday regularly, so that they may be privileged to worship in the way that seems to them best. This they have done for forty years back. Improvement has gone on at such a rate since the condition of their social life changed that these fishermen are now as fine a seafaring race, physically and intellectually, as can be found on the British coast.

Fifty years ago, with their tiny cockle-shells of boats, they never ventured, when engaged in fishing operations, farther than a mile or two from their own shore. Except on rare occasions, they preferred to wait almost within hail of the beach till the fish came to them. Not only do the

present race of fishermen, with their splendid boats and complete equipment, almost cross the North Sea in search of the spoils of the deep, but they carry on their campaign on almost all parts of the British coast. They are equally at home on the Barra coast, at Stornoway, Orkney, Shetland, the east coast of Scotland, Scarborough, Yarmouth, the English Channel, and even the wild western coast of Ireland. As proof of their qualities, a good many of these villagers have acted as fishery instructors—the chief being an Inverallochy man—on the Irish coast, under the Congested Districts Board of Ireland. Their efforts have met with most gratifying success. The fishing has been developed at a wonderful rate, and its future possibilities, thanks to the skill and teaching of these Buchan fishermen, are of great consequence to the poor Irishmen inhabiting the north and north-west coasts of Ireland.

One of the most important undertakings ever carried out, affecting the interests of the villagers, is on the eve of realisation. A new light railway between Fraserburgh and the villages has been sanctioned, and will be completed within a reasonable time. The long lease of isolation will be at an end, and the resident portion of the people brought into still closer touch with the outside world. The beach between Inverallochy and St Combs, and miles beyond, is beautiful, while a magnificent stretch of links, with turf of remarkably fine quality, second to none in the north for golfing purposes, lies ready to be laid out. With the projected improvements completed, these fishing villagers, with their once primitive ways of life still clinging to the older generation, will enter upon a new and a better era.

THE COTSWOLD HILLS.

Now the sunset lies a-dying, and the purple fades to gray,
And the arms of night steal softly round the weary,
restless day ;
All the rich and mighty city in her fairest robe is drest ;
But I would that I were roaming o'er the Uplands of
the West !

There's a stretch of barren hillside where the white road
leads along ;
Where the larks are quivering downward in a throbbing
joy of song ;
Where, below, the far-off valley lies asleep in misty rest,
While the sunset glory lingers on the Uplands of the West ;

Where the wolds roll wide and lonely, and the lapwings
call and sweep,
And the dry bents rustle gently to the harebells dropt asleep,
And the silence broods in coolness on the hill's thyme-
fragrant breast,
And the night-breeze wakes and ruffles o'er the Uplands
of the West.

This great world may hold scenes fairer and more dazzling
bright than this,
In far lands of snow-crowned splendour, or in golden isles
of bliss ;
All the wide earth laughs in beauty ; but my heart loves
still the best
Just the way the dusk flows softly o'er the Uplands of
the West.

EVA D.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



'LLOYD'S' AND OVERDUE SHIPS.

SHE is overdue, and ninety per cent. has been paid on her.' The anxiety and suspense which such an announcement brings to those having friends on board the overdue vessel must be left to the imagination of the reader. It is the financial side only of this subject which the present article deals with.

Not within the present generation have so many vessels been announced as overdue as during the opening months of the present year. Commanders of ocean-going steamers and experienced travellers unite in testifying that the February gales in the Atlantic were something quite unprecedented. Ten or more steamers trading between this country and America have never been heard of since sailing, and are now missing vessels, having in all probability been worsted in an unequal contest with the elements; while others, more fortunate, arrived in a bruised and battered condition just when the last ray of hope was disappearing from the hearts of those interested in them.

The two steamers which perhaps excited the greatest interest were the Cunard steamer *Pavonia* and the Hamburg liner *Bulgaria*. Both are magnificent vessels and regular Atlantic traders, and both were seriously overdue. Indeed, as much as ninety-two pounds per cent. was reported as paid on the Hamburg steamer within an hour of the news reaching Lloyd's that she had arrived at the Azores; but the rate on the Cunarder never exceeded twenty-five guineas. The splendid record which the Cunard Company has for safety no doubt accounts for the reluctance which underwriters on their steamer showed in paying the very high rates usually asked to relieve them of their risks on vessels which are seriously overdue.

Gales in the Atlantic do not, however, exhaust themselves there; they create financial gales at Lloyd's. Not for a long period back has there been such excitement in that venerable institution as was recently seen. There is a room in

Lloyd's known to the initiated as the 'Chamber of Horrors,' in which are posted up from time to time the names of vessels overdue, missing, and wrecked. Of late this list has been terribly heavy. Underwriters eagerly scan the lists as they are posted up, and then as eagerly consult their risk-book to see whether or not they are interested in the casualty announced; and their faces generally tell the tale whether they have been fortunate or the reverse.

Owing to the exceptionally large number of vessels announced as overdue lately, quite an unusual amount of reinsurance has been effected in Lloyd's. The 'Doctors' have been kept very busy. The 'Doctor' is the familiar name given to a broker whose special business it is to insure overdue vessels. When an underwriter who has taken a risk on a vessel in the ordinary course sees her noted as overdue, he has only two courses open to him. He may either stick to his risk and trust to the vessel arriving, or he may get rid of his risk by reinsurance. In the latter case he calls in the 'Doctor' and tells him to reinsure his line at a certain limit—say forty, sixty, eighty, or even ninety per cent., according as the vessel is looked on as only moderately or seriously overdue. Underwriters can usually be found in Lloyd's who will accept any kind of risk, provided they are paid what they consider an adequate premium; and so the 'Doctor' soon comes back to his principal, and tells him he has been able to get the risk transferred to another underwriter. The original underwriter then awaits the issue of events. In due time the vessel reinsured as an 'overdue' either is lost or arrives. In the former case the original underwriter pays the loss to his assured, and then claims the amount from the underwriter with whom he reinsured his risk. Should the vessel arrive, however, he has lost the amount he paid to reinsure, which amount is a clear gain to the underwriter with whom he reinsured.

The arrival of an overdue vessel is notified at Lloyd's by the ringing of the 'Big Bell.' This

bell has a remarkable history. It belonged to H.M.S. *Lutine*, which was wrecked just one hundred years ago (in 1799). She sailed from Yarmouth with a large amount of specie on board, and was wrecked on the very night of her sailing, near the Zuider Zee. The specie was insured at Lloyd's, and the underwriters paid the loss, hoping to recoup themselves to some extent by the recovery of the specie from the wreck. This country was then at war with Holland, and the Dutch Government claimed the whole as a prize. Subsequently, however, the King of the Netherlands agreed to give up to Lloyd's the portion of the salvage claimed by him, which was one-half.

Some fifty years ago specie to the value of fifty thousand pounds was recovered from the *Lutine*, and further amounts at later dates. The ship's bell was part of the salvage, and now occupies a prominent position in the underwriters' room at Lloyd's, and is used, as already stated, to announce the arrival of overdue vessels. The ringing of the

'Big Bell,' as it is called, is a moment of keen excitement in Lloyd's. All ears are open, and all eyes turned to the end of the room, where in a kind of pulpit stands the crier, resplendent in red gown, who, having rung the bell, announces in stentorian tones the arrival of the 'overdue.' Meantime, the underwriters who have stuck to their lines and not reinsured are very happy; others who had given her up for lost and paid perhaps ninety per cent. to reinsure their amounts may be excused if they are not so jubilant. The ringing of the 'Big Bell' has brought home to them the fact that they have paid what is within a few pounds of a *total loss* on a vessel *which has arrived*. In a few moments the arrival of the 'overdue' is flashed all over the country, and it is pleasant to come away from Lloyd's, where, as we have seen, the intelligence produces somewhat mixed feelings, and to picture to ourselves the many homes in which the news will be received as 'tidings of great joy.'

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER V.—A QUESTION OF HONOUR.



CHARLES EDWARD, whom we called the Pretender, and quiet-living people the Young Chevalier: there could be no doubt that the man before me was that unfortunate prince.

In truth, I had none. Had confirmation been needed, I had it in the scene in which he had taken part at the Dower-house, and which forbade the idea that I might be misled by a chance resemblance. So great was the shock of recognition, however, that a minute or two had passed before I ventured another look. Now he was talking earnestly to my cousin, who listened with downcast eyes; he was well in my view as he leaned against the rail of the little bridge; and you may believe that I missed no detail of his appearance. But, above all, 'twas his face that held me.

More than once, in London and in Yorkshire, I had sat at the tables of Tory relations who had been 'out' in the '45; and there, when the wine had routed discretion, I had seen the tears welling to the eyes of these hardened old rebels as they described the gallant youth who had led them in fight, and marched joyously at their head through the privations of a winter campaign. And from all I had heard the one testimony: that Charles Edward was the most handsome and gracious prince of his kingly line.

Now I looked upon the same countenance with my own eyes. Yet 'twas not quite the same. The features were there, but the setting was

fuller and less delicate; and misfortune and care—perhaps other causes not so reputable—had left their marks in deeply-drawn lines. Nevertheless, the face had still a certain stamp of nobility—dignity it could never lack—and one could imagine the charm that had once inspired an army with a love and devotion which flouted death itself. I was a Whig, and a servant of King George, and for a minute even I could not behold him unmoved.

But only for a minute. Then, as the significance of his presence on English ground forced itself upon me, my brain became clear. I had suspected a conspiracy: had I stumbled upon the kernel of it?

In any event, my present duty seemed plain. I did not move. Screened by the friendly holly-bush, I could watch the scene without much fear of discovery. I offer no excuse for so doing, and, indeed, I learnt nothing more. The pair conversed together for some ten minutes, the talking, for the most part, being apparently on the side of the Chevalier. And, in the meantime, my ideas were taking shape.

I must mention one fleeting thought (not altogether to my credit, it might be) that had already crossed my mind. Trying to guess a reason for the meeting of the two, I had a suspicion that brought the blood to my face. The Prince's character was a byword; he was, if all accounts were true, a master in the arts of intrigue; and he had an ancestral example how best to relieve the tedium of an enforced concealment. But the suspicion rose merely to be

dismissed. My momentary doubt did not concern Kitty. It concerned Charles alone; and, from my observation, his demeanour was of the most respectful.

The interview, whatever its object, was not prolonged beyond the ten minutes. Charles held my cousin's hand for an instant, bowed deeply, and so turned away; and she, on her part, remained standing on the bridge until he had climbed the opposite bank. At the top he doffed his hat again, and then disappeared among the trees in the direction of the Hall.

Kitty had begun to retrace her steps, and was coming slowly towards me before I was reminded of my own position. Hitherto I had not considered what my course should be. Now, thinking swiftly, I perceived that there was but one. The new situation must be faced sooner or later. Better, then, that it should be faced at once.

Yet 'twas with no light heart that I stepped forth from my hiding-place. She was within a few yards; and I cannot describe—still less can I ever forget—the look that leaped into her eyes as they fell upon me.

'You—*here*?' she cried.

'Yes,' I returned simply. I could say no more; it never struck me to explain or to justify my presence. Somehow it seemed needless.

'Oh!' For a moment she stood silent, and then: 'You have seen—everything?'

And again I assented.

'You recognised the—you recognised *him*?'

The question scarce required an answer, for she must have gathered from my countenance that I had done so—and more. Shuddering a little, as if she were cold, she walked on.

'We cannot talk here,' said she. 'Let us go back to the house.'

Not a word was spoken betwixt us as we crossed the garden; but, stealing a glance, I saw that her brows were drawn in thought, and her little mouth set in a manner that reminded me curiously of Sir Charles. My own brain was not idle. Fate had brought me to the cross-roads, and in the next minute I must choose my path. Perhaps I should not have hesitated. The safety of the State came first; all other considerations must give way to that; and, knowing what I did—who lay hidden at Langbridge Hall, and what that fact meant—I could doubt no longer that a plot more dangerous and matured than I had suspected was in existence. And, knowing that, I still wavered. The struggle was keen—for Kitty was beside me—but it was soon over. Before we reached the house I had made up my mind.

She led me into an empty room opposite to that in which I had left Mrs Herbert, and closed the door. Then she came straight to the point.

'Well, what are you going to do?' she asked quietly.

'There is only one thing,' said I in the same tone. 'I am deeply sorry, cousin, but—I fear I must ask you to direct me to the nearest inn.'

'The nearest inn! But'—

'I must get a horse to carry me to Bath to-night.'

'To Bath?' Her voice grew harder. 'Then you mean to betray the Prince, Mr Holroyd—and us?'

'Not that!' I cried. 'I wasn't even thinking of the Prince—only that some deep scheme is afoot, and I should fail in my duty if I did not give warning. I can never repay my debt to Sir Charles and you all; and you will believe me that nothing'—

But here her enforced calmness broke down. 'Yet you would not scruple to betray us to my Lord Kynaston?' she interrupted me. 'Is this your honour, cousin? Oh! I am not speaking of our claims on your gratitude. But your promises to me—surely they are not so distant that you have forgotten them?'

'Not so, and you may rest content that I will keep them,' I hastened to say, with more eagerness than discretion.

'In the letter—only to break them in the spirit! 'Twill be a notable service!'

'Your father need not appear in this affair at all'—

'And leave his comrades and the Prince to the tender mercies of—my Lord Kynaston? I am afraid he has already settled that question. He might prefer even the worst to the protection of his good cousin—under these circumstances.' Then her tone changed again. 'But must you go?' she asked, pleading with her eyes. 'After all, we have treated you not ill. Think, cousin! It means the undoing of brave men—perhaps their capture and death. Is there no other way?'

'Would to Heaven there were!' I cried, with all my heart; for truly her scorn was easier to bear than this. But I could see no other way for me.

'Then you will go?'

'I am the king's servant; and 'twould be the blackest treason to do otherwise—to hide what I have learnt to-day.'

'So there is no more to be said?' she asked, turning hopelessly away. 'I am only a weak girl, and cannot keep you here against your will. For the rest—well, it may be you are in the right. And you have to remember your own advancement.'

But this was more than I could stand. 'As God is my judge, I have not thought of myself for a moment!' I burst out. 'You may think hardly of me, cousin Kitty—you cannot think that I would betray my friends to benefit myself. It is no question of persons. You would do much for your cause?'

'I would willingly die for it,' said she softly.

'There is no sacrifice you wouldn't make for it,' I continued. 'Well, my cause is not less dear to me, and how can I desert it when a great danger may threaten it—a danger known to me alone? 'Tis bitter hard for both of us—for me, perhaps you cannot understand how hard. But I dare not stand aside. In honour I must go on.'

Kitty's eyes dropped as I proceeded, and I perceived that my appeal was not in vain.

'Forgive me, cousin George,' she said. 'I should not have spoken in that way; but it was all so difficult; and—oh!' she cried, her voice breaking, 'there is nobody to tell me if I am doing right. If only my father were here!'

Frankly, I could not echo the wish; for the meaning of past events was now clearer to me, and I was beginning to suspect that Sir Charles had laid and baited a pretty trap to detain me at the Dower-house as long as it might suit his purposes. And for other reasons, which you may guess, I was not too anxious to meet him just then.

'At the least, will you not await his return?' Kitty went on. 'He cannot be long, and surely an hour or two matters little.'

I shook my head, albeit most reluctantly, and she said no more. The consciousness of her failure showed itself in a pathetic droop of her mouth, and I hastily averted my eyes. Never had I been so hateful to myself, and I felt doubly so when I heard a little sob, and, looking again, saw the tears glistening on her lashes. For a moment, as she strove bravely to control her emotion, her sweet face came betwixt me and my duty, and I had a mad impulse to throw honour aside and choose the easier path. Then I took her hands in mine.

'Kitty, believe that I would give the world to save you this pain!' I cried.

'I am very foolish,' she said, trying to smile. 'But I was thinking of my father—and the others. They have no warning, and what will happen'—

'I was just about to speak of that,' I said; and, indeed, I had not intended to depart until I had made some arrangement to ensure the safety of my friends. 'Whatever befalls, your father must not come to grief through me.'

She withdrew her hands, but the colour stole back to her cheek as I spoke, and there was a new light in her eyes. After a minute she glanced at me shyly.

'I have a plan—if I durst ask the favour.'

'I am trying to find one,' said I.

'I can scarce expect you to grant it,' she continued quickly—'to take a letter to Bath for me, and promise to deliver it before you see Lord Kynaston. More, to say or do nothing in this matter until to-morrow. Is it too much, cousin? I cannot tell what my father will

do; but at the worst 'twill give us time to run away.'

Considering, I convinced myself that the request was not unreasonable—that, at least, not much further mischief could be accomplished in a few hours. By our inclinations agreeing, the result was not long in doubt. So:

'I will do it, Kitty—for your sake,' I promised.

She reddened a little. 'Be sure I can never forget your kindness, cousin,' she replied, and then ran on: 'Now you will want a horse, and if you can wait—I have the call of Mr Kennett's stables, and will send to the Hall for one at once. 'Twill be quicker—the nearest inn is three miles away. Meanwhile, you have your excuses to make to Mrs Herbert.'

Then she went off; and, the die being cast, I crossed the hall and woke Mrs Herbert to hear my news. My pretext was that I felt much better, and so had prevailed upon Miss Kitty to borrow a horse to take me to Bath. The interval was pleasantly spent in combating the good lady's endeavours to change my purpose.

At last, after nearly half-an-hour, the summons came. My cousin had been as good as her word: an excellent animal was waiting outside, under charge of a grinning hostler. At the door she handed me the letter. It had this address: 'To Thomas Kennett, Esquire of Langbridge, at the Pelican Inn, Bath.'

'I cannot be so certain of finding my father,' she explained, as if divining my thoughts.

'You may trust me to see it safe, cousin,' said I.

Then our farewells were spoken. That she did not offer me her cheek as we parted was doubtless due to her father's absence, and I had no fancy to claim it as a cousinly right.

'And the direction?' I asked, having mounted.

'Hold to the left after leaving the avenue, and a quarter of a mile will bring you to the Bath road. Good-bye, cousin! Perhaps we may meet again some time—when the fates are kinder!'

As I rode away I vowed that it should not be my blame if we did not, and at no distant date.

Six o'clock had struck and 'twas long dark when I pulled up in the courtyard of the Pelican Inn at Bath, after an uneventful but most tiring ride. Mr Kennett was not within, but had been there lately; mine host opined that he might be found at the Pump-room. Now my chief desire was to get the disagreeable part of my task over as speedily as might be; and so, having delivered the horse to the landlord's care and attended to my toilet, I betook myself forthwith, under the guidance of a link-boy, to the famous meeting-place of the Bath quality.

There a new difficulty hindered me. The ushers, looking askance at my riding-costume,

were reluctant to admit me; and not until I had exhausted argument, and (as the last resource) mentioned my office, was I permitted to pass those jealously guarded portals. Entering, I was taken in charge by one with the manner of a grand-duke.

'This way, if you please,' said he. 'You would wish my Lord Kynaston to be informed, sir? His lordship has just come, and as you are not in dress, perhaps you would prefer to await him in an anteroom?'

Doubtless he believed that my business concerned the State, and I could do nought but curse him for an officious fool, and follow. But now my good luck was to have a turn; for, crossing the vestibule, the first man on whom I clapped eyes was Kennett himself, walking towards the door with every mark of haste and perturbation in his demeanour. Seeing me, he stopped as if shot.

'You?' he cried.

'I have been looking for you, sir,' said I. 'I am just arrived from Langbridge, and have a message for you.'

'From Langbridge?' he repeated, with a glance that (to my mind) was not free of apprehension. 'I am in some hurry'—

'It need not detain you a minute.'

He turned with me at once, but spoke not another word until the usher had shown us into an empty room and there left us alone. For a moment the only sound was the music of a minuet that came faintly to our ears. Then:

'Well, what the devil is it?' he demanded.

I had cause to resent this tone, but I saw that, for some reason (which I hoped was the miscarriage of his plans), he was in the vilest temper, and so contented myself with pulling out Kitty's letter. He seized upon it without ceremony.

'Ah! poor Kitty Hollingworth,' cried he, tearing it open.

I watched him narrowly as he scanned the contents; and although they seemed to be of the briefest, he must have read them over five or six times. From his face—and be sure I missed not a shade of expression—the news was far from pleasing. At length, with a gesture of anger, he crushed the paper in his palm.

'This too!' he muttered, having apparently

forgotten me. 'Good God! what will Sir Charles say to it? If I can only catch him before that confounded!—'

Then he recollected himself, and his hand wandered to his sword-hilt as his eyes caught mine.

'Sir, you have my compliments,' said he. 'A nice bit of work, faith! May I ask what you intend now?'

'Your pardon, but that is my affair,' I returned, bowing.

'And not hard to guess. You will seek out Kynaston—and, Gad! he is to be congratulated on an apt pupil!'

'Oh! you have still a few hours,' said I, nettled by his gibes. 'Mistress Hollingworth has my word that I shall say nothing of your little plan until to-morrow.'

'And then?'

'That you may also guess.'

He took a step towards me, still gripping his hilt. 'So you really expect us to depend upon *your* word, sir?' he asked.

I bowed again.

'After our former meeting—and your declaration? And now, after all, you have proved yourself the spy and informer! Sir, I will ask to be excused.'

Plainly he was bent on forcing a quarrel, but had overlooked one small circumstance. Otherwise, to be honest, his task would not have been difficult. Even as it was, I could scarce control myself to reply calmly:

'There is but one way to answer a lie such as that, sir. Unluckily, as you are aware, my sword-arm is useless for the moment.'

'I beg you to believe that I had forgotten it,' he said, reddening somewhat. 'Nevertheless, I am ready to repeat the words whenever it may suit your convenience.'

'And I, not less ready to meet them. Meanwhile'—

Here, warned by a noise at the door, I glanced round, to see, standing just within it, the dapper figure of Lord Kynaston! There was a twinkle in his keen eyes as they travelled from one to other of us, and I wondered how much of our conversation he had heard.

(To be continued.)

THE GOLDFIELDS OF SIBERIA.



OLD is found sporadically over the greater part of all Siberia in larger or smaller quantities. East of the Urals gold is worked along the basins of the Obi, the Yenisei, and the Angara Rivers—all west of Lake Baikal. East of that lake the principal gold-workings are at Merchinsk on the Amur

River, or far away to the north along the beds of the streams that water the territory between the Amur and the Lena Rivers.

The whole industry of gold-getting is carefully watched and regulated by the Russian Government, and no gold produced can be legally disposed of but to the Government. According to the present regulations, the gold

recovered is sent to one of the Government proof-offices, where it is assayed and purchased at a fixed rate, a certain percentage being withheld to cover the cost of manipulation. For Eastern Siberia the chief centre is now Irkutsk; but it is intended shortly to establish proof-offices at more convenient centres for the gold brought from the Maritime Province—probably at Blagovestchensk and Khabarovsk, which will save the great cost of carriage to such a distant town as Irkutsk.

The gold found in these districts is all alluvial, and, in spite of the most primitive means of washing, returns a very fair yield. The want of enterprise which the Russian shows in most undertakings is very conspicuous here. Though gold has been worked for years within a couple of days' journey of the port of Nikolaevsk, at the mouth of the Amur River, there are still practically no roads of any kind to the gold-workings; and the cost of supplies of all kinds—for the country is a desert—is, of course, exceedingly high. The want of communications also prevents the importation of the newest machinery, although the Russian Government recently passed a law to allow gold-working machinery to be admitted duty-free into all parts of the empire. This privilege has given a slight impulse already to the workings on the Obi and Yenisei; but in the Far East matters continue the same. In fact, unless gold can be found very near to the banks of a navigable stream, it does not at present pay to work it in the Maritime Province of Siberia. Some idea of the easy-going system of working and the inadequate supervision over the workmen may be formed from the fact that although nuggets of anything up to half a pound troy-weight are by no means infrequent finds, yet they never come into the hands of the owners of the workings unless by the merest chance, and in valuing a mine are left out of account even when known to occur.

The workmen available are all either Buriats, a Mongolian race native to that part of Asia; Koreans, who are found in large numbers all over the Russian Far East; or, best of all, Chinese. These labourers are all very cheap in regard to the question of wages; but, for the reason stated above, their maintenance is a large item in the cost of working. Of genuine Russians there appear to be hardly any employed in the gold-mines of the Far East, chiefly, no doubt, because the only ones available are either time-expired convicts or criminals sent to the far-distant parts of Siberia for residence. The lack of energy of the Russian, and above all his affection for frequent high holidays and the accompanying big drink, which is almost obligatory for all Russians below the level of the educated classes—a very small exception, this—make him a very unprofitable hand, apart from the suspicion of his honesty and the fear lest his antecedents may

not have taught him more than is desirable as to the means of disposing of contraband gold.

In spite of the most stringent laws on the subject, there is an enormous business done all over Siberia in gold, both dust and, especially, nuggets stolen from the workings. It is a criminal offence to be found in possession of gold; but as so large a proportion of the population of Siberia consists of those sent there for punishment, and the only further punishment they have to fear is deportation to some yet more distant region of the same barren and joyless land, the deterrent is by no means so formidable as a mere perusal of the awful menaces of the statutes at first sight seems to convey. Moreover, the successful dealer in stolen gold rarely fails to escape the penalties of his offences, even when caught red-handed. The Russian official even in Russia proper is seldom altogether unreasonable; and in Siberia, where the pregnant saying of the dishonest *chinovnik*, 'It's a long way to Peter'—that is, St Petersburg—is especially significant, the official is 'good-natured' in the extreme; and a substitute can always be bought to accept unpleasant responsibilities. A great part of this gold is conveyed over the Chinese frontier—that is, across the river Amur, which is the sole defence of the frontier against smuggling from both sides—and finds a ready sale at ruinous sacrifices in exchange for a certain fiery Chinese *vodka*. The valuable properties of this spirit, much esteemed by Russian and native alike, are that it gives the consumer the beatitude of intoxication one day, and on the next he can attain the same exalted state by the cheap expedient of drinking water.

The Russian Government has always shown itself very jealous in the matter of admitting the foreigner to undertakings which its own subjects have never proved equal to working as they would be worked by any other people in the world. The laws forbid the foreigner to hold real property in all those parts of Russia where the foreigner alone would be likely to covet such a privilege; and it is only by making exceptions in favour of individuals that such undertakings as the English exploitation of the Baku naphtha-wells are made possible, and then only with many safeguarding clauses, one of which leaves the Government the right to stop everything at a blow without warning or reason given; the matter of compensation is left to be fought out. In the Far East the same strict rules against the foreigner apply; but some three years ago a special clause was added to the law permitting foreign subjects to petition the Department of Agriculture and State Domains for leave to purchase land and work coal, gold, or other minerals. The explanation given *officially* for this addition to the law is highly instructive; it is that 'Russians have not shown themselves able in the past to work the mineral wealth of this country,

and there is no hope of their doing so in the future.' Permission, therefore, may be obtained by persons not Russian subjects, of whom the Government approves, to own land and work gold, &c. The old law, which even prevented the formation of Russian joint-stock companies in which any foreigner held shares, has thus relaxed much of its stringency; and advantage is already being taken of the opportunities afforded to the non-Russian subject.

In prospecting for gold the regulations ordain that the finder shall at once plant a post on the spot chosen by him, and inform the Government Inspector, who proceeds to the spot and surveys it, marking out the finder's claim to a limited extent on each side of his post. In the case of the banks of a river, both sides may be secured by one finder; but no other claim is allowed to him within so many versts up or down the river on

either side of his first find. The latter difficulty is got over, of course, by entering the second claim in the name of a friend or even a wife; so important to the Russian is the mere letter of the law. In this manner it is possible for one owner to secure actually, though not nominally, any number of miles of gold-bearing stream, his rights extending back for, in the first instance, some half-mile from the banks; the limit of length for each separate claim being five versts, or over three miles. These are liberal figures; and, added to the other considerations mentioned above, sufficiently serve to show in whose hands the gold-workings of Eastern Siberia are. There is no such thing in Russia as the 'gold-diggings fever;' and even on the money market comparatively little is done in gold-mining shares, unless it be in the case of companies which have originated outside Russia.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A SHIP'S RUDDER-RECORDER.



AT a time when collisions and other accidents to ships are far more numerous than they should be, the invention by Mr J. E. Liardet of a helm-recorder—which, actuated by the rudder, gives a history of the course steered, and the various deviations from that course—will meet with the attention which it deserves. The record is made by a pencil on a paper band which moves on a drum actuated by clockwork, and it will not only be useful in clearing up disputed points in case of collision, but it will also afford evidence of the competency of the man at the wheel. Some steersmen will keep to a straight course far better than others, and this means a saving of time and—in the case of a steamship—of fuel. The new apparatus will enable a captain to pick out the best men for work at the wheel.

AN INTERESTING CENTENARY.

The Royal Institution of Great Britain has been celebrating its centenary by a banquet and by commemoration lectures. This noble institution was founded by Benjamin Thompson, afterwards Count Rumford, its scheme being much after the pattern of that pursued by the present Society of Arts—that is, an endeavour to bring science and art into closer contact. With the advent of Davy as manager in 1802 the original programme was dropped, and the Institution became what it is now, a place where lectures are delivered, and where experimental researches in pure science are conducted. It was in the theatre here that Davy first showed the electric light between points of carbon. It was here, in 1812, that Faraday, a young bookseller's apprentice, attended some of

Davy's lectures and afterwards ventured to send his notes of them to the great man. Davy took a fancy to the lad, and offered him the post of assistant in the laboratory. What great things Faraday did for science most people know. It was here that he discovered that close connection between a magnet and an electric current which was the germ which finally gave us the modern dynamo and all its wonders. Tyndall, who followed Davy, kept up the reputation of the Institution by his lectures and scientific researches; and he has been worthily followed by Lord Rayleigh, Professor Dewar, Professor Ray Lankester, and others who are now at the helm of this wonderful ship of science in Albemarle Street, London.

BALLOONS IN WARFARE.

Experiments recently conducted by the Balloon Department at Aldershot point to the possibility of a new horror being added to modern warfare. The idea is to drop from balloons heavy charges of high explosives into fortified works beneath them, so as to annihilate the garrison and dislodge the guns at one fearful operation. The suggestion does not seem to be altogether new, for it has been foreshadowed in some of those lurid novels now so much in vogue, in which scientific marvels of the future are dealt with as if they were realities of the present. The accounts of the experiments in question are somewhat vague—perhaps they are purposely so; but what we gather from them is that it is found possible to send up small balloons carrying explosive charges, and that these charges can be released from a distant point by a modified application of Marconi's wireless telegraphy apparatus. It is stated that the explosives can be so dropped with

wonderful precision, into a space of little over an acre in area, from great distances. We are glad to note that at the Hague conference this method of warfare has been forbidden, at least, for five years.

A NEW PRINTING METHOD.

Although the new process to be described has been called 'an improvement in lithography,' we hesitate to adopt such a title, because it does not employ a stone, but a zinc plate. But the method is lithographic in its nature, seeing that the parts of the metal upon which the ink is not required to act are rendered antagonistic by a chemical application just in the same way that water is made to resist the action of the greasy ink in the usual lithographic process. The nature of the chemical used is at present a secret; but it was discovered by one of those fortunate accidents which have so often come to the aid of observant men. The invention is that of Mr G. R. Hildyard; it can be carried out on an ordinary fast-running letterpress machine; and, as colour-work can be effectively dealt with by the new method, it promises to be of great value. Such a process, in which neither water, gum, nor acid is employed, to say nothing of the saving of labour involved in preparing the stones for the press, appears to offer many advantages.

A NEW CAB-FARE METER.

A fare-meter that claims to possess several improvements upon the taximeter, which has already been noticed in our columns, has been recently introduced. The apparatus has two dials which are inside the vehicle, one of which shows the distance run in miles and yards, and the other the time which has elapsed since the hiring of the cab, both starting from zero when the hirer enters the vehicle. In addition, there are secret registers by which the proprietor can tell the exact distance run by the cab during the day, so as to check the driver's accounts. The connection between the wheel and the mechanism is by a steel wire which receives a 'to-and-fro' motion from a cam on the hub, and works a ratchet-wheel in the fare-meter.

AIR LIQUEFACTION.

We have recently had an opportunity of seeing at the works of Brin's Oxygen Company, Westminster, the apparatus invented by Dr Hampson for the production of liquid air. The small bulk of the apparatus at once excites surprise, for it occupies only two square feet of floor room, so compact is it in its arrangements. Its principal part is a coiled mass of thin copper tubing, through which the air to be liquefied, after being robbed of its moisture and carbonic acid, circulates under pressure from an attached pump; or the air may be driven direct through the apparatus after having been compressed in a portable cylinder. At the lower end of the magazine of

coiled tubing the air is allowed to escape through a valve, and thereupon it immediately expands with the development of great cold; and this cooled air is directed upwards over the tubing, so that the oncoming air is rendered colder and colder until a point is reached when it can no longer retain the aeriform condition, and it accumulates in a vacuum jacketed glass receiver below in the form of a pale-blue liquid. Under the most favourable conditions the air is seen to commence liquefaction five minutes after the compressing pump is put into action. Dr Hampson was, we believe, the first to apply this self-intensive principle—without any aid from other methods of refrigeration—to the liquefaction of gases; and it is due to this principle that the reduction of hydrogen to the liquid state became possible.

PRINTING WITHOUT INK.

The march of improvement has long made it possible to make bricks without straw; but to carry on the work of the printing-press without the employment of printing-ink would seem to be a far more difficult thing to achieve. This apparently impossible task has been conquered by the Electrical Inkless Printing Syndicate of Brixton, London, at whose premises we recently saw the new system in operation. It is, however, not new in principle, for so long ago as 1845 Bain, in his electro-chemical telegraph, adopted the same means for recording his message upon paper. The paper is prepared with a chemical solution, such as nitrate of manganese; and when this, in a damp condition, is run between two metallic surfaces, and a current of electricity is passed from one to the other, the chemical is decomposed and the paper is stained. In the new method of printing, paper is used which has been chemically treated during its manufacture, which can be done without additional cost to the material; and this paper, supported on a metallic surface, receives pressure from the type, while at the same time a current of electricity takes the place of ink. Any existing printing-machine, by the removal of its inking arrangements, and connection with a source of electricity, can be readily converted to the new system, while its output is increased and all cost of ink and rollers saved. The invention appears to have a wide future before it, although it is not likely to prove a rival to high-class printing.

SUBTERRANEAN TRAMWAYS.

A proposal is before the London County Council to relieve the enormous street traffic in the Metropolis by constructing electric tramways just below the surface of the pavements, ready access to which could be obtained at nearly every street corner, in which respect the scheme would differ altogether from the deep-laid electric railways already in use. The trams would run on a double

line of rails, and would occupy subways beneath the chief thoroughfares, such as are now actually provided in the newer streets of London. One great advantage of the system would be that such subways would, besides furnishing a passage for the electric cars, afford accommodation for telephone and telegraph wires, besides gas and water pipes, thus avoiding the constant upturning of the thoroughfares which at present is such a standing disgrace to our municipal arrangements. It is said that such light underground tramways already exist abroad, notably at Boston and at Budapest, and that they are paying concerns. The scheme for London comprises in the first case a line from Westminster to the Bank, a route which at present cannot be traversed above ground without constant vexatious stoppages owing to the congested traffic of the thoroughfares.

ALUMINIUM.

The beautiful white metal aluminium, which, on account of its extreme lightness and cheapness, has within recent years come into such common use, is vulgarly supposed to be free from that tendency to be acted upon by acids which is common to most other metals. Referring to this popular belief, Mr A. Witte, in a recent communication to the Paris Academy of Sciences, has pointed out that the resistance of aluminium to acid influences is due to the presence on its surface of an impervious layer of alumina. When this is removed, as it can be by a solution of common salt and acetic acid, the metal is acted upon very rapidly. A solution of sea-salt will act upon the metal if oxygen and carbonic acid are present at the same time; thus a plate of aluminium, after immersion in sea-water, will be corroded if it is exposed to the air without being cleaned, and the corrosion will become worse and worse. Those in possession of articles made of aluminium, such as field-glasses and the like, should take warning from these facts.

▲ GLORIFICATION OF THE VINE.

Among the many other extraordinary sights that are in store for visitors to the famous French Exhibition next year, one of the most remarkable will be a panorama relating the history of the vine from the earliest biblical days down to the present time. This panorama, which will be 4000 feet long, will form a background to a number of constructions of different historical periods, arranged into streets, according to the epoch they represent. These buildings will be, in reality, restaurants, cafés, and wine-bars, where the different wines from all the countries will be sold by pretty girls in the different costumes of their respective nations. The streets will be bordered with growing vines, and will be lighted by electric lights, arranged inside bunches of grapes. There are to be concerts organised, in

which the songs are all to be in honour of the vine, and representations of vintage scenes; both ancient and modern, will be constantly given—in short, this particular branch of the Exhibition will undoubtedly be a glorification of the vine in all places and all countries. It will occupy 40,000 feet of ground, and will certainly have the merit of novelty.

PILE-DRIVING.

The power of water under pressure has often been applied to pile-driving; but a simple application of the principle as described in the instructions to technical works for the Russian Engineer Corps is of interest. The pile to be driven is furnished on two opposite sides with longitudinal grooves, of sufficient capacity to receive iron gas-pipes, which may be of one and a half inch diameter, but contracted at the lower end like a hose-pipe, and turned towards the iron-shod point of the pile. The upper ends of these pipes are connected by rubber tubing with a force-pump, so that water under pressure, about seventy pounds to the square inch, can be projected into the soil at the base of the pile. It is said that under this treatment a pile will sink into the earth far more quickly than if driven in by the ordinary method. The pipes can be removed so as to do duty again and again as soon as the pile has sunk to the required depth.

BIRDS' NESTS.

In China they make soup of birds' nests, and the 'edible' nest is quite a feature of mandarin cookery. These nests must be very different from some which were exhibited at a recent meeting of the British Ornithologists' Club, where a heron's nest was shown built almost entirely of wire such as is used in reaping-machines to bind the sheaves. A member is in possession of a turtle-dove's nest made entirely of wire, and some Indian crows have discovered that the wire from soda-water bottles makes excellent nesting material. The nest of a spotted fly-catcher was shown, built to a great extent of wax vestas and with the paper of cigarette-ends embedded in the sides; while the wrappings of champagne bottles, evidently left by a picnic party, were found in a moorhen's nest. To illustrate the not very common practice of birds building inside the nests of other birds, the nest of a wagtail built inside the old nest of a blackbird was exhibited, as well as a robin's nest built inside the old nest of a thrush. In this last case there was a cuckoo's egg inside the robin's nest, so that the original structure had served three different species. A woodchat's nest built entirely of flowers lent a pleasing variety to the show; while another covered with confetti showed that the builder must have been a participant in some gay and festive occasion or other. Not only in selecting materials for their nests, but in choosing sites for them, birds would

appear to have strange fancies. They are proverbially fond of churches; and recently a pair of robins have ensconced themselves in the organ-pipes of a church at Bournemouth, while another pair have nested, laid, and hatched on a book-ledge in another country church. Even scarecrows have not deterred them, and the cannon's mouth has lent a ready entrance to 'Miss Wren,' whose nest was found at the farther end of a disused gun, at the bottom of the touch-hole. Railway carriages and signal-posts have equally attracted them; and nests have even been found in the hollows underneath the rails, all the operations of maternity being carried on while the trains thundered above. Wayside letter-boxes have frequently afforded shelter to the hard-pressed but confiding tits, who have found little difficulty in squeezing themselves through the aperture intended to exclude the predatory hand of the tramp. Even the more prosaic sites chosen by some birds for their nests show a curious disregard of the fitness of things, and a contempt of danger which often leads to disastrous consequences. But they are soon consoled for the loss of their homes, and bird families are no sooner broken up than they are constituted again. On the other hand, some birds will return to the same nest year after year.

A ROLLER AND MOWER COMBINED.

What seems to be a very useful application of the horseless vehicle or 'auto-mobile' is the combination of a garden-roller and lawn-mower which has been introduced by Messrs Grimsley & Son of Leicester. The machine is driven by a two-cylinder petroleum engine, and works up to six horse-power. It is well adapted for large areas, such as parks, cricket-grounds, and the like, where the turf must be kept like velvet, and where the tread of an animal's hoofs—the drawback of the ordinary mowing-machine or roller—is objectionable.

HISTORY IN POTTERY.

An exhibition of a quaintly humorous as well as most interesting kind has recently been opened at the Bethnal Green Branch of the South Kensington Museum. This is a collection of pottery and porcelain illustrating popular British history, and is lent by Mr Henry Willett of Brighton. Mr Willett points out in the excellent catalogue which has been published that the history of a country may to a large extent be traced on its homely pottery, and that these articles—plates, mugs, vases, jugs, statuettes, tiles, models, plaques, &c., which may still be found on the mantelpieces of many cottage houses—are the records of popular events. The exhibition has no pretence to excellences of ceramic art, but has been made up of the homely articles referred to; and the classification is not of the usual chronological kind, but deals with the greater human interest which the

various objects present. Thus we find on the cases such titles as Military Heroes, Naval Heroes, Royalty and Loyalty, Noted Men, Costumes and Characters, Religion, Sporting, Conviviality, Crime, and Domestic Incidents. The collection is probably unique, and is extremely interesting to those who care to trace back some of the waves of popular feeling which have swept over the country during the two past centuries.

COMBATING DISEASE.

The Liverpool School of Tropical Disease, which was opened by Lord Lister only a few months ago, is doing good work. A special ward at the Southern Hospital has been set apart for the clinical instruction of the students; and the committee have definitely decided to send a commission to the West Coast of Africa to investigate the causes of malaria and other diseases common to that unhealthy seaboard. Special attention will be paid to the investigation of the theory that malaria is spread by the bite of the mosquito. Major Ross, who has had much experience in the investigation of disease in India, will be in command of the West African expedition, the results accruing from which may be of the most valuable kind.

EXPERIMENTS ON THE FERTILISATION OF PLANTS BY INSECTS.

Professor Plateau, of the University of Ghent, has, after considerable study, been making an exhaustive series of experiments with regard to the fertilisation of plants by means of insects visiting them. Until now it has always been supposed that the blossoms, anxious to attract the little visitors so necessary for their reproductive-ness, not only gave forth their sweetest perfume, but also attired themselves in their gayest and most alluring garb for the same purpose. But Professor Plateau has come to the conclusion that sight plays a comparatively small part in directing the insects' choice of flowers in comparison with scent. His experiments go to prove that they are quite indifferent to the colours of flowers they visit in search of honey, for he has covered over with bits of green leaves the gay petals of such brilliantly-hued flowers as the dahlia, but the insects still continued their visits. Nor were they influenced by the absence of colour caused by removing the corollæ of the bright lobelia, foxglove, or evening primrose. The professor also tried the experiment of artificially providing with honey certain vivid flowers, such as the geranium, which seldom or never attracts the bees, with the result that they were at once allured, passing over similar flowers not thus treated. He then tried the experiment of removing the honey-bearing parts of the flowers, leaving only the showy outer petals. The single dahlia was used as an example, but the flower was neglected until a single drop of honey was inserted, when they came as before.

Oddly enough, even flowers formed of green leaves, when honeyed, were rifled of their sweets, but the bees and other insects were too clever to be tempted by artificial flowers even when provided liberally with honey.

GERMAN EXPLORATION OF BABYLON.

The Sultan of Turkey has just given permission to a German expedition to explore the ruins of Babylon. This exploring party sent out by the Government of Berlin will be directed by Dr Robert Koldewey. The examination of the ruins will last five years, and will doubtless be of immense value historically. The position of the ruins of Babylon was determined for the first time by Mr Layard, who was later the English ambassador to Constantinople. It will be remembered that it was he who discovered the ruins of

Nineveh, which were afterwards explored by French savants (1815-1854). Some years later Sir Henry Rawlinson went over the same ground. The last explorer was Rassam, a friend of Mr Layard. But all these researches were only partial, whereas the Germans, with their usual plodding thoroughness, intend to pursue their examination in a methodical and complete manner. Great sand-heaps along the banks of the Euphrates, where Babylon once stood, two days' march from Bagdad, show where the most important monuments lie. The greatest of these is called El Kass'r. It is said to cover the ruins of the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, where he spent the greatest part of his reign, and where Alexander the Great died. The Germans intend to begin their explorations by opening this sand-hill, and so settling the question.

THE VELVET MOUNTAIN.

AN ADVENTURE IN KAMCHATKA.



I HOPE Porouguine will not see this; if he should I beg to apologise. But there is not much periodical literature at the hot springs of Tareinski, in Kamchatka; and, on the whole, I am inclined to take the risk. Porouguine is not one of your very large Russians—on the contrary, he is rather below the average height; but if you borrow his warm leathern coat—as I did—you will most likely have no difficulty in buttoning it over your chest, and will probably find the ends of the sleeves coming well over the knuckles. Muscles hardened by exercise and exposure to the consistency of triple brass, a constitution as sound as a bell, and a keen diamond-blue eye, set far back in an intent, weather-beaten face, indicate what he is—namely, a mighty hunter; for Porouguine has shot three hundred bears in his time, and kills and cures thousands of salmon yearly with his own hands. He also keeps a log shanty, called, I am led to understand, a 'hotel,' and probably the only one in the vast, silent peninsula of Kamchatka. Porouguine's Hotel has but poor accommodation. Be that, however, as it may, the red glow from its windows, accompanied by the howling of the sledge-dogs tethered in the yard, coming suddenly out of the darkness after a piercingly cold ride through the swampy forest at the head of the East Lake, was the most welcome thing we had come across for a long time.

I was travelling with my friend Zaporoff, a wealthy young Russian, who had served his year in the horse artillery as a gunner in the St Petersburg Military District, and was now going round the world in order to complete the education commenced in a university of European

Russia. In a very short time after our arrival we were both descending by a ladder through the floor of the bathing-house, built on piles at the edge of the largest hot spring, which formed a pool about the size of the ordinary horse-pond usually to be found in the village greens of far-away England.

Fate, and the orders of the Commander-in-chief on the China station, had brought me to this out-of-the-way, but extremely interesting, spot; for I was attached to one of Her Majesty's cruisers, which had parted company from the cruising squadron assembled at Hakodadi in the Northern Island of Japan, in order to patrol round the seal-rookeries of the Commander Islands, situated some three hundred miles east of the Kamchatka coast. Here international diplomacy has laid down the law that none going down to the sea in schooners or other craft shall do any seal-fishing within a belt of thirty marine miles from the coast, under peril of magazine-fire from the rifles of the Aleut guard ashore, or summary arrest by the British or Russian man-of-war cruising in the sacred zone of salt water, followed by an enforced appearance before the Consular Court at Yokohama or the judicial authorities at Vladivostok, as the case might be. Just at present it was the turn of the Russian man-of-war *Manreatz* to do the monotonous cruising round the islands, while we of H.M.S. *Desirée* were recruiting in the sunny harbour of Tareinski. As the ship had been in commission some time, and was in very fine order, my duties were not particularly onerous in harbour, and I had brought Zaporoff over as my guest from Petropaulski—which was about a dozen miles off across the bay—with the object of getting some bear-shooting; and it was in this way that we found ourselves sitting up to our

chins in the warm sulphurous waters of the hot springs, getting the cold out of our bones after fifteen hours of sailing, duck-shooting, wading, riding, and walking. The day had begun finely and well; but as twilight deepened the biting wind had piled up the scurrying clouds, and a searching drizzle, which froze as it fell, had warned us that if we wished to last through the night we must get under cover somewhere; and—delightful feeling!—here we were with Porouguine's hospitable shelter under our lee, with the prospect of a good supper, and appetites which the keen air and hours of fasting exercise had sharpened to that point when the sensation of hunger merges into that of voracity.

Porouguine has had three wives, the last of whom—a buxom, rosy, jolly, peach-skinned young woman—sits at the head of the table. Sixteen children have the quartette given to Holy Russia, varying from the dark-skinned, sallow, rather silent eldest son, who lives with his father and thinks of nothing but his rifle and pretty, newly-married wife, to the last-arrived pink baby, generally ensconced in her mother's comfortable arms, but now fast asleep, breathing softly, in its parents' bed, occasionally twitching its chubby little fists, and warmly wrapped with the skins of reindeer, bear, wolf, and big-horn sheep. The room seemed hot and stuffy after the open air, but that made little difference to the not very fastidious party gathering round the hunter's homely but hospitable table; and we were about to sit down to a smoking dish of reindeers' tongues, when an inner door opened, and we were joined by another couple, of whose presence, in the only private room of the house, we had not previously been aware.

The new-comers proved to be the very learned—and muscular—Doctor Koltzoff, of Moscow, who, with Madame Koltzoff—tall, elegant, handsome, and accomplished—was staying at the hot springs, resting after a scientific and exploring expedition in the central wilds of Kamchatka. The Doctor is a large-boned, bearded philosopher, with a benign face and a frame as stiff as oaken timber; his modest and sympathetic manner concealed—what I afterwards found out—the fact that he was probably the greatest living authority on the ethnology, geology, zoology, and botany of that part of Asia extending from Behring Strait to the Great Wall of China. A splendid white hound lumbered in after them, and, dropping with a thud on the floor behind their chairs, gave two or three noisy thumps with his tail, to wish us all greeting as friends of his master, like a canine gentleman as he was; then remained perfectly still, his head on his paws, except when he gave an occasional look up at the Doctor or madame, or when a more than usually savoury whiff from the table forced an oblique glance from his liquid eye.

We none of us spoke much at first, and it was

not until the reindeers' tongues had been disposed of and the next dish, consisting of stewed salmon's heads, was well on its way after the first—washed down by *kirin* beer from Japan, reindeer's milk, whisky, or *vodka*, as our various tastes suggested—that we commenced talking by asking the Doctor where he had picked up his magnificent hound. It appeared he belonged to a very rare breed employed by the Tchuktchis—an Eskimo tribe inhabiting the country situated between the north of Kamchatka and the west coast of Behring Strait—for hunting wolves in the bleak and inhospitable regions which extend from thence far inside the Arctic circle. The chief of the tribe, having been operated upon by the Doctor for carbuncle, had in return presented him with a pup of this valuable breed, which are very celebrated for their acuteness of scent; and the dog and his master had since been inseparable. A pasty of boiled salmon, with rice and cabbage, was succeeded by dishes of salmon roe, fishes' hearts, and reindeer-foot jelly; and, when we had finished the repast with a hot glass of tea in which floated slices of lemon, the Doctor gave us quantities of information about all parts of north-east Asia, but more particularly Kamchatka, with its virgin forests, volcanic ranges, and unfamiliar animals.

It appeared that the Doctor, on returning from his scientific mission, whilst passing through the Velvet Mountain district, a few hours' ride from the springs, had come upon a couple of Aleut hunters, one of whom was mortally wounded, as it proved, when returning from a bear-hunt. The injured man had been badly mauled about the face and head, besides having a broken wrist and a terrible compound fracture of the middle third of the thigh-bone, and was evidently dying. However, the Doctor gave the poor fellow a restorative, and did what he could to ease his agony; and directing the unhurt man to get some wood for a fire, while the remainder of his own expedition, whom he had outstripped, were still struggling through the brushwood, the Doctor sat down by his patient to watch the effect of the medicine. After a few laboured groans the unfortunate Aleut's eyes partly opened, and, though glazing fast, cleared again a little as the cordial began to take effect. He then muttered in his own language—with which Dr Koltzoff had become familiar in his prolonged researches—how, after a very successful shoot, he was coming down from the high mountainous regions to which the bears resort in summer, by a pass which he had not used before, near the Velvet Mountain (so called from its peculiarly black and glossy sheen when seen in certain lights), when, as he was walking down a steep path running along the face of a bold cliff and was nearing an angle, a huge beast, whitish and shaggy, had sprung out on him, hurled the pony he was leading into the depths below, and, as he

expressed it, 'began throwing him about until all his bones were broken.' Doctor Koltzoff, much interested, tried to get more details; but poor Ivan's strength was nearly gone, and, gasping out some words again, emphasising the size of the beast's claws, and especially his fangs, gave a shivering gasp, and, as the Doctor put it, a fatal termination soon supervened. In that province of the Russian Empire little is thought of an Aleut hunter more or less, and a shallow trench with some heavy fragments of granite were soon all that concealed the body of poor Ivan.

The conversation, which had been hitherto chiefly monopolised by the Doctor, now took a more general turn, and I told him I had met one of his *confrères* in our navy, who had served in a ship that had taken part in the disastrous attack of the Anglo-French squadron on Petropaulski in 1854, and had made a search in this very locality for fossils, being an enthusiastic geologist. He had been much struck by the quantities he had come across in certain parts, particularly in a pass near a conical black mountain, of which he did not know the name, nor is it known as the Velvet Mountain on the Admiralty charts, the name being purely local.

Young Zaporoff was, I saw, now fast asleep, leaning against the logs forming the wall of the house, his pipe—which seemed to have been out a long time, for it felt quite cold when I took it from between his lips—still set in his clenched teeth; the ladies had gone, and old Porougine had got away promptly as soon as the conversation began to sound scientific, preceded by his son, who had turned in unhesitatingly directly after supper. Mrs Porougine had made up the fire in the Russian stove for the night, and by these portents the Doctor and I divined that it was time for us to go also; so, knocking out the ashes of our pipes, we woke Zaporoff up, and, with high hopes for the next day's shooting, we bade each other good-night, and were soon under the heap of soft skins covering our beds.

Beds in Kamchatka are not always as comfortable as they might be; and, either for that or some other reason, my sleep was fitful and disturbed. The scenes of the preceding day kept recurring more or less vividly to my imagination, and then fading away into snatches of oblivion, alternating with periods of intense wakefulness, in which the time seemed never-ending; the snoring in different keys that penetrated the thin partitions—for the hotel was practically one big room divided up by wooden screens—sounded more than usually aggressive; the air was smoky and flavoured with the aroma of cured salmon; and the watch under my pillow seemed to tick with a metallic ring. After some hours of this I could endure it no longer; and just as the day was breaking such a longing for fresh air came over me that I decided to turn out, and, finding the younger Porougine—who, I knew, had intended to

start before us—go on for our camping ground among the hills, leaving a message to tell old Porougine and Zaporoff what we had done. Putting our exceedingly small impedimenta in front of him, the young man and I started on our journey in the gray dawn, and, striking in a direction about a quarter of a circle away from our destination, the Velvet Mountain, went on at a steady jog-trot, bestriding the short-legged country ponies, with heads like hippopotami, legs short and columnar, and the climbing capacity of a squirrel. My guide was armed with a repeating .500 Winchester rifle, while I took a long .303 Lee-Metford, as I wanted to try the effect of small-bore, high-velocity bullets on big game. In order to make the bullets expand on striking, a cross had been cut on the nose with a very fine saw, and into the small slits thus made tallow had been poured, and with them I felt perfectly confident of stopping anything I was likely to meet.

We got along slowly, making our way through forests of fir and ash. Occasionally we would come across the track of an immense bear, with its deep claw-marks and shape of a clumsy and very broad human foot-sole; and again we would pass a river running black and smooth and cold, the banks sometimes slushy and sometimes gravelly, but always alive with salmon. Even the little rivulets, shallower than a salmon's draught of water, were swarming with fish, half-swimming, half-wriggling over the stones, and looking like streaks of burnished silver in the dim darkness of the gloomy morning. Now we began to bear away to our right, crossing the brawling brooks, which had little hollows of spongy ice adhering to the roots of the rusty-looking tufts of grass growing on their banks.

Working still more to our right, the scenery became rapidly wilder as we rode along, the ascent steeper, and the appearance of the craggy mountains to which we were drawing near more fantastic and grandiose.

Before leaving the last rivulet we had shot a couple of salmon in the shallow water, and after gutting them we had slung them, for future use, to the saddle of my 'universal provider.' On resuming our ascent the way became extraordinary and most wild in appearance; and yet, unaccountably, I seemed to have been over it before, which puzzled me, as in my present state of existence, at any rate, this was impossible. The general appearance of the rocky glen was now becoming sinister and awful. The sky gave signs of an approaching storm, and the animals and birds seemed to have disappeared. The path, which had been running between two high, steep hills covered with burnt-looking boulders, gradually clung more and more to the left-hand mountain, which slowly assumed a steeper slope, until, dwindling down to a ledge some four feet broad, it ran along the front of a cliff, and, rising

rapidly higher and higher, owing to its steep gradient, at length had an immense perpendicular descent to the right, while the cliff on the left towered up far away until its summit seemed lost among the dense clouds which were fast gathering and scudding before the wind, bringing down long straight lines of snow.

So threatening was the appearance of the weather that I more than once wished myself clear of the pass, and wondered if we should ever get out of it, as we were only in the forerunner of the storm; though even now the horses—strong, good, and patient little beasts that they were—seemed to have as much as they could do to face the squalls. It had never been very light; but, as the storm hung low and increased in might, the clouds began to change their tints from a dull purple-violet to a sombre black. The little light there was began to fade fast, and the distant ominous reverberations of thunder were tossed about in echoes from the massive sides of the mountains; while the flickering lightning, which had at first only appeared as a transparent, incandescent glare, illuminating the surfaces of the clouds from within, now tore in quick crooked ribbons between the clouds, as well as from them, to the earth, and the falling snow changed suddenly into sharp showers of hail.

The wind, which had decreased a little, now shifted more to our right front, or towards the cliff over our heads, which was a decided relief, as our horses had almost come to a standstill, and our bodies in front were covered with frozen snow, our beards were frozen, and I am convinced that nothing but our leathern clothing, furs, and high Russian boots kept us from being frozen to death. But worse was to come, for, in a sudden, fearful squall, the wind flew back right in our teeth, and blew with such terrific violence that it seemed to fall on us like a solid body, driving us helplessly to the earth. So tremendous was the roaring that, while the lightning in a manner surrounded us, the tongues of flame quivering in all directions, the thunder was inaudible, though we could feel the solid rock beneath us vibrating in unison with the chaos in the sky.

By this time, I need hardly say, I had dismounted and was crouching behind a friendly rock, my pony shivering with cold and terror beside me. I was afraid for young Porougine, who, when last I saw him, was just turning an angle of the cliff a short distance in front, which I hoped would give him a little shelter. But it was quite impossible for me to stir hand or foot to help him without risking the certainty of being blown into the abyss below. All I could do was to make my naturally big frame as small as possible in my cranny, and hope that the wind would exhaust its infernal violence before my strength gave out. How long the last supreme gust lasted I shall never know; but just when I thought that the

pressure and cold of the wind must end my life in some way, and in the very crisis of a yet more awful squall, the wind suddenly died away to a dead, unnatural calm—the 'eye of the storm,' as the Spaniards call it—the sky became blue, the sun shone, and nothing seemed to remain of the storm except a very hard bank of cloud all round, the distant droning of the wind, and the crashing of the trees far down in the valleys, as they were uprooted by the passage of the tornado. My ears, suddenly released from the confusion of noises, and perhaps from the removal of the rushing pressure of the wind, seemed unusually sharp, when in the almost painful silence succeeding the dismal uproar of the elements I heard three or four shots in quick succession, an awful scream of human pain, and a series of bestial, inarticulate sounds like very loud quick yapping, deepening into a long-drawn, groaning, horrible sort of laugh. A few stones fell over the edge of the path close to the angle in front of me, followed by Porougine's pony kicking and squealing in an agony of equine terror, as he appeared for an instant, and then plunged, struggling and turning over and over, into the depth below.

For an instant I was startled, the next thankful that, for a time at least, the period of helpless submission to the power of the wind was over, and the opportunity for action had clearly arrived. So, grasping my rifle, which lay on the ground beside me, I opened the 'cut-off,' felt the sight carefully to see that it was adjusted for close quarters, and hurried to the front to find out what had become of my companion. As I ran it instantly flashed across my mind why the spot had seemed so familiar, for I remembered our dear old naval surgeon's account of his search for fossils during the expedition of '54, and Doctor Koltzoff's story of the unfortunate Aleut hunter. I ran, and recollecting simultaneously his vivid description both of the incident and the scene of the tragedy, concluded we were very near the same spot, and felt great comfort in the thought of the ten excellent reasons lying ready in the magazine of my rifle to prevent any enemy, human or animal, from coming to close quarters. Poor Kotick Porougine was lying huddled up near the entrance of a rocky chasm that ran nearly horizontally inwards, close to the angle of the cliff near which I had last seen him, his rifle by him all bent up and twisted, with a thin thread of smoke curling up from the muzzle. A little smoke hung about in bluish layers, and the scent of fired gunpowder tainted the air. He was on his face, breathing heavily and giving an occasional low moan, but otherwise quite quiet and insensible; not very much blood came from him. I expected an immediate attack; but there was apparently nothing else in the cave, though of this I was not sure, as, although I could not see well after coming out of the light of day, I felt that most disagreeable sensation of a presence in the dark-

ness which is so unpleasant at the best of times. Striking a match and lighting a short piece of candle I had by chance put into my haversack—for in the heavy, calm air this was now quite easy—I placed it some little way farther in on the floor of the cave than we were, so as to be between us and whatever it was that had attacked Porougine, and then proceeded to examine him as closely as a rather limited acquaintance with surgery would permit. I saw that the worst injuries were a bad compound fracture of the thigh, a broken wrist, and some very grave injuries to the head and face. And again I remembered the story of Ivan, for I saw that these injuries were very similar to his. Keeping one eye on the inside of the cave, and my rifle close at hand, I poured a little spirit down the throat of the injured man, after turning him on his back; then, binding up his head, which was much torn, I set the wrist temporarily, and, covering him up, made him as comfortable as possible, and sat down alongside to watch. I had barely finished, when the wind came back with, if possible, more violence than before. The candle was blown out, and I was in absolute darkness—for the sky suddenly grew as black as pitch—alone with the poor, wounded, broken heap at my side, which depended upon me, his comrade, for help and protection.

Alone! Was I alone? Outside, the storm was again raging in furious melody, and Nature, as if in an epileptic fit, was striving to rend and shatter and destroy. Inside, two insignificant human beings—one almost at death's door, the other much battered and miserably cold, but both partly sheltered by the shape of the entrance from the blast and from the snow now falling, instead of hail, and piling up wherever it was not waltzing madly round before the eddies of wind at the mouth of the cave. Determined to protect the injured man from any further attacks, I lay down on my face, holding my rifle pointing to the interior of the cave, tried the action, felt the cartridge in the chamber of the weapon, and waited rather anxiously for the next move. I was hoping that the other two, as soon as the storm subsided, might come up and find us, when I thought the best plan would be for one to stay with me and watch Kotick Porougine, as I was inclined to believe that it would do him more harm than good to move him without medical assistance. The third might then go back for Dr Koltzoff and more assistance.

Then I remembered that the animal which had killed Ivan was probably the same which had disabled Kotick. What could it be? A bear, possibly? No, hardly that, as the description was so unlike that of a bear's attack. Bears don't throw a man about; nor were the sounds like anything I had ever heard or read of as emanating from the throat of a bear, or, in fact, any other

animal. It sounded more like the onslaught of one of the very large felines; but I was sure, or at any rate believed, that none existed in Kamchatka. Again I remembered the extraordinary stories of witchcraft which freely circulated among the superstitious Russians. Was it—could it be—something supernatural? The shocking injuries, the twisted rifle, indicated a power, an energy, greater, I fancied, than that of the tiger, the strongest of all the feline tribe. Man? No. Too much strength. At any rate, I should soon know now, for at some little distance beyond where my blown-out candle lay I saw the stealthy glow of two dull-red eyes, scintillating, intermittent as the lids closed over them occasionally. The eyes were more than four feet higher than mine, as I lay on the ground deadly still, so that if it were a beast of prey it was a very large one. Was it fancy, or could I hear the breathing of a huge animal? Probably fancy, as the turmoil of the storm raging outside was almost deafening. Deep down I felt my heart beating, for the awe of the supernatural was on me—that feeling most of us have experienced when alone after dark in some uncanny spot. How long this duel of the eyes lasted I cannot say; but at any rate, raising my rifle silently, I fired as nearly as the darkness would permit at them, and instantly I was aware of the same snapping, snarling, hideous howling as I had heard when poor Kotick screamed. Something huge rushed at me. I fancied I saw an immense pair of jaws, with long tusks in them, just below the eyes; a fearful roaring sound seemed to strike the drums of my ears. I saw a million stars, and then I remember no more.

When I came to myself I was again in bed at Porougine's Hotel, with my head singing like a tea-kettle, bandaged, and in great pain, good Doctor Koltzoff near me, and Zaporoff not far off. They told me that, thanks to the Doctor's grand hound, they had tracked us to the pass leading to the Velvet Mountain, where, at a very considerable height, they had found us close to where an avalanche, or perhaps a landslip, had taken place. We were lying side by side; my rifle was close to me, and on examination they discovered two cartridges had been fired; but Kotick's was gone. The landslip had uncovered the bedrock, which was of very old formation and full of the fossils of large mammalia. They mentioned nothing of any cave, but said they had found a large fossil close to my head, with some of my hair adhering to it, and, from the size and weight of the stone, if my skull had not been fractured it ought to have been—which I felt to be a doubtful compliment. Kotick was doing as well as possible; temperature very little above normal, pulse good, and so on, with other doctor's details. His poor little wife had gone nearly wild with grief when he came back, but, after the first outburst, had settled down as an excellent nurse. After a few

days, during which the medical officer of the *Desirée* was unremitting in his attention to young Porouguine and myself, I was able to board that good ship at Tareinski anchorage, and the officer of the watch who met me as I went over the side said, 'We thought of you on the —th, as we knew you were among the mountains, and could see a well-marked thunderstorm going on there, with very brilliant lightning and detached shreds of cloud revolving round the central column with immense velocity. Were you in it?' 'Yes,' I answered, 'we did have a breeze, in which you may see I rather came to grief. Did you have anything here?' 'No; in fact, it was a very fine day, except for that local thunderstorm, which appeared to hang about the hills.' As I hate a fuss, nothing more was said at the time; but while breakfasting with my friend Donetski, a Russian priest of the Greek Church, he declared—and I believe even to this day declares—that we were attacked by a demon of the hills who had often destroyed hunters near the Velvet Mountain, and that the mark of the cross on the tip of my bullets enabled them to be effective. He said it was a well-known fact that Finnish sorcerers could at will raise a tempest sufficient to swamp a ship: how much more, therefore, could such a specimen of the art-magic as the one who had tried to kill us! He rounded off his remarks by mentioning that roubles, when properly applied to Church purposes, were the best counter-spell with which he happened to be acquainted. Old Porouguine is a reticent man, but supported the Orthodox Church on the whole in the supernatural theory laid down by the priest.

Doctor Koltzoff is puzzled, and reserves his opinion; but the fact that struck him most was the remarkable similarity between the injuries of Ivan and Kotick to each other, and to those inflicted by a huge feline animal seizing and playing with its victim. Kotick does not seem to clearly remember what happened, and, I am glad to say, only shows by a slight limp what he has gone through. He stoutly maintains that he did not recognise that part of the pass in which we were caught by the storm, though when we first entered it he thought it was the pass he had always used previously. In this I am inclined to support him, as I rather imagine there were two landslips or avalanches, the first of which we could neither see nor hear because of the tornado, while the second swept away the cave and its formidable denizen, the latter being buried in the débris.

In the ordinary course of duty I was relieved and came home; and one night, when my friend Baiesault, of the Geological Society, was dining at my house, I told him the story, described the dim outline of the animal, or whatever it was, that had rushed at me, especially dwelling on the shape of the distended jaws and the size and shape of the

fangs, the latter of which had impressed me as very remarkable, and showed him the large and heavy fossil that had struck me on the head. He mused silently a short time, and then asked me to describe again minutely what I had seen; then, borrowing my coal-hammer, knocked off some large fragments from the fossil. Embedded between the eyes of what was clearly the fossilised head of some large carnivorous mammal was a *Lee-Metford* .303 bullet, cross-cut at the tip; another one had glanced from a fang and was buried in the palate. How it could possibly have got there was extraordinary, as the mouth was closed before he had used the hammer. 'That head,' said Baiesault, 'belongs to a long-extinct antediluvian animal, the Arctic or sabre-toothed tiger.'

Somewhat later I received a letter that was addressed in a very foreign-looking hand, and for which I had to pay extra postage. It was forwarded from Yokohama, where it had been posted by the captain of a Behring Sea sealing-schooner. It was from Kotick, written for him in English by an official of the Great Fur Seal Company at Petropaulski. He still thinks a great deal of a new rifle I sent him, and of pretty Olga, his wife; but also of something else, as he has asked me to be sponsor to his first boy. He is not even now at all sure what attacked him, but proposes in his future bear-hunts to steer clear of the Velvet Mountain.

TO THE POET THOMAS GRAY.

(Died 30th July 1771.)

SERENE and lovely Voice, too seldom heard!
Thy solitary note forsakes the crowd
Of eager singers, that with pipings loud
Fill the resounding Day. Like Night's fond bird,
Alone thou singest when the woods are stirred
With quiet-breathing airs; till, softly bowed,
The bright Moon slips her shoulder from a cloud
And leans, rapt listener to each melting word.

Most tender, melancholy, studious, sad!
Thou hadst no Mate to answer to thy call;
No tears to drop with thine, if thine did fall;
No laughter in thy home to make thee glad.
But on thy peaceful grave fit wreaths are hung,
Low sleeping where thy sweetest song was sung.

ADA BARTRICK BAKER.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

A GAME OF WEI-CH'I.

By JULIAN CROSKEY.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

IT seems an easy thing to write a tale about Chinamen for one who, from residence in their country, may be supposed to know the 'local colour.' But in reality nothing could be harder; no character lends itself less readily to the demands of fiction than the Chinese character. A story, to be interesting, requires life, emotion; it requires the palpitation of humanity in its incidents, and the colour of a life which is immediately recognised as real. But Chinese life, in its externals, is unreal, grotesque, a puppet-show; and the Chinese character is bafflingly devoid of emotion. It is, then, but a wooden story I can tell. Its tragedy is deep enough to me; but to you it will seem but a tragedy with the tragic part left out. I am sorry for this, for it is a confession of failure at the outset. I do not love the fiction which is mere photography, and yet here I feel myself reduced to the rôle of printing a blurred photograph from a faded negative.

Wang Lai-chee was my servant; after the European fashion, I called him Wang, although, correctly, if you presume to be familiar with a Chinaman, you should call him by his second name. Wang was a quiet, gentle, persevering man, with a thoughtful and intelligent countenance. He was a Hunanese, but his family had moved to Kiang-si, his father (now dead) having been a runner in the service of the late governor of Nau-chang, who was also a Hunan man; in China a high official cannot hold office in his own province. Two of Wang's brothers were employed in the Nau-chang porcelain works; Wang had been a designer there also, and had afterwards set up a small curio-shop in Kiu-kiang, which is the treaty-port of Kiang-si. I had bought up most of the contents of Wang's shop, and he had been promptly robbed of my payment by his father-in-law; he then entered

my service as 'boy' and curio-buyer, a position which he did not fulfil entirely to my satisfaction from a business point of view, because he knew too much about porcelain. A Chinaman who understands china will not buy modern trash, and would be ashamed to haggle over the price of an antique. A European, on the other hand, who supplies the European market knows that nothing but modern trash will go down as antique in Europe, and he has to get it cheap to cover his expenses. I was acting at that time, in conjunction with other mysterious businesses, as buyer for a curio firm.

But all this is by the way, and has nothing to do with the story. If I mention Wang's antecedents, it is simply because, in a Chinese story, I feel that nothing can convey verisimilitude except a bald statement of facts.

Now, this is the beginning of the tale. One night during the war the natives of Kiu-kiang were growing restless. The anti-foreign feeling, which is always the first inflammation when the national pride gets sick, was exhibiting itself strongly in 'foreign-devil' cries from a crowd down below on the foreshore. If there is one port more than another that is safe on the Yang-tze, it is Kiu-kiang; for here the Customs staff, under a stiff-necked commissioner and a reckless young ex-militia assistant, played bayonet and sabre pricks with the rabble during the 1890-91 riots (the only way in which British prestige can be maintained in China); here the French exacted a thumping indemnity for the pillage of the unfinished cathedral; and here only the little settlement has always maintained its right to keep and close at night gates at either end of the Concession Bund, which preserves to Europeans one cool promenade in summer. If you would understand the inestimable boon of such gates, you need not go as far as the first 'Concession' on the Yang-tze—Chin-kiang; you will see in our

own crown colony of Hong-kong how little room there is for the Englishman on the side-walk where Chinese are allowed equal rights. They literally jostle you off your own road; and in the Concessions, where the sombre Sikh police are not in evidence as they are at Hong-kong, they not only monopolise the only decent promenade on the river-front, but spit behind you as you pass.

But if Kiu-kiang thus preserves the haughty *jus Britannicum*, it is on that account the more dangerous when the native feeling rises to the gate-breaking point. Nowhere are Europeans more cordially hated as a body, and nowhere are they more isolated and numerically weak. The only *raison d'être* of the settlement, the tea-trade, has virtually disappeared, and it is two or three days from the nearest gunboat at Shanghai. I was thus anxious for my valuable stock of curios, and wanted Wang to take the more precious pieces to his home in the native city at the back until the trouble should be over. I had rung the bell several times, and not one of my servants had answered.

The kitchen-coolies' quarters were in a detached outhouse at the back, and I went out into the veranda to call. To my great alarm, I perceived that one end of the low building was on fire. 'Boy!' I shouted. There was no answer. Not a man was to be seen. But I noticed through the rice-paper windows that a light was burning in Wang's room. I rushed down and broke into the rickety apartment. Wang was sitting there alone, in a flap-eared cap, his hands tucked into his sleeves, his thick-soled boots shuffling a little on the brick floor to keep his feet warm, bending over a stool, and intently considering an array of marble draughts on a black-and-white chess-board.

'What on earth are you doing, Wang?' I cried, kicking the stool over and shaking his shoulder. 'Don't you know the kitchen is on fire, you bat-eared Archimedes? Come out at once.'

Wang rose and looked at me in piteous dismay. 'Oh master,' he said reproachfully, 'I little time makey finish the thirteen squares! Now I must to begin again.'

'*Maskée*, never too late for that,' I replied cheerfully; 'but can be too late to stop fire. *Sao hwich!* Makey fill bucket from *kang*, bring me.'

I hurried him out to the water *kangs*—big stoneware tubs daily filled from the river for domestic consumption—and, seizing one of the pair of buckets standing hard by, with the water-coolie's yoke lying over them, I managed to get the fire under. I then assisted Wang to pick up his scattered draughtsmen, and told him to bring his board and box of clothes upstairs, in case of another attempt to fire the sheds. I ascertained that the cook (*mafoo*) and coolies were all out with the crowd, and probably one of them had upset a *chatty* among some shavings on purpose.

After carefully packing my more valuable pieces in Wang's pigskin trunk, I sent him out to reconnoitre in the crowd, while I remained on guard at the gate of my bungalow. He presently returned, and reported that all chance of a riot was over, as the down-steamer from Hankow was in sight over the bend, and the Customs staff was under arms patrolling the bund. It is one of the anomalies of life in the outports that the sole practical protection of European property depends on Sir Robert Hart's cosmopolitan civil service, which is wholly in Chinese employment, with no other obligation towards white men than the sterling Anglo-Saxon blood bond—a bond far stronger than discipline; for on entering the service you are required in set terms to forego your national allegiance where it conflicts with your allegiance to the service. I believe that the staffs at every port are now provided with a stand of rifles, and they are ready to use them to preserve order; the British Consulates are sometimes equipped with an ancient rack of Sniders, but the British consul would risk his position if he were to do anything so repugnant to Foreign Office red-tape as to serve them out. Things are changing now, however, thank goodness! It is no pleasant thing to belong to the one great Power the effect of whose policy is to make its subjects 'lose face' in the presence of Chinamen, with whom 'face'—prestige—is a far more powerful weapon than gunboats. But, with our blood-brother Americans taking a hand in the game, we are going to change all that. We are going to teach Chinamen that their old friends are still their best friends, but that they must be respected. It is only necessary to hammer that lesson into them as a nation, and all will go very well. The Chinese are good business partners when prejudice is removed.

'Now, Wang,' said I, 'talky my what fashion thing that 13-square game?'

'Belong *wei-ch'i* [way-chee], master,' Wang replied; 'but I think you no can understand. All dis year I you boy, I learn to play with 13-square; to-night I just have finish when you makey bobbery. Now I must begin again; take velly long time, no can play only night-time.'

I shall drop the troublesome pidgin dialogue to explain as briefly as I can the upshot of Wang's statement. He was presumptuously attempting to learn the great game of *wei-ch'i*, the holiest of holies for the most erudite intellects of the empire, which I suppose no non-'literate' save the patient, studious, and withal astonishingly ambitious Wang has ever so much as attempted. I suppose you have read some description of the game; if not, then the sinologues who have recently undertaken to instruct us in things Chinese have singularly neglected their duty, for *wei-ch'i* is more characteristic, more bound up with the genius of the nation, than any other Celestial amusement—their interminable dramas and classical examinations not excepted. To call *wei-ch'i* an amusement is an

audacious irony; *wei-ch'i* is a science. Whist and chess are frivolous by its side; you may learn chess in a year, and be able to play whist in two years; but at the end of a lifetime the utmost a great scholar would venture to say of *wei-ch'i* would be that he had begun to know that he knew nothing. It is only comparable to the Chinese language itself.

Wei-ch'i is played on a board containing 324 squares, formed by 19 lines crossing 19 others at right-angles, thus making 361 points of intersection; 300 'men' are used, moving along the points of intersection—150 black and 150 white. One move at a time is made by placing a piece on a point. The winner is the one who surrounds the greater number of points with his own men, surrounds an empty point, or a point occupied by the enemy, who is then removed. At the corners and along the sides a point can be secured finally; but in the centre of the board there is always the danger of a besieging army being besieged by a greater one. An adaptation of the game has been imported into Europe; but for some reason or other it is child's-play. *Wei-ch'i* is not child's-play. At chess twenty minutes to half-an-hour is sometimes allowed for a single move; at *wei-ch'i* one move an hour is playing recklessly, like a novice. Towards the end of the game players will sit and look at the board for a whole day, at the end of which 'white' puts down a checker. Then he suffers a night of remorse and agony, knowing he has made a mistake. The Anglo-Saxon race probably does not produce more than one intellect in a generation capable of entertaining all the possible combinations dependent on a single move; the Mongolian race produces about a hundred in one generation. The patience, memory, and expansive retentiveness of mental retina required

for the study is made and not born. When the Chinese system of education, of committing thousands of alphabetical symbols and tomes of recondite philosophy to memory, is abolished in favour of modern science, *wei-ch'i* will be relegated to the limbo of lost arts. It is an intricate game.

Wang was not a 'literate'—that is to say, a man who had studied for the public civil service examinations, and who, although these examinations are open to all, is generally the descendant of a generation of 'literates,' inheriting the initial order of brain required for mnemonic studies. Although China is in theory the ideal democracy, the necessity for the artificial brain of heredity is the reason that the 'literati' have grown into a distinct caste of aristocrats. Every year a few outsiders creep in; but they are immediately absorbed and assimilated, and do not make new blood in the ancient order of obstacles. In spite of his birth and poverty, however, Wang had acquired a knowledge of his own language which for common uses equalled that of a graduate. But, beginning at the beginning, as he did, he had to conquer everything by perseverance—an excellent type of the Chinese nation at large, and a microcosm of its narrow, steadfast growth. *Wei-ch'i*, likewise, he therefore began at the beginning. He commenced with a board of 11 lines; when he had mastered the combinations of 100 squares, he added another line on each side, which gave him 121 squares, and so on. I had just interrupted him in his study of the 13-square (14-line) board containing 196 points of intersection, which was still little more than half-way to the combinations of the full board. He had been practising on this, as he said, during the year he had been in my service; the game which I upset had taken him two months.

THE CONVICT-CAPITAL OF DARTMOOR.

By W. SCOTT KING.



PRINCETOWN, or—to cling to the older form—Prince's Town, the convict-capital of Dartmoor, possesses three unique claims to notoriety: its desolate situation, its romantic past history, and its terrible present-day associations. To be more explicit, Princetown is the highest town in England, and by far the most outlandish and inaccessible; on the granite-strewn wastes surrounding it cluster the stone remains of the Phœnician and Norse traders and colonists who came here for tin when the world was young; and to-day it is the 'long home' of some nine hundred of our convicts.

When this unparalleled assemblage of interests is remembered, and also Princetown's growing reputation as a resort for consumptives, it is not

to be wondered at that every summer its snug little hotels are crowded with artists, antiquaries, folklorists, criminologists, and patients. The strange little town is located in the innermost wilds of that vast and mysterious tract of country, half mountain and half moor, known as Dartmoor, or the Forest of Dartmoor, and is called with literal accuracy, though half in jest, its metropolis. On every side of it lie thousands of untilled acres of moorland, in the summer-time golden with the broom-plant, but always desolate and rocky, save where the treacherous bogs and morasses blacken its surface, or isolated peat-cutters' cottages peep from among its boulder stones.

The traveller to whom this lozenge-shaped wilderness is unfamiliar would probably be inclined to call it a mountain-range rather than a moor

when first he sees it, for steep black hills rise one behind the other like so many gigantically-curved waves to the misty horizon, each one surmounted with a rugged granite headland, or tor, as it is called, having the appearance of a crumbling feudal castle. Here is the birthplace, 'unknown, untrod,' of fourteen rivers and a hundred brooks and streams, principal of which are the Dart, which gives its name to the whole moor, and which rises in that elusive morass, Cranmere Pool, and the Teign, the Tamar, the Tavy, the Plym (hence Plymouth), and the Walkham.

Whatever conclusion archaeologists and antiquaries may come to as to its having once been a classic seat of Druidical worship or a settlement of Phœnician tin-traders, Dartmoor will ever remain one of the most ancient and significant landmarks of prehistoric days, and a happy hunting-ground for the tourist, the painter, and the collector of fairy-tale and legend. But our present interest is not in its 'sacred circles' or 'rock-altars,' nor yet in its mischievous 'pixies' and ghostly 'wist-hounds' which are still said to lure the traveller from his path and haunt the moor after nightfall, but in Princetown, the austere, granite-built capital.

After five or six miles of steep white road have been traversed on the way from romantic little Tavistock, and the quaint Merivale Bridge and storied 'Dartmoor Inn' passed, the traveller, from the top of his jolting coach, begins to observe a change passing over the face of the tracts around him. Well-built and cemented walls now mark the limits of the road; grazing meadows, of unlooked-for richness and colour, lie right and left; while wheat and roots of various kinds are seen growing in comparative abundance. Then he knows—or, if he does not, his driver will be sure to help his intelligence—that he is nearing the convict-city. In addition to this, it is more than likely that a military-looking warder (they are usually old army men) with gun and bayonet will be seen patrolling behind some stone wall, over which he constantly casts a vigilant eye upon the black-arrowed gang hoeing potatoes or tossing hay with their hands in the fields beyond. Or, quite as probably, the coach will be abruptly drawn to the left to allow a small regiment of close-cropped men in blue-and-yellow jackets to pass. Continuing the drive, the road now winds beneath the tall Lookout Tower, which is crowned by a powerful telescope and signalling apparatus, to be called into use immediately upon the sounding of the great prison-bell which announces that some prisoner has made a dash for his liberty.

After driving through a long avenue of trees, whose presence upon the bleak uplands represents years of careful culture, the prison-farm is passed on the right, and a hundred yards lower down on the left the cyclopean gateway of the prison itself. The most exalted town in England has

now been reached, and, it may interest some to know, the wettest also. King Charles II. is reported to have said that if it was raining anywhere in his humid kingdom it was 'sure to be raining in Tavistock.' This royal libel might be made with much greater propriety on Princetown, seven miles distant. The town is nearly a century old. It was built in 1806 at the direction of Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt, who was warden of the Stanaries or tin-stamping towns of those days, and the *alter ego* of the Prince Regent, and he named it after his royal master. The first erection was the prison, or the prisons, as it is customary to call them, which were built to accommodate the French prisoners taken in the great war then raging with Napoleon, and who were said to be literally rotting in the old, insanitary hulks at Plymouth. These prisoners of war seem to have carried away with them very exaggerated ideas of their surroundings, anathematising Dartmoor as a veritable Siberia, covered with snow seven months out of the twelve. M. Cotel said: 'For seven months it is a *vraie Sibirie*, covered with melting snow, and as soon as its snow goes away the mists appear. Imagine the tyranny of *perfidie Albion* in sending human beings to such a place.'

But, notwithstanding these climatic drawbacks, their fate was less unkind than that of many an Englishman pining in damp Gallic cells. Their parole admitted them to a free range over several miles of moorland, as well as, in the case of the officers, residences in Okehampton, Tavistock, and other neighbouring towns. In addition to this, many of them were invited to the houses of the hospitable west-country families, who pitied the captivity of the vanquished Gaul. The very inscription over the stern old gateway, taken from Virgil, '*Parcere subjectis*'—to spare the vanquished—testifies to the consideration which these involuntary exiles received at the hands of 'perfidious Albion.' How this inscription is to be interpreted in the light of the present use to which the prison is put it is not easy to say, though many who stand to read it think it has reference to the fact that a number of the present inmates are here through having their death-sentence commuted to imprisonment for life, they having been 'spared' the gallows. At the back of the prisons is a pretty and well-tended little cemetery, where many of the foreigners who did not live till the close of the war were buried. Some years ago it had fallen into decay, but a recent governor caused it to be replanted and enclosed, for which gracious act he received the thanks of the French Government.

There is one other memorial of their stay on Dartmoor, and that is the church, built by the side of 'the long unlovely street' by these compulsory visitors, and for which labour, it is well to add, they received remuneration. Its bare tower is to-day a conspicuous landmark for many miles across the moor. Besides a very imposing marble memorial celebrating the benefi-

cence of the founders of Princetown, the church contains a curious little mural tablet, 'To the memory of three Guardsmen who perished in the snow upon the moor, preferring obedience to their officer to life itself.' So runs the inscription. At the rear are the long rows of stoneless grass mounds which cover the unhonoured resting-places of the convicts who have died during the last fifty years.

The erection of the prisons cost £100,000; but when peace was declared in 1816 they became empty, and remained so till 1850, save when spasmodic attempts were made at utilising them as a factory for the extraction of naphtha from peat. In 1850 they became what they are to-day—our chief convict settlement.

But before anything further is said of the prison and the penal régime, one more object of great importance and picturesqueness connected with Princetown claims at least a reference. This is the far-famed moorland railway. As early as 1823 there was a horse tramway constructed between King Tor, the seat of Sir Thomas above mentioned, and Plymouth, for the conveyance of granite; and of this the poet Carrington has sung:

Lo! along the iron way
The rocks gigantic slide; the peasant views,
Amazed, the masses of the wild moor move
Swift to the destined port.

Upon part of this old tramway the modern railway has been laid, and train should be taken from Yelverton, where the line leaves the Great Western system, when the traveller will be drawn up by a panting engine to its terminus, fourteen hundred feet above sea-level, and will then be able fully to appreciate its extraordinary S-curves and wonderful moorland scenery. The line at times doubles upon itself in its climbing efforts to escape the almost perpendicular tors. As you rise among the hills you see a miniature railway far below, and inquire what it is. 'That is what you have just passed over' is the answer. 'And what is the railway coiling the hills above?' 'Oh, that is where you are now going' is the not quite reassuring reply. And so, among black blocks of grim-looking granite, and past green patches of bogland set in purple heather, mounts the little train, until, without any warning, the flank of Hessory Tor is turned, and it glides with triumph into Princetown Station.

Strange indeed does it seem that so wonderful and at times supremely enchanting a country should surround, and so romantic a railway lead to, a spot where centre the accumulated horrors of a thousand crimes—a spot in which one can never quite shake off the feeling of being one's self a prisoner. The stony-hearted 'city' chills the soul even on the hottest day and when neither armed warders nor sweating gangs are in sight. When the first inhabitants settled in Princetown, Carrington chanted of the coming moor-cultivation

which should 'bid the cheerful grass wave in the upland gale, and harvests bless the renovated wastes.' In some small measure the poetic prophecy has been verified. In dry weather those of the prisoners who are physically equal to such labour are marched off in companies of twenty and thirty, under the care of four warders, to the adjacent marshes, which they drain and cultivate with surprisingly good results. The less robust and the old and infirm are employed in the manufacture of baskets, boots, and post-bags for the army and postal service. To-day there are in residence nearly nine hundred men, who are attended by between two and three hundred warders. Every man has a cell of his own, lighted by a small window by day and an outside lamp at night. Books are allowed to any extent, if approved by the chaplain, and some are omnivorous readers of history, travel, and fiction. Each man is shaved once a week by a prisoner known to be an ex-barber, though for a razor he is only permitted to use a species of small-toothed clipper. Three months before liberation, however, beards are allowed to be grown, as one slight help in concealing from coming employers a disqualifying past life. The prison fare consists of three meals a day: a pint of tea and half a loaf of bread for breakfast, eleven ounces of roast beef or mutton and a pound of potatoes for dinner, and half a loaf and a pint of cocoa for supper. For his dress the convict wears a dull-yellow cap of the 'Scotch' order, upon which a brass letter is fastened, one letter for each period of servitude the wearer has endured. It is no uncommon thing to meet in the streets of Princetown men with five or even six of such tell-tale decorations. The thick rough jacket and trousers are of the same yellowish hue; but after a year or two the 'good conduct' men are privileged to exchange these for garments of dark-blue and a red collar. The warders tell you that a favourite form of petty insubordination is to tear to pieces these yellow suits, the punishment for which is that the 'tiger' appears in the quarry next day arrayed in board-like black canvas.

This is not the place to offer suggestions as to possible and needed reforms in the penal system, nor yet to advance some impossible ideal of remedial servitude in the place of the present one. Still, one or two features of the convict's life on Dartmoor may be noticed with disfavour. First, there is the oft-condemned 'cellular' system. When not at work—work is his salvation here, as possibly it might have been before he came—the convict leads an absolutely solitary life—a life of deadness, hopeless loneliness, and silence, broken only by the tramp of the sentry in the long corridor without or the howl of the moorland wind. This is calculated to eat out men's hearts, break down their spirits, and ruin them, as it so frequently does, both in mind and body. Again, there is the everlasting surveillance—gond-

ing, maddening surveillance—more than sufficient, as cases innumerable prove, to provoke to insanity and desperation. If a prisoner carries a pail of milk from the cow-shed down the road, a warder is behind and before him, and he might easily smell the gun-metal; if he drags a trolley of stone or tosses a field of hay he is within a three yards' range of half-a-dozen musket-barrels; while every ten minutes throughout the long night, as the storm-fiend shrieks over his rocky 'home,' an inspecting eye glares in upon him through a hole in his cell-door. In one word, while fully realising the paralysing difficulty of the task imposed on the authorities, Dartmoor can hardly be said to be an ideal penitentiary, seeing that from the day he goes in to the day he comes out—and twenty years may lie between those days—not one solitary effort but the dreary hour's service on Sunday afternoon is made to instruct, improve, or redeem the convict. Dartmoor Prison is absolutely a *penal* settlement and nothing more.

Of course all the inmates belong to the Cistercian brotherhood—they live, if not under a vow, under a rule of perpetual silence. In honesty it must be said, however, that recently this rule has been but laxly enforced, owing to the reluctance of the warders to spend all their time in shouting out, 'Now, shut up there, will you!' But in the general observance of this rule of silence lies to a very large extent the safety and lives of the warders, and, indeed, the possibility of the working of the whole penal system as now conducted. Could the men freely converse, concerted action among them would then be easy, and no doubt constant, which would make it impossible for three or four or even half-a-dozen warders to be put in charge of the large gangs of prisoners; almost every convict would then require a caretaker. As it is, if an escape is attempted it is almost invariably limited to one man, and therein lies at once the safety of the warder and the failure of the attempt. If twenty men could plan an instantaneous 'bolt,' their guards would be wholly insufficient to stop them. At the same time, in most mysterious and round-about ways, they do manage to get news of the day, money, tobacco, and to plot, in twos and threes, for united insurrections. For example, the most daring and successful 'leap for liberty' which Dartmoor Prison has known occurred little more than a year ago, and one feature of it was made great capital of by the local and London press. About three o'clock in the afternoon a gang of twenty convicts, while working out on the moor, became suddenly enveloped in a characteristic Dartmoor mist. Three warders were in charge of the party, and the chief of these at once ordered a 'fall-in' and a 'march!' On coming within sight of the prison three men suddenly bounded out of the ranks and vanished into the fog. Fortunately for the fugitives the rest of the men had to be safely marched to their

cells before the alarm could be given, and fortunately for the warders five or six of these were within a few weeks of being liberated, and consequently were not likely to forfeit their twenty-five per cent. reduction of term by aiding their comrades, much less by following their example. The fate of the three was both comic and tragic. One was soon overtaken by the horsemen, and while leaping a low wall was shot dead. The rule is that a fugitive must be called to three times before he is fired upon, and then only his lower limbs are aimed at. Our readers will remember the severe censure which the press next day passed on the authorities for this disaster. Undoubtedly it was due to an accident that the shot proved a fatal one. No. 2 wandered about the moor for days, unable to find his way or to get anything to eat, and finally gave himself up to a farmer, who marched him back to Princetown and claimed the five pounds reward.

The fate of the third was more romantic. He wandered for six miles over the frozen moor, then crossing the old Roman bridge, he came in the early dawn of Christmas morning to the little hamlet of Pool Bridge. Here he broke into the dining-room of a Quaker gentleman's house; and, as the appearance of the room testified next morning to the astonished maid, helped himself generously to the good things with which the family had been celebrating the festive eve. Going into the hall, he exchanged his tell-tale cap for a silk hat, and his yellow jacket for a fashionable Chesterfield overcoat of convenient length. An umbrella and a pair of kid gloves completed his costume. But whether his sampling of the Christmas fare had been 'too well' or not, when he left the house in the early morning he foolishly set his face back towards Princetown; nor did he discover what he had done till a warder rode by and inquired of the fashionably-dressed gentleman whether he had 'seen anything,' and the tower of the church came into view. Terrified, he struck away to the right, and hid throughout Christmas Day upon the moor. Afterwards, it is current in Princetown, where the doings of that Christmas Eve are still much discussed, he confessed that many times he lay down among the rocks and bushes as he saw the glasses of the search-party pointed in his direction. When night fell he came to Tavistock, where he broke into a house at the back of the one in which this account is being written. Ultimately he got clear away from the dangerous neighbourhood to Devonport, and would undoubtedly now be beyond the water but for a most trivial and foolish failure of his discretion. Walking along a road in the outskirts of the seaport he met a policeman, who was accompanied by a small terrier dog. The constable nodded 'good-morning' and passed on; but his dog turned round and, as little dogs will do, began snuffing at the convict's heels. He, not daring to look round, imagined that he was being

followed, and immediately set off to run. The policeman turned to look for his dog, found it in hot pursuit, and of course joined in the chase. Capture followed easily, and number whatever he was soon found himself back at Princetown.

The most celebrated escape of the past, and, it is said, the only one which was finally successful, dates from many years ago, when a convict lived for three weeks in a peat-cutter's cottage, almost under the shadow of the prison walls. The grandmother who lived in the house was dangerously ill; but when the warders came to search the house she got up from her bed and gave it, together

with her night-cap, to the convict, who most successfully sustained the rôle of an asthmatical old woman of ninety. When the excitement had subsided he quietly left the house at night in the peat-cutter's clothes and escaped to America.

Every Tuesday morning some of the convicts are usually seen on the platform of the South-Western at Tavistock, but clothed and bearded, and, it is to be hoped, in their right mind. They are on their way to Pentonville Prison, where they will be photographed; and then, with two pounds in their pockets, they will once more taste the sweets of life and freedom.

THE LOST CAUSE. A ROMANCE.

By DAVID LAWSON JOHNSTONE, Author of *The Rebel Commodore, An Unauthorised Intervention, &c.*

CHAPTER VI.—MY LORD IS ENIGMATICAL.



KENNETT must have recognised my lord at the same moment; for I heard him swearing softly under his breath, but could only guess his thoughts. For myself, I was not quite at ease. The Secretary's penetration and shrewd humour, veiled by a manner almost child-like, are yet remembered at Westminster; and at his best, as he was then, he was not one with whom any man burdened with a secret cared to bandy words. Now, as he briskly advanced, his smile would have disarmed the suspicions of a Jesuit—if they had met for the first time. One thing was rather surprising. For an invalid, my lord's movements were wonderfully alert and active.

'So you're there, Holroyd!' he cried, holding my hand affectionately. 'Well, such adventures fall only to the young. And your wound—eh?'

'A mere scratch! . . . Then your lordship got my letter?'

'An hour or two ago'—

So late? Noting the fact, I could not forbear a glance at Kennett. But he was standing with his eyes fixed on the ground, and a brow as black as a thundery sky.

'And was vastly relieved to have it. I start for London to-morrow afternoon at one, and meant to pick you up by the way. Now you have spared me the trouble. I was told you were here, but'—turning half-inquiringly to Kennett—'not that you had company. You will excuse me if I have interrupted you.'

The hint was plain, and I had no choice but to take it—whatever Kennett might do. So:

'My Lord Kynaston,' said I, 'let me present Mr Kennett of Langbridge, to whom I am indebted for a recent service.'

Both bowed, but Kennett's was of the slightest.

On the other hand, no smile could have been more friendly than my lord's. So friendly was it, indeed, that I began to scent sport.

'Mr Kennett is not unknown to me by name—and repute,' said he in his blandest tones. 'If I am not wrong, sir, you have ambitions of a public life?'

For an instant Kennett was taken aback, and then, 'Your lordship is misinformed,' he replied stiffly.

'Mayhap! mayhap! . . . Well, at the best, 'tis a thankless game. It may even be dangerous, Mr Kennett—for the losers.'

'Yet the luck is not always with the one side,' said the other, recovering himself.

'In my experience, 'tis with the side that holds the best cards, and the worst play is to stake everything on the chance of a *coup*. Better, if an old gamester may advise, to retire quietly—while there is still something to be saved.'

If Kennett suspected the significance underlying all this—and that it had a meaning I doubted not—he was wise enough to hide his feelings, and even to cover his retreat with some credit.

'And your own example, my lord?' he asked.

'Oh! I have played—and play now—because I have usually had the fortune to hold good cards. . . . But we must not keep you, sir. Doubtless you have other work on hand to-night?'

'None that your lordship's counsel would not lighten,' said he, bowing profoundly. Then, to me: 'You will not forget our engagement, Mr Holroyd?'

'I anticipate it with pleasure,' I returned.

He bowed once more, and so withdrew. My lord's eyes followed him to the door.

'A youth of parts!' he remarked, seating himself in the most comfortable chair, and signing to me to take another. 'A friend of yours, George?'

'An acquaintance,' said I. 'In fact, he is one

of the two gentlemen who succoured me after my encounter with the pad.'

'Ah! . . . That was a curious affair—eh? I must get your story to-morrow—I have no time for it now—and when I have leisure, we must see what can be done in the matter. 'Twill never do, egad! to have the King's servants stopped on His Majesty's highway.'

'And the papers?'

'They arrived safe enough—trust that rascal Joseph for that! He had a sound thrashing for his pains. After all, they were barely worth the pother. Do you know, sir, we have been scouring the country in search of you for a couple of days?'

I expressed my gratitude in proper form. 'But surely the importance of the intelligence'—

'Pooh! there was little that I had not learnt already from my own agents—and provided for. Mind, I don't blame your zeal, George. You had not my knowledge, and were quite right to leave nothing to chance. I had the clue, and 'twas child's-play to countermine the little plan of our friends across the water—who are clumsy conspirators at the best. After to-night, I shall be vastly surprised if we hear more of 'em.'

I had no reply to make: the revelation was too unexpected. How much had my lord discovered? Not all, I was sure; for I could scarcely believe that he was acquainted with the outstanding fact of the Chevalier's presence in England. And until the morrow my lips were sealed.

'But that we can also discuss again,' he continued. 'Just now I have only five minutes to spare. The Duchess of Chandos will never forgive me if I am longer absent from the card-table—and her charms. And, by the way,' he said, pausing to take snuff, 'are there any ladies at Langbridge?'

I fell on guard at once. 'That I cannot tell you,' I said. 'But at the Dower-house, where I was so hospitably received, there are two ladies.'

'So you had a pleasant time—eh?' he asked, in his most innocent tones.

'They were very kind to me.'

'And your host—what did you call him in the letter?'

'Morell,' said I.

'An old man, I suppose?'

'Middle-aged, I should think. I saw but little of him.'

He scratched his chin reflectively. 'Morell?' he repeated once or twice. 'Now, I wonder if I know him?'

'I have never seen him in your lordship's company.'

'No? . . . Well, perhaps he is an old acquaintance. I have a fancy that he is, but the name eludes me. . . . In any case, George, you were fortunate to meet him—and Mr Kennett.'

I assented, and hastened to divert the talk into another channel. We were trenching on ground far too perilous for my taste. Luckily I remem-

bered that I had not yet inquired into the state of his health. I did so forthwith.

'Never was better!' he cried cheerily.

'But—the gout?' said I, in some surprise.

He chuckled to himself. 'A little pretext! I had a twinge about Christmas, but, for the rest—between ourselves, George, the gout is a most convenient ailment. The truth is,' he said, beaming confidentially upon me, 'I had a certain affair on hand—you can guess what. 'Twas after my own heart, and I had no mind to be troubled with the fancies and claims of my good colleagues of the Ministry when I could settle it myself, and have some enjoyment into the bargain. Wherefore I stayed in Bath, howling with pain. To-morrow, having recovered sufficiently to travel, I return to London. You take me? . . . But yourself, lad,' said he, with concern—'you look more ill and worn than I care to see. You have not taxed your strength overmuch, I hope!'

I was beginning to feel that I had. Excitement had prevented me doing so hitherto, but now the effects of my exhausting ride made themselves unpleasantly evident. So I admitted to my lord that I was somewhat tired.

He rose immediately. 'Off you go to Combermere House, then!' cried he. 'Get some supper and a bottle of my Rebellion port from Deakin, and I warrant you'll sleep sound. In any event,' he added, with a whimsical glance at my travel-stained riding-suit, 'I could hardly venture to present you to the Duchess in that garb!'

Jesting thus, he accompanied me into the vestibule. A party of ladies and gallants was just arriving, and he drew me aside until the doorway was clear. Then, as we said good-night:

'One thing, George,' he whispered in my ear—'you may go to bed in the full certainty that His Majesty's throne is in no danger for to-night!' and, laughing, he moved off.

For me, as I stepped out and hailed a link-boy—for, my lord's house being at no great distance, 'twas needless to take a chair—I had ample food for thought. Mentally, I was in a fog. Either my chief knew more than I could have deemed possible, and had been quizzing me, or he was resting in a false security. Reviewing our talk, I could not decide which was the more likely; and I was still puzzling myself with conjecture when the thread of my reflections was broken (not too gently) by a most startling incident.

We were walking peaceably on, all-unsuspicious. Suddenly, as we were turning a corner, a sharp whistle sounded; three or four men threw themselves upon us; the link was struck from the boy's grasp and himself tumbled in the road; I was gripped by several pairs of hands, and had barely time to utter a single shout for help before my head was enveloped in a cloth or sack. I struggled my hardest; but, caught un-awares, I had small chance against such odds;

and my strength was failing me when I heard a voice that seemed familiar.

'Curse you! Can't you be quick there?' it cried. 'Drag him on—help's coming!'

But again I was heartened to continue my resistance; and, doing so with every muscle, I managed to hold my own for a moment or two longer. Then, following a chorus of oaths and the thud of blows, I was flung violently against a wall, and thence fell. Barring a scantiness of breath, I was none the worse; and, disentangling my head from the cloth, I picked myself up, helped by the pair of sturdy fellows who had plainly come to my rescue.

'Hope you ain't hurt, sir?' inquired one, touching his cap.

'No—thanks to your promptness. But who are you?'

'His lordship's sedan-chairmen, sir. Sent us to follow you home—in case of accidents,' he said. 'Wonder how 'e finds out them things—eh, Bill?'

The link-boy was still on his back, whimpering for mercy; my assailants were disappearing from sight down the street. The whole affair had not lasted two minutes.

'Hadt'n't you better chase the scoundrels?' I asked.

The chairman shook his head. 'Our orders was to see you safe home, sir,' said he. 'Besides, they're two to one.'

'Let us get on, then.'

Fortunately we were quite near to Combermere House, which was reached without further adventure. Then, after seeing my honest protectors duly rewarded, I was glad to obey my lord's injunctions. But I took to bed with me a new cause of apprehension. I had recognised the voice directing the attack upon me, and I now knew that Kennett and his associates would stick at nothing to achieve their ends.

I was awakened next morning by my lord himself. Although the hour was unwontedly early—'twas not yet nine—he was dressed for the open air.

'Ah! you're looking hugely better,' he remarked as I sat up to greet him. 'Slept like a top, I'll wager? Well, the Rebellion port never fails. And, if you like, you can have another hour or two in bed. I only came up to see if you were fit to travel, and remind you that we start about one o'clock. Until that time I have business that will keep me occupied.'

I made to rise. 'If your lordship needs me'—

'Not a bit! Rather otherwise, to be frank. And, pray, have no anxiety concerning me, George. I may be abroad all morning.'

Then, as my drowsiness cleared away, I remembered that I was now free to speak. I durst not hesitate longer, and so asked him if he could give me ten minutes ere he went.

'Why, not a single minute!' he cried, his eyes

twinkling. 'There is too much to be done before noon, and already I should be at work.'

'But I have information that 'tis of the utmost importance you should hear,' I pleaded.

'Since last night? Well, it must still wait!'

He was moving towards the door, and I grew desperate. 'A moment, my lord! It concerns the Pretender'—

'Oh! if you have been playing with fire,' said he, laughing, 'I must leave the young man on your conscience a little longer—as a punishment. And perhaps,' he added slyly, 'you will do well to bide indoors to-day. After last night's brawl we cannot let you loose again upon the peaceful folks of Bath!'

He was off before I had another opportunity to beg him to listen, and I heard him humming gaily as he descended the stairs. Leaping out of bed, I threw on some clothes with the intent to try once more; but in a minute a shout for his lordship's chair from his steward, Deakin, told me that 'twould be futile. I knew not what to make of the matter, and for the solution must await his return with such patience as I could muster.

In truth, 'twas little enough. The day being fine, my enforced inaction was all the more irksome; the weight of my secret became heavier with every hour's brooding; and I could neither discover my lord's whereabouts nor form a tolerable guess regarding the import of his business. Somehow, however, the forenoon passed. At noon, when Deakin served me with lunch—by order, as he informed me—the Secretary was still absent; and, observing no preparations for departing, I commented upon the fact to the steward.

'My lord travels alone, sir,' was his reply.

'Without the household?'

'We don't go till to-morrow.'

'But surely that is strange?' I suggested.

'I ventured to say so to his lordship, sir,' he answered, with a shrug of his shoulders, 'but he bade me to mind my own affairs and be—You know his way, sir.'

'Doubtless he has an object,' said I, and wondered what on earth it could be.

'Twas nearer two o'clock than one when he appeared at last, bursting in upon me with the announcement that the coach was at the door. Albeit despairing of success, I made a last attempt to effect my purpose. But, as before, he would not hearken.

'What has taken you, man?' he demanded, hurrying me out. 'No more now, if you love me—you can speak to your heart's content as we jog along!'

'Then it may be too late,' I put in.

'Pooh! we can always turn back, I suppose?'

Outside, another shock met me. The coach was there, with its four horses and the couple of postillions. Only, instead of the well-armed servants whom I had expected to see in the

rumble, who should fill it but—Joseph, alone and grinning sheepishly? For one whose life was of such value to the realm, the protection struck me as being absurdly inadequate.

'You are never going on thus, my lord?' I cried.

For answer, he jumped in. 'Why, what is wrong now?' he asked, assuming a look of surprise.

'This,' I persisted—'the roads are heavy, and 'twill be dark long ere we can reach Devizes; that man behind is an arrant coward, and my arm is

useless in the event of a meeting with lawless people; and the danger'—

'Can be faced at the proper time!' said he, more sharply than was his wont. 'If you mean to get in at all, George'—

Having made my protest, I could but obey. Then the door was shut and the word given; and, sped by a cheer from the little crowd of idlers who had gathered round, we clattered off on the journey that was to prove so momentous.

COFFEE-CULTURE IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

By ROWLAND W. CATER, Author of *Out with the India-rubber Gatherers*,
Banana-growing for the Markets, *In Quest of Mahogany*, &c.



COFFEE is, and has been for years past, one of the principal articles of export from each of the five Central American republics; yet the industry is still in its infancy, and each year witnesses its augmentation. Undoubtedly the very best quality produced in these regions is that coming from the Vera Paz district of Guatemala; and many buyers in England have become so used to this variety that they will have no other. Costa Rica probably ranks next in the quality of her coffee, always commanding a ready and good market; but Nicaragua runs her very close in quality, and even surpasses her in quantity. San Salvador does not export on a very large scale, nor does her coffee compare in quality with that produced in her sister republics; like Spanish Honduras, it is as much as she can do to satisfy the demands in her home markets.

Botanically, the coffee-shrub is known as *Coffea Arabica*, belonging to the Rubiaceæ order. It was originally a native of Abyssinia, but has since become naturalised in many other countries. When wild or uncultivated it will often reach twenty-five and thirty feet in height; but in plantations it is seldom allowed to run beyond twelve or fifteen feet. Its main stem is almost invariably straight, the branches being thrown off in pairs at right angles, thus giving the shrub a curiously awkward appearance; and its small green leaves are to be found principally at the extremities of the branches. The flowers, which are white, generally appear in clusters all along the branches, and in time give place to small globules of a dark green, which gradually change to light green, then to yellow, and finally to a deep red. When the fruit has assumed this ruddy hue it is ripe, and the twin seeds it contains are the familiar coffee-beans of commerce.

Although coffee can be grown almost at the sea-level—indeed, I have seen a very good sample grown in British Honduras at not more than one hundred feet above it—still, it is not advisable to try to cultivate it below five hundred feet, the

best and most convenient elevations being from two to four thousand feet. A natural reluctance to form plantations far from the ports of shipment led former growers to plant at the lower levels near the coast. Planters are now generally agreed, however, that many advantages are to be gained by planting at the higher elevations; and the writer has himself seen results, in many instances, which tend to support that opinion. Not only do the trees bear more freely and produce fruit of a better quality, but in the more temperate uplands the grower is involved in less expense for weeding and clearing, and this is a serious item in those districts where the growth of unfriendly herbage is so appallingly rapid as it is in the damp heat of the lowlands. In Nicaragua especially is this the case; and coffee grown on the slopes of the extinct volcano Mom-bacho, at, say, three hundred to eight hundred feet above sea-level, cannot for a moment compare with that grown in the districts of Managua and Matagalpa at elevations ranging from three thousand to five thousand feet. This latter district is inhabited by some twenty thousand or more semi-civilised Indians, whose sustenance consists of such game or wild fruits as they are able to procure from the immense forests surrounding them. In comparison with the generally lawless and unreliable *mestizos* or half-breeds, of whom the bulk of the population of these countries is composed, they form an excellent population. Though quiet and docile when fairly treated, they will, when smarting under an injury, real or imaginary, often rise up *en masse*, and on such occasions are a terror to the whole country. Ruled by a number of chiefs or *caudales*, scarcely more civilised than themselves, these people are held in a kind of respect by the Government of the day, which aims at keeping in harmony with them, although it is not always successful in its attempts in that direction; and in times of revolution both parties invariably send commissions to Matagalpa to enlist the support of these Indians; for, when their primitive smooth-bored are replaced by rifles more or less formidable, the party fortunate

enough to secure their aid usually triumphs. Of course, amongst these Indians there are some who are learning to till the soil. These either start little *fincas* of their own or hire themselves out to work for the few plantation owners, chiefly foreigners, who have settled down in the vicinity.

During my last sojourn in this district—towards the close of 1894, I think it was—Guillermo Jericho, a gentleman of German origin, who had succeeded in forming a very prosperous coffee plantation, was foully murdered in his bungalow on his own estate, and was discovered dead in his hammock next morning. The news spread rapidly, and as it was known that he had been into town the previous day to bring back the necessary cash wherewith to pay his labourers, it was the general conviction that robbery was the motive. I was staying at that time at the bungalow of Dr Gilman, an American dental surgeon, who divided his time between coffee-planting and dentistry. By some means or other—probably by a confession wrung from a confederate—suspicion fell on a certain Indian who had been in the deceased man's employment, and was now missing. Suddenly Gilman came bounding breathlessly into the bungalow, and rushing out to the back, commenced to saddle a mule. 'Grab a beast and come, sharp!' he shouted; and I, scenting an adventure, was soon in the saddle alongside.

In a remarkably short time we were joined by several others, mainly Americans and Germans. Off we went, numbering nine in all; and I soon learned that our errand was to effect the capture of the suspected Indian. We went first to Jericho's house, and the sight of the mutilated body, added to the fact that the victim had been highly esteemed by all his acquaintances, so fearfully incensed the party that, with all kinds of anathemas and vowing vengeance, they set off in pursuit of the murderer. They divided into two parties, each taking a different route; and our party—for I was still with them—after nearly a whole day's fruitless search, was just returning through the town, when we were hailed by the other party, also returning, but from the opposite direction. They had come up with the culprit, and had him with them, a stoutly-built fellow, bound hand and foot. Seeing that the object of our search had been attained, I left the little band and adjourned to Gilman's bungalow, for I had been in the saddle a great deal of late, and was anxious to try my friend's hammock for a change.

In the meantime the two parties, thus reunited, returned to Jericho's house, and on again viewing the now almost decomposed body, their fury passed all bounds. After a short consultation one of them stepped forward with a rope in his hand, and, making a noose which he passed over the culprit's head, tightening it round his neck, he slung the other end over a branch of a huge tree close by. Then, with a 'whoop' rather suggestive of Red Indians, his companions rushed

forward, grabbed the rope, and raised the murderer high into the air, where, after a few gurgled oaths and one or two gyrations and fruitless kicks, he expired.

Like wildfire the news travelled. The native newspapers, for days together, talked only of 'Judge Lynch in Nicaragua,' and the deed was condemned on all sides. I too, when Gilman, who had always displayed somewhat high principles, told me what they had done, could not help endeavouring to convince him that, to lynch a man, however guilty, without even an apology for a trial, was by no means commendable, and would serve as a very bad example to the natives. But he was an American, and tried to vindicate himself, pooh-pooling all my arguments.

A commission was sent from Managua by the authorities to inquire into the affair; and finally the eight executioners were apprehended and thrown into prison, also without a trial, a measure which was applauded by the natives. But the authorities were in an awkward position. Whilst it was absolutely necessary to inflict, or at all events appear to inflict, some severe punishment, in order to avert an uprising of the Matagalpa Indians, still they were compelled to act cautiously to avoid any disagreement with the American or German Governments, which, they imagined, might intervene on behalf of their respective subjects. To do the authorities justice, however, their almost proverbial wiliness did not forsake them; and although outside the so-called prison the *gringo* lynchers were very harshly spoken of and universally condemned, they were treated like lords inside, and allowed all sorts of privileges denied to other prisoners. Eventually, when the wrath of the populace had almost subsided, the prisoners were, one by one, allowed 'to walk out of the back door,' so to speak; whilst indiscreet and officious inquirers were informed that, after a secret trial inside the prison, the authorities were unable to bring the crime home to any one of the lynchers in particular, as all eight had pulled at the rope; and, therefore, they had deemed it wise to banish the lot—hence their absence. In reality their release was due to the fact that the only two unmarried men amongst them, in order to free the remaining six, assured the authorities that they were the actual lynchers, and no blame whatever attached to the six married men. Gilman, the dentist, was one of the two single men who remained in jail; but even he evidently could not have been detained there long, for I saw him in the capital shortly afterwards, a free man, pulling and stopping teeth once more; and although I never had an opportunity of asking him how he got off, being well acquainted with the country, its vices and its virtues, I found an explanation in the word 'dollars,' a word to conjure with in Nicaragua at all times, and in a law-suit an advocate infinitely superior to the cleverest of lawyers.

When the excitement caused by the incident I have just related had somewhat abated I locked up Gilman's bungalow, sent the key to him at the Cabildo, and set off to visit some of the coffee plantations in the vicinity. Some weeks later I visited several others in the San Marcos and Managua districts; and, taking advantage of these opportunities and others which were afforded me during subsequent visits to plantations in Costa Rica, Salvador, and Guatemala, I was enabled to study the methods of cultivation peculiar to these regions, and to compare them with those employed elsewhere.

In starting a coffee plantation, it is usual to commence with a nursery, formed by planting only carefully selected seed at the beginning of the rainy season. The temperature should not be below sixty-five degrees nor above eighty-five degrees Fahrenheit. The rainfall should be plentiful, and the soil deep, loose, and fairly moist, so that the roots, penetrating to a considerable depth, may find below the necessary moisture to counteract the evils of the parched surface above. The chosen spot must also be well protected from trade-winds. The nursery is composed of long beds or ridges about three feet wide, divided by narrow furrows. When the earth has been well loosened and broken up, the seeds or beans are sown at a distance of four or five inches apart and about two or three inches deep; and fine loam is sprinkled over them. The beds should then be protected in some way from the fierce rays of the midday sun, when beyond an occasional watering while the rains are not very plentiful, they will need no further care, and the planter may turn his attention to the plantation itself. Naturally, the land chosen for the plantation has first to be cleared; but as the coffee-shrub is tender, certain trees have to be left standing to afford shade, the greatest care and discretion being requisite in deciding upon the right amount; for if too much shade be left, it not only deprives the coffee-tree of moisture, but of the sun's rays also, besides preventing the free circulation of air. In short, the fastidiousness of the plant in regard to extremes of moisture, light, and air makes the successful cultivation of it almost entirely a matter of studious attention to those points when selecting a location.

When the young plants are from eighteen to twenty-two inches high they can be removed from the nursery to the plantation, holes being dug from twelve to fifteen feet apart to receive them. The main root of the plant, or tap-root, strikes directly downwards; and if this be doubled, twisted, or otherwise damaged, the development of the tree will be retarded to an astounding degree, so that great care should be taken to make each hole sufficiently deep to receive the roots destined to occupy it. The transplanting over, the planter must look to the

undergrowth. Throughout its lifetime the coffee-plant must be kept free from weeds, for it is necessary that it should enjoy the whole of the moisture the soil affords. As a rule the plantation should be weeded three times annually.

Usually, between the second and third years, when the plant is from five to six feet high, it is pruned. This operation consists in removing the middle shoot or extremity of the original stem, and then covering the wound with clay; and its object, obviously, is to promote the formation of new branches, to strengthen existing ones, and to reduce the tendency of the plant to upward growth. Pruning must be judiciously done, and at a time when the plant is not bearing. In the third year the trees will begin to bear a small number of berries, and at the end of the fourth year the first real crop can be harvested. The fruit should not be picked until fully ripe, as an admixture of green berries has a detrimental effect on the remainder. The harvesting is done by native men, women, and children, each having a set daily task of picking a certain quantity of berries.

The preparation for market is not difficult. When the berries are taken from the trees they are about the size of a small gooseberry. They are first washed in running water until fermentation commences, being afterwards put into a machine known as the 'pulper,' in order to remove the outer rind. The beans then appear enveloped in a species of jacket or thin skin, commonly called 'parchment,' and in this state they undergo another washing process with the object of removing all gummy matter. They are then crushed in a mill to rid them of their parchment coverings, winnowed, and finally spread out in the open air in yards or *barbecues* to dry by the heat of the sun. Women and children separate the grains according to size and quality, removing all broken and damaged ones; and this completes the operation.

With reference to the cost of planting and cultivating coffee, Señor Romero, the Mexican Minister at Washington, U.S.A., says that each plant up to its time of bearing will cost eleven cents Mexican currency, or, say, fourpence. The manager of the Barcenas Estate in Guatemala puts the cost in that country at four cents, roughly equivalent to twopence. As coming from nearer home, however, let us take the figures of Sir H. Dering, who has written extensively on the cultivation of coffee in Mexico. He says that up to the fifth year the cost of one thousand trees, including clearing, digging holes, cost of plants, planting, weeding, and harvesting, would be thirty pounds seven shillings and eightpence; or, say roughly, sevenpence halfpenny per tree. Therefore, if we take the cost at eightpence per tree, we shall, at all events, err on the safe side. Now, if a suitable elevation has been chosen, and the site selected where the general

conditions, climatic and otherwise, are favourable, the trees will yield, in the fifth and subsequent years, an average of two pounds of coffee each; and there should be no difficulty in disposing of the product at seventy-five shillings per hundred-weight or eightpence per pound. Thus, each tree, which has cost eightpence up to time of bearing, will make a return of one shilling and fourpence annually—that is, a profit of 100 per cent. The outlay during the sixth and following years will be considerably reduced, for it will consist only of the expense of weeding, replanting where necessary, and harvesting. Thus the profits will increase proportionally, and, making the usual allowances for the planter's personal expenses and interest on the capital outlay, deducting also a liberal percentage to cover cost of preparation for the market, freights, commissions, and emergencies, there will still remain a very substantial profit.

Of course the planter need not remain idle while his coffee-trees are growing. Once they are planted, he can turn his attention to side-crops, such as

maize, ginger, sarsaparilla, or any other product to which his soil is adapted. These will bring in small profits while he is waiting, and help to reduce the cost of producing the main crops.

The price obtainable in the market depends to a vast extent on the preparation of the beans before shipment. Several planters who have taken greater care than usual of their trees, studied the cultivation more closely, and gone to the expense of first-class machinery, are able to command much better prices; indeed, I have known some to obtain up to one hundred and twenty shillings per hundredweight for their produce. Others send their coffee in the parchment skin to London, to be prepared there by the most modern appliances. This latter step is very advisable. By adopting this method the grower lessens slightly the expense of preparation, whilst the parchment covering, if left intact, preserves both the aroma and colour of the bean during transit. In this way a much better price is ensured when the coffee comes upon the market.

MRS MILLS' ECONOMY.



FARMER MILLS, of Burt's Corner, put down the pen he had been writing with; and, with a grunt of dissatisfaction, pushed a sheet of paper across to his wife, who sat opposite, sewing.

'There, lass, that will be just four hundred pounds left owing when old Bliss has been paid his interest to-morrow; and, what with one thing and another, it's powerful hard to pay much off beside. Now, are you sure, Pris, there's nothing else you can economise in?'

Priscilla Mills pursed her lips and went on working energetically, yet glancing significantly in the direction of the old-fashioned chimney-corner, where sat an old man, with his eyes half-closed.

He had evidently followed the conversation, however; and, not waiting for the woman to reply, chimed in, with a quiet laugh:

'Economise, Abraham? What for? What's the use of stinting and cutting everything so fine—eh? I reckon you're doing handsome, to pay interest, and some of the capital off every year into the bargain, as you know you do. Why, when you married my daughter Jane for your first wife there was over a thousand pounds mortgage on this farm; and since then, between us all, it's down to four hundred; and I reckon that's good work, without economising much further. Economy can go too far sometimes,' concluded the old man, as he knocked the ashes out of his clay pipe on the hob.

For the word economise was not to his liking; he had experienced so much of it one way or

another from the present Mrs Mills that he was beginning to fear his last solace, his pipe, would be stopped.

Mrs Mills had waited ominously until he had finished, and then let loose the vials of her wrath on his head.

With a shrill voice she told him to recollect that he was dependent now on their bounty, and as such had no right to interfere in her affairs, as mistress of the house.

'Easy, lass, easy,' interjected Abraham whenever he got a chance, which was seldom, and which was all he dared say in the old man's defence, who had sat dazed through the outburst, and, without waiting for it to subside, betook himself off to bed, while the farmer slipped out to the stable to look round for the night, and to enjoy a quiet half-hour.

When Mrs Mills was in a worse temper than usual she always played a vigorous tattoo on the table—which was one reason why the old man and the farmer thought it wisest to leave her, the latter thinking that by the time he returned the paroxysm would be over, and matters would go on quieter for a time; but he was mistaken, for on returning the signs were as vigorous as ever.

'Abraham Mills, am I to be dictated to in my own house?' she demanded with emphasis the moment he had closed the door.

'Certainly not, my lass; but the old man meant no harm; he likes to have a say, seeing that he has lived on the farm all his life.'

'Say or no say, Mills, I've made up my mind, and I give you notice that John Walters shan't

stay under this roof many days longer;' and her face assumed a determined expression.

'Come, come, lass; don't be too hard on him,' replied the farmer, somewhat startled at the turn matters were taking.

'I've settled everything,' she replied, 'and so I won't be thwarted; but sit down, and hear what I've got to say here this very night.'

With subdued mien the farmer obeyed and prepared to listen, knowing full well that if she said the matter—whatever it might be—was settled, it was of little use his objecting.

She was rather calmer now; but with a look of acidity delivered her decision:

'As I said, I have determined that the old man must go, and that speedily.'

Mills looked at her astonished. 'Go—go where?'

Without replying to his query, she continued:

'He is now seventy-five, eats heartily, and smokes a lot—all expense; and, as he gets older, perhaps a doctor will be needed; or perhaps he might live ten or fifteen—ay, twenty—years longer. The Walters are a long-lived family. Why, man,' she concluded her tirade, 'he will be no end of trouble, and cost us two or three hundred pounds, maybe.'

'Ay, ay! Granted. But what the deuce are you driving at? Let us be knowing, woman.'

'This: he must go to the workhouse, and soon,' she replied deliberately; 'before he becomes a burden.'

'What!' he ejaculated, regarding her with astonishment. 'The workhouse? Why, the neighbours would cry shame on us, lass.'

'I care nothing for neighbours and their talk,' she snapped. 'Let them mind their own business. I tell you once for all, my mind is made up, and has been for some time; therefore, that settles the matter.'

The farmer blew a cloud of smoke, gave a whistle, but said nothing, knowing it would be useless, and that what had been said by his better-half was law, and nothing would turn her decision. Yet he felt a qualm of shame when he remembered what the old man had been to him in the past.

Yet, further, to his great disgust, his wife laid on him a few days later the undesirable office of telling the old man as to his future destination; and it was not without feeling very shamefaced that he broke the news, which was received in silence. For a few minutes the white-headed old man seemed unable to grasp the purport of the message. As he gazed feebly round the kitchen, with its heavy rafters black with age, and hung with hams and bacon in plenty, the tears trickled down his withered cheeks as he thought of the past, and the happy hours he had experienced under that roof, which was not to shelter him any longer.

'Economise, economise,' he murmured; 'is this,

then, what it means? Ah, me! Man and boy have I worked on this farm for sixty-five long yet happy years; and now I am turned out of where I ought to end my days. Economy's all very well; but doing right's better. Still, God's will be done,' he said, with a pathetic sigh.

Abraham Mills twiddled his thumbs and, shuffling uneasily in his chair, looked across at his wife appealingly.

But she was relentless, and as firm as adamant.

'Now, it's no use taking on about it,' she replied in a hard, matter-of-fact tone. 'You'll be comfortable enough in the "House," I'll be bound; and I have settled with Sam Wilmer to come for you in his cart at three o'clock, to drive you to Brankton; so the less fuss the better, and the sooner you'll get used to it.'

Sam Wilmer was a small, hard-working farmer and general carrier for the district, and his wife was annoyed when he told her his destination while he was harnessing the old mare. Sam's wife, Betsy, before she married him, was servant to the old man; and, in her kindness of heart, could not conceive a reason for the step, knowing how he had worked and slaved for them all. So the news upset her; but before Sam started she gave him instructions:

'Now, Sam, listen. After you leave the farmhouse with the old man, mind you drive with him straight up here. It'll only be a mile out of your way, and I'll get a cup of tea ready, and let him see that there's somebody who thinks a little about him, different to them two graspers up yonder—drat 'em!' And, jerking her head contemptuously, she departed indoors, flushed with wrath; while Sam, with a laugh, jumped in, bade Kitty get on, and started to fetch his passenger.

The old man sat for the last time in his favourite nook by the fireside. In front of him his bundle of clean clothes lay on the table, and knotted loosely in a handkerchief was a geranium which he had reared from one of his old wife's cherished plants. While he gazed around, absorbed in sorrow, Sam's old market-cart rattled up to the door. Mrs Mills stood by the window watching.

'Here's Sam. Now, are you ready?' she said, without the slightest tone of feeling.

'Ay, ay; quite ready;' and, taking a last look, he picked up his bundles and stick, and walked feebly towards the open door, past Mrs Mills, who held out her hand stiffly.

'Good-bye,' she said curtly. 'You needn't take on so; me or Abraham will come over sometimes and see how you are getting on.'

'Good-bye, missis,' he replied brokenly; but the moisture-laden eyes prevented his seeing the extended hand, and he passed out, while the farmer, ashamed at his own cowardice and the whole business, was peeping through an upper window until they were gone.

Sam spoke not a word, though full of angry thoughts, as they bowled along, now and again glancing at his charge, who sat looking stonily ahead; the old man never noticing that they had passed the turning to the main road to Brankton until they came to a cottage.

'Whoa, lass!' and the exclamation, with a sudden stop, brought the old man to himself, to find his old servant Betsy and her little daughter standing in the house-porch with a smile of welcome.

'Now, dad, let's have you out for a bit; leave off thinking about that cursed pair of sharks, and come and have a cup of tea with us. There's Betsy and the youngster waiting; look at them. Besides, it looks uncommonly like to me as if there was a storm blowing up from yonder.'

Almost as he spoke there fell a few heavy spots of rain; and, seeing the old man and his bundles safely inside, he quickly put up his mare and joined the others, just as the storm beat furiously on the window panes. The old man sat comfortably crooning an old song to the little girl, who was now settled on his knee, while Sam and his wife sat opposite communing together. There were nods and whisperings, and the end of it all was that their guest stayed that night and the night following, until it was settled between the pair that he should stay there with them so long as he lived.

Which caused Mrs Mills to remark, when it came to her ears, that if some people chose to be fools it was none of her business.

Two years later John Walters was laid to rest with his forefathers in the little hillside churchyard. Farmer Mills and his wife had been invited to the funeral, with several neighbours who had known the old yeoman, and, to their wonderment, Lawyer Framley from Brankton had attended at the graveside; and, after the last rites had been paid, he invited them all, with Mr Sam's permission, to return with him to the house, where he would have a little matter of business to settle and make known to them. All thought it was singular; but there was not a man or woman there who did not return, and all were soon seated in Betsy's best room.

After refreshments had been passed round in country fashion, Lawyer Framley drew a packet of papers from his pocket, and looked keenly around at the expectant faces.

'I must explain to you first,' he began, 'that my late client, Mr John Walters, desired me to attend at his funeral, and invite all who cared to come, as being more satisfactory, to hear his last will and testament read.'

'His will!' ejaculated Mrs Mills with a snap, while her husband opened his eyes widely; 'his will! Why, he had nothing to leave, man. What nonsense is this?'

The lawyer bowed with a look which told an observant onlooker that he held a winning hand.

'Pardon me, madam; but as to that I will now proceed to enlighten you.'

There was dead silence as he methodically untied and then proceeded to read the document which had been made and signed twelve months before, and in which he left to his dear friends and benefactors, Samuel and Betsy Wilmer, all his real and personal estate whatsoever and where-soever—duly signed and attested.

Mrs Mills, unconvinced, smiled grimly, remarking with bitter emphasis, 'Pooh! What rubbish, to be sure! He had nothing much but what he stood up in; and to go and make a will! Why, the man was mad;' and she laughed with derision.

'My late client was far from being mad, madam,' returned the lawyer stiffly; 'and it is now my duty to give a little explanation according to his last wishes, and then I have finished.'

'As some of you may remember, John Walters had a son James, who emigrated to Australia when a young man. He corresponded with his father for a time; but his letters got fewer and fewer, until they ceased altogether. Nothing had been heard of him for over twenty years, and it was supposed that he was dead. But he was not dead; he had married out there, and had lost his wife and two children; so, feeling lonely, he had made up his mind to come back to the old country; but unfortunately he also died before this decision could be carried out.'

'He had previously made inquiries, and knew at that time that his father was living at the old farm, so he had willed all his belongings to him, as sole relative.'

'When my late client was notified of his fortune it was his wish that the affair should be kept secret; and it has been so until this present time, as he desired you all to know that what had been done for him by friends during his later days was simply from pure kindness of heart, and not from expectations or greed.'

The lawyer inclined his head to Betsy, who was weeping silently through the ordeal, Sam squeezing her hand sympathetically the while. Mrs Mills stared at the lawyer, her features twitching with excitement and passion; and her husband gripped the arms of the chair and stared blankly around.

With an effort the woman jerked out spasmodically, 'And—what amount has he left, pray, after all?'

Not a sound could be heard but the rustling of the papers as the lawyer tied them together, and, looking straight at her, he replied quietly and effectively, sending a thrill of excitement through the room, 'Ten thousand pounds!'

'What!' she shrieked, the wine-glass she had held dropping from her nerveless fingers to the oaken floor with a crash: 'ten thousand pounds—lost—lost—for'—

A faint whisper in answer parted the farmer's lips—'For economy.'

HOW TO LIVE UNDER WATER.



O century of the world's hitherto chronicled history can show such a record for invention and discovery as the nineteenth; and its closing years, far from seeing any diminution in the number of secrets wrested from Science and from Nature, bring us every day further evidences of man's ingenuity and research. His fertile brain has controlled light and heat and motion, and he defies time and space. Now he is engaged in discovering, among other things, how human beings may live in an element that is, apparently, not intended for them. As the result of studies in this direction, the Academy of Paris has been examining into the truth of a very remarkable proposition, its attention having been drawn to the subject by the well-known physiologist Dr Laborde. When the question is known to be that of how man can exist under water, the importance of the matter with regard to the problems of submarine navigation will instantly be realised. That this has been possible to a certain degree is, of course, well known; but the system hitherto in use, of employing reservoirs of compressed air, from which a respirable gas was gradually released, has not given entire satisfaction, as it leaves behind in the confined space the residuum of all sorts of the human breath. Monsieur Georges Jaubert, formerly attached to the Polytechnic School of Paris, set himself, according to the account given by Dr Laborde, to solve the following problem: how to provide a person placed in a confined space with the practical means of preparing a respirable artificial air necessary for life. Taking for basis the standard idea that the composition of the air we breathe is 79 per cent. of nitrogen and 21 per cent. of oxygen, Monsieur Jaubert first examined air vitiated by respiration or combustion, and of which the oxygen had been completely exhausted, to see if the 79 per cent. of nitrogen remained intact, and if, by a special process of purifying to eliminate the carbonic acid and watery vapour, the normal air could not be reconstituted by an admixture of pure oxygen with the original nitrogen.

Numerous chemical experiments proved this hypothesis to be correct on all points. But the most important question of all remained yet to be solved: How was the oxygen to be generated? After long and patient researches, Monsieur Georges Jaubert has, he declares, discovered a chemical substance (the name of which he, not unnaturally, keeps for the present to himself) that will, by a single operation of extreme simplicity and within the reach of every one, perform the desired miracle. In the first place, it will thoroughly purify the vitiated air in a confined space of its carbonic acid, its watery vapour,

and all the other unrespirable gases, the result of human exhalation. In the second place, it will restore to him in exchange just the quantity of oxygen he requires. In a word, this marvellous substance, by its simple contact with air vitiated by respiration, will regenerate the latter entirely, and restore to it all its former good qualities. Various experiments are being made at the present time by the French Admiralty, and their experiences leave no doubt, it seems, of the enormous value of the discovery. The inventor claims that with from six to eight pounds of this new product it is possible to give all the air necessary to ensure life to an adult man for twenty-four hours, even in such a confined space as that of a diving-bell or the present form of submarine boat; and the trials made with it, both with beast and man, prove this to be no mere empty boast. Dr Laborde and Monsieur Jaubert intend to pursue their examination of the qualities of this chemical substance with a view to the application of oxygen thus generated to medical and therapeutic treatment.

There is reason to hope that this new scientific discovery will be of extraordinary benefit to mankind. If it is practically established, it is quite impossible to realise the changes which its use may bring about. The oxygen obtained by the new process is chemically unadulterated, and can, as far as purity is concerned, only be compared to electrolytic oxygen.

P R E D E S T I N A T E D.

Not always 'mid the toiling and the striving
Does solitary effort claim remark;
Not often in the fevered rush of living
Do single sparklets flash from out the dark.

Yet, now and then, some sweet, refined existence
Shines, silhouetted, 'gainst a dull, cold sky,
And shows us, with a pow'r beyond resistance,
That it is purposeful, and cannot die.

For even when the golden bowl is broken,
And when the silver cord is loosed for aye,
We hold the words that helpful lips have spoken
To guide us gently on our rugged way.

God takes the Harvest, man is left the Gleaning,
And, to mistrusting ones, the Spirit saith,
'There is no Life without its perfect meaning,
There is no chance in that which men call Death.'

Sweet lives pass on: the world may never mind them.
And souls, though bright, may shed no dazzling ray;
But God will know exactly where to find them
When He makes up His jewels in His day.

Bring, then, O hearts! the first-fruits of your treasure;
Yield up your living, trust your sacred dead.
Weigh not the cost, for He who holds the measure
Will smooth and straighten ev'ry tangled thread.

NANNIE POWER O'DONOGHUE.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

NATTERJACKS.

IN the course of my spring and summer rambles on the East Anglian marshes, I often visit a lonesome tract of salt-marsh lying not far from the coast. The salt tide of a river-estuary washes the southern border of the marsh, and deposits there a dark stain of coal-dust, intermingled with broken cork net-floats, clusters of whelks' eggs, shellfish, and the 'wheelbarrows' of the skate. Sea-gulls and hooded crows are often seen on its oozy shores in winter, when they come there to feed on the stranded sea-wrack; and then, too, one may hear the harsh screeching of dunlins and the plaintive pipings of the beachmen's 'sand-larks,' the ringed plovers. Lapwings often wheel above the marsh, and I have found their nests not far from the rush-fringed salt pools; and snipe may be flushed from amid the rank aquatic grasses. In summer some of the fairest of our fen flowers bloom there, such as the beautiful marsh orchids and pale-pink bog-beans; while in autumn the tall sea asters wave their daisy-like blossoms amid the rushes and sedges.

After the end of March, when there is warmth in the sunshine, and the golden blooms of the marsh-marigolds deck the dikesides, I often hear, while rambling along the borders of the marsh, a curious trilling that makes the air seem tremulous. It comes from the dikes which intersect the marsh, and is not the trilling of a flock of warblers, hidden by the reeds, but the love-song of the natterjacks. It is difficult to describe the sound, and I can only say that it somewhat resembles the distance-deadened song of a night-jar, or what one might imagine to be the effect of the grass-hopper-warbler's 'grinding' robbed of its metallic shrillness. When first I heard it I was much puzzled as to its origin; but a marshman whom I interrogated on the subject told me that it was made by 'them there runnin' toads, an' he an' his mates orfen called 'em marsh-birds.' Since then I have often come across the natterjack in the course of my marshland wanderings; and a better acquaintance with it has impressed upon me

the fact that it is one of the most interesting of our few British reptiles.

The natterjack toad was first discovered in England about the middle of the eighteenth century, when it was found in Lincolnshire by Sir Joseph Banks, who reported his discovery to Thomas Pennant, the naturalist friend of Linnæus and correspondent of Gilbert White of Selborne. Pennant devoted much time to the observing of frogs and toads; and in White's letters to him we find references which prove that they were in the habit of comparing notes concerning these familiar reptiles. Not much, however, was learnt about the natterjack, which was considered a very rare species in this country; for at the end of the last century Sir Joseph Banks wrote: 'The *rubeta*, or natterjack, frequents dry and sandy places. It is found on Putney Common, and also near Reversby Abbey, Lincolnshire. It never leaps, neither does it crawl with the slow pace of the toad; but its motion is liker to running. Several are found commonly together, and, like others of the genus, they appear in the evenings.' This is all that was known of the natterjacks in Sir Joseph Banks's day, except that among the Lincolnshire fenmen they were called 'Boston waites' and 'Dutch nightingales.'

Unlike the common toad, the natterjack is a decidedly local species; it is fairly abundant in some districts, and entirely absent from others. It is supposed to be indigenous in the south-west of Ireland, where, like common toads and frogs, it apparently escaped the exorcism of St Patrick; and in some of the eastern counties of England it is almost as numerous as the common species; but, although most plentiful in marshy districts, it only resorts to the water during the breeding season, and is quite capable of existing for months together in dry places. There is little doubt, however, that it has a partiality for marshes; and that it prefers those not far from the sea is indicated by its presence in the fenny localities of Norfolk, Suffolk, Lincolnshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, Dorset, Hampshire, and Cambridgeshire.

There is no difficulty in distinguishing between the natterjack and common toad, for the former is smaller than the latter, and, as its name of 'walking' or 'running' toad implies, has a different mode of progression. The common toad is, as Shakespeare says, a 'heavy-gaited' creature; but the natterjack is more agile in its movements, and when disturbed will 'walk' or 'run' fairly fast. To see a toad elevate its body and run strikes one as a somewhat curious sight at first; but the natterjack can not only run, but can climb over obstacles that might well be imagined impassable to it. I have seen a natterjack comfortably installed upon the top of a log that lay beside a lowland dike, and from the complacent manner in which it sat and gazed about it one might have supposed it was proud of its climbing powers. When, at the commencement of the breeding season, it starts off from its winter quarters for the marsh dikes, it allows nothing—not even an ivy-clad garden-wall—to hinder its advance. Like many other creatures, it has a way of shamming death when in danger, and it does this so cleverly that even the marshmen, who, while they are dike-drawing, come across plenty of natterjacks, have been deceived. 'They're curious warmins,' said one of these men of the marshes, 'for you may see 'em lyin' spread out near th' deeks, lookin' jist as if some one had stamped on 'em an' squashed 'em; an' if you pick 'em up they 'ont move unless you give 'em a good tidy nip.' The Norfolk fenmen, according to Dr Emerson, have a 'rockstaff,' or proverb, 'that a man can quiet the most restive horse with the bone of a running toad.'

The natterjack has shorter hind-legs than the

common toad, more conspicuous eyes, and less-webbed feet. Its body is of a yellowish-brown colour, with dark-greenish cloudings; and along the middle of its back runs a thin bright-yellow line. The male possesses a vocal sac, which is absent in the common species, and which only reaches its fullest development in the green toad of the Continent. This sac renders its trilling much louder than it would otherwise be. The species deposits its spawn in the usual way of batrachians, and its young assume the tadpole form, though the tadpoles are smaller and darker than those of the common toad. It has been estimated that the female lays as many as nineteen thousand eggs; but this is not too great a number when it is considered how many tadpoles are destroyed by fishes, newts, and the larvæ of dragon-flies, and that water-fowl and fish at times gorge themselves with the spawn. Bell, in his *British Reptiles*, even goes so far as to say that the tadpoles eat each other; but although I have reared a good many of them, I have never seen anything that suggested such a thing. Worms and insects are the favourite food of the species, which has a long tongue, to assist it in catching the latter. A naturalist who kept some natterjacks in his garden observed that they were fond of lying exposed to the full glare of the summer sun, and that while enjoying their sun-baths they were ever on the alert for such insects as came within their reach.

The scientific name of the species is *Bufo calamita*; and its English name, if not derived from the provincial word *natter*, to be querulous, find fault, nag (used by George Eliot in *Adam Bede*), in allusion to its voice, is presumably from the Anglo-Saxon *nædre*, an adder.

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER VII.—THE SETTLING OF AN OLD SCORE.



FOR a time my lord was silent, and busied himself in so arranging his cloak and wraps as to ensure the utmost warmth and comfort—a matter of no small consequence on a cold winter day. We had reached the open country before he turned to me, his eyes dancing with merriment.

'Why so glum, man of little faith?' he asked.

'Frankly, my lord, I like the affair less than ever,' said I.

'And cannot credit me with some degree of method in my madness? Fie, George! Come, am I in the habit of doing anything without a purpose?'

I had to confess that he was not.

'But, in this case, you cannot conceive what it is? Well, for your sins, you are not to learn it yet awhile!' He leaned back in his corner, laughing quietly to himself. 'A single hint!'

he said, continuing. 'We have been playing a comedy, some old friends and I—even you have had, unconsciously to yourself, a part in it—and I am vastly in error if the curtain is not about to rise on the last act. Then you will see—what it may surprise you to see, my lad.'

'But . . . I don't understand!'

'I have no intention that you should,' said he cheerfully. 'To divulge the secret beforehand would only spoil your enjoyment of the play. . . . *À propos*, have you ever helped to trap a fox? If you have, you will know that 'tis no easy task, and that the bait must be delicate and skilfully laid. That, in a word, is why we are here at this moment.'

'And we are the bait?' I cried, as his meaning began to dawn upon me, albeit but dimly.

'I am, to be precise. And, if all goes as I hope, I think I can promise you some entertainment within the next hour or two. That being

so,' he went on, 'I have a favour to ask. I have had little sleep for two nights past, and would be the better of a nap. You, on your part, are burning to give me your adventures and—confessions, shall I say? Well, I want you to keep the story until we can have it comfortably over a bottle of wine at Devizes, where we lie to-night. Of course, if you must speak, I am at your mercy. But otherwise, I will listen with the devoutest attention when we get to the "Bear"—which is more than I may do at present. Is it a bargain?'

I replied that 'twas for him to decide; and indeed, thanks to his hints, I had not now the same consuming desire to unbosom myself. Somehow it seemed less essential.

'Very good,' said he, and at once composed himself in his place. In two minutes he was snoring gently.

For me, what could I do but look out (with unobserving eyes, I fear) at the white landscape that flitted past the steam-clouded window, and permit my imagination free rein? Here I need not set down the thoughts and anticipations that ran through my brain. The reality was not amongst them.

So the coach jolted onward, with many an oath and crack of the whip from the postillions. Considering the late snowfall, our progress was not unsatisfactory; and as we dashed through one hamlet after another, and passed field and hedge and wood, I idly recognised the successive landmarks that I had noted on my ride to Bath the day before. 'Twas scarcely travellers' weather; and, save for a few wagons, a score or two of country folks afoot, and a stray chaise—and these chiefly in the first half-dozen miles—we had an open road. It became more and more deserted as the second hour merged into the third and the afternoon shortened. Latterly, in a long stretch, we met nothing but the London coach. It flashed by to the cheerful music of the horn, and for an instant my lord's slumber was broken.

The next half-hour was without incident, yet I had an increasing feeling of restlessness as the minutes sped. Then, happening to glance out, I observed something (but forget what) that gave me my bearings. I realised that we were approaching the byroad which led to the Dower-house of Langbridge, and so could not be far from the spot where I had encountered the highwaymen. The fact, for some strange reason, added to my foreboding. Sir Charles and Kitty had been much in my mind, and now Craddock (if that were the pad's name) recurred to it; and with the conjunction came a premonition that here, if anywhere, would my lord's comedy be played out. As you are to learn, I was right. Only, 'twas to be a tragedy rather than a comedy.

Indeed, the idea had hardly been formed ere 'twas justified. There was a cry without, fol-

lowed by a frantic rapping on the roof of the coach; my lord woke up with a start; and, pulling the window open, I thrust forth my head. As I did so, I heard Joseph's voice from the rumble:

'Look, sir! . . . There, in front!'

The road took a sharp turn, which we were just rounding; the light was still good, although the dusk was beginning to creep in; and, looking, I saw that which had startled the servant—and now startled me. For there, fifty or sixty yards on, a couple of masked men sat their horses right in our path; and the taller (as I perceived at once) had a black beard, and bestrode a powerful bay with a patch of white on its forehead! In my amazement, I had almost called out: there was no mistaking either man or horse. And, inconceivable as it may seem in those later days, they were plainly determined to stop us—in daylight, and on one of the main highways of England!

'Faster! faster!' I shouted to the postillions. 'Don't pull up—ride them down if they will not give way!'

The men lashed their horses, and I drew in again. Then, having possessed myself of the pistols lying ready on the opposite seat, I turned to my lord. Never had I beheld him more cool.

'Well?' he asked.

'Pads—and the pair who stopped me before!'

Rising, he cast off his wraps. 'Are you quite sure it isn't our fox?' said he, with his quiet smile. 'In any event, George—no violence unless I say the word.'

Suddenly, before I could reply, came a rough jolt; he was thrown against me, and both of us against the door; then another, followed by the shivering of glass; and, as the coach tilted up, 'twas borne upon me that the arguments of a brace of pistols had proved more potent than my command, and the rascally postillions had driven us into the ditch. The sequel was not long delayed. Just as we had picked ourselves up, the far door was pulled open, and the black-bearded pad showed himself, pistol in hand. He regarded us for a minute in silence, and meanwhile a shot cracked outside.

'Twas to me that he addressed himself at last.

'Once more, Mr Holroyd!' said he. 'I am very fortunate! Now I must trouble you to get down—you and his lordship.'

I started on hearing his voice; it sounded not altogether the same as that of my old antagonist, and liker to another that was more familiar to me. Even yet, however, I guessed not the truth.

My lord answered him. 'With pleasure, sir,' he said briskly, and climbed out with the agility of a younger man.

I made haste to follow, and in a glance saw our position. The coach was firmly fixed in the left-hand ditch, while the horses stood quiet,

panting and trembling. The postillions had fled; twenty yards back, they and Joseph were disappearing at their best speed round the turn, leisurely herded by the other highwayman. He it was, no doubt, who had fired to hurry them on.

The same glance also told me exactly where we were. For, some thirty or forty yards Londonwards, I recognised the point at which the road to the Dower-house left the highway. On the main road, which ran on in a straight line for perhaps half a mile farther, not a movement was to be observed. At the spot of our adventure 'twas bounded on one side by a hedge, and on the other by a high park-wall. It struck me that the wall was probably that of Langbridge.

All this I had noticed instinctively; and meanwhile my lord had drawn out his snuff-box, and was calmly awaiting the highwayman's next step. He, on his part, sat his horse motionless until the fleeing trio of servants were out of sight. Then he raised his hand to his face with a quick gesture.

'Enough of this masquerade!' he cried. 'It has served its purpose in frightening these fools, and now it may go!'

The voice was doubtful no longer; and an exclamation of utter astonishment was forced from me as mask and beard dropped to the ground together and the man stood revealed.

'Sir Charles Hollingworth!'

'Twas indeed my cousin—and he and the pad were one and the same.

'Or Squire Craddock—at your service, Cousin George,' said he. 'You had no suspicion? Well, the necessity of war must excuse the former affair. This concerns you less.' He turned at that to my lord, who had shown not the slightest sign of surprise, and just then was taking a pinch of snuff. 'So we have met again—at last,' he remarked to him.

Their eyes encountered; and I knew that two men who hated each other with the deadliest hatred, and could never be aught but enemies, were face to face.

'Oh, I felt sure that my hint would have its proper effect,' said my lord, replacing his snuff-box in his pocket.

'Then you intended this meeting?' Sir Charles's tone had just a shade of perplexity in it.

'Knowing you, I hoped for it.'

'And, having met'—He broke off as his comrade cantered back and pulled up beside him. 'Well, Tom?'

'All clear,' replied the other. 'The cowards will run for a mile before they stop.'

He looked from one to another, hesitated for a moment, and then unmasked likewise. This time I was not unprepared—and had my arm been stronger I should have been yet more

pleased to discover another old acquaintance. I had not forgotten the previous evening.

'You too, Mr Kennett?' cried my lord. 'Still playing for the high stakes, I perceive? Well, young men *will*.'

He bowed, but said nothing; and after a whispered conversation Sir Charles gave him his bridle and dismounted. I was still gripping my pistols, and, nodding to me, Kennett proceeded to recharge his. My cousin intercepted the sign, and put his own interpretation upon it.

'Mind, Kennett,' he said meaningly, 'this is a matter betwixt Lord Kynaston and me—and betwixt us alone—and Mr Holroyd has no part in it.'

'Unluckily for me—or for Mr Holroyd,' returned Kennett.

'And as it must be settled speedily, while the light lasts . . . if his lordship, as I am convinced,' he added, again confronting him, 'has no objection . . . why, let us get to business!'

'By all means,' said my lord. 'Twas for that purpose I sought this meeting, having a certain proposal to make you.'

'There can be but one,' said Sir Charles, 'and it need not delay us for long.'

'A moment, if you will pardon me. First, I have to remind you of several facts. Any day these three weeks past I could have laid you by the heels, and you have not taken a single step unknown to me—neither yourself nor one of your accomplices. Your plot, if I may call it so—one expected more from such an old conspirator as Dare-devil Charlie—your plot is dead. 'Twas strangled yesterday—and you know who strangled it.'

'I am not denying that you were cursedly well informed!' burst out Sir Charles.

'So, there being an end of that'—

'Not quite!' cried the other. 'I trust to end it myself—when your lordship is ready.'

'Oh, I have not done. . . . His Majesty's business being settled, then, I remembered an ancient score of my own. I am here to pay it—and you will guess that I have not come unprepared. To be frank, I expect a reinforcement of half-a-dozen men or so in a few minutes, and I have others on every road within a dozen miles. Thus your friends—all your friends, Hollingworth,' he repeated with a grave significance in his tone—'are at my mercy—unless you choose to accept my offer.'

So the secret was out! I heard a muttered oath from Kennett as he glanced apprehensively round—first along the road, and then at Sir Charles.

'And the offer?' inquired the latter curtly.

'Is simply that you deliver yourself prisoner to me,' answered my lord quietly. 'In that case your friends may go back to exile without hindrance from the government.'

'And in the other case?'

'Of your refusal?' He shrugged his shoulders. 'Then I am afraid there will be lamentation in many noble families—perhaps even in the most exalted.'

The allusion was sufficiently plain, and to me the dilemma that faced Sir Charles seemed a terrible one. But I did less than justice to his readiness of resource.

'A pretty scheme, egad!' he cried. 'Yet, after all, does it not strike you that there is another course? God knows we have little cause to love each other, Kynaston, but at the least let us play the game out like gentlemen! We are man to man: why should we not finish the bout that was interrupted some twenty years ago?'

My lord's face darkened at the recollection. 'The stakes were more level then,' he said. 'Now you have nothing to lose—even your life is forfeit—and everything to gain.'

'Is not that the very consideration that should appeal to you?' asked Sir Charles, with a touch of scorn. Then he turned towards the other, smiling wickedly. 'Or is it that, as ever, my Lord Kynaston trusts to his head rather than his hands for the undoing of his enemies?'

The red flamed into my lord's cheek, and his answer was swift—and uncompromising.

'That is a lie, and you know it, Hollingworth!'

In an instant they had doffed cloaks and gloves and their swords were out. They would have met there and then if I had not intervened.

'Think, my lord'—

He stopped me at once. 'After Sir Charles has had his proof,' he said coldly.

'And you may see fairplay, George,' added Sir Charles, still smiling. 'But had we not better go back a little? We may frighten the coach-horses here. And if you will keep watch at the turn for Lord Kynaston's friends, Kennett'—

'I was just thinking of that,' he said, and rode off at once with the two steeds.

All remonstrance would now have been in vain. Not only did each man stand for a cause: he had an implacable enmity of twenty years to nerve him. The preliminaries were speedily arranged, and surely was never duel so important to be fought under conditions less favourable! The light was fast fading; and at the spot chosen, a dozen yards or thereabout behind the coach, the trodden snow offered but an insecure footing.

I gave the word, and the blades crossed and embraced. Both men had skill beyond the ordinary. Sir Charles I had proved myself, and my lord's reputation was high in the London schools; and now the first minute's play told me that they were well matched. I have not the heart

to write in detail of the keen and relentless struggle that ensued. 'Twas, as I was well aware, a fight to the death; I was bound to both by many ties, and could not witness it unmoved; and with the lapse of time that which remains most clearly in my memory is the impression of the bitter ending.

The issue was long in doubt. For nearly ten minutes the only sounds to be heard were the hard breathing of the combatants and the ring of the steel, and still the advantage was to neither. More than once my heart jumped into my mouth—as when Sir Charles's sword slipped under his opponent's guard and ripped his coat, and again when my cousin saved himself by a marvellous *riposte*. And then, while the result hung in the balance, this shout came suddenly from Kennett:

'Horsemen in sight, and riding fast—they will be on us in five minutes!'

The antagonists did not seem to hear him, and certainly paid no heed. The lust of contest was in their blood, and all else was forgotten. But the end was near. A minute later the good fight was over. Sir Charles's foot slipped as he made a quick *botte*, and before he could recover himself my lord had seized his chance. My cousin fell forward, run through the body.

I was beside him in a second; and Kennett, seeing what had happened, threw himself from his horse and joined me. Together we did our best, which was but little. But Sir Charles, looking up at us with his whimsical smile, shook his head.

'Tis no good—I'm done for at last,' said he faintly. Then: 'Is Kynaston there?'

My lord bent over him.

'Will you shake hands, Kynaston?' he asked. 'You have won the game—and I bear you no grudge. At the least, I have cheated the London mob of a beheading!'

So they clasped hands, those two who had been lifelong rivals and enemies, and had at length settled their dispute. As the winner turned away I could have sworn that the muscles about his mouth were twitching.

Then Sir Charles spoke again: 'Now, Kennett—off with you!' he said.

'I stand or fall with you,' returned the other doggedly.

'You have yourself to think of—and the Prince. . . . *He* comes first, lad! . . . And Holroyd will see to me.'

Kennett resisted no further. Jumping upon his horse, and taking the bridle of Sir Charles's, he rode off; and as he turned into the byroad and so from my view, I heard the clatter of the approaching reinforcement—which was too late. And, looking, I saw that Sir Charles had fainted away.

FRUIT-FARMING IN SCOTLAND.

By A PRACTICAL MAN.

IN TWO PARTS—PART I.



IN these days of agricultural depression, when the farmer finds it increasingly difficult year by year to make both ends meet, while the landowner is confronted by an annual shrinkage in his rental, it is at first sight a somewhat surprising fact that more attention is not given to the development of the cultivation of fruit. The enormous quantity of fruit, and more particularly of strawberries and raspberries, which is consumed both in its natural state and in the shape of jam, must have led many, both farmers and landowners, to wonder whether they could not participate in the profits of the trade. In the present article it is proposed, without going too deeply into the statistics of the business, to point out some of the difficulties and trials which beset the path of the fruit-farmer in Scotland. There are probably not many outside the trade who are aware what a large industry already exists in the cultivation of what is known as 'small fruit'—that is, of strawberries and raspberries—and, to a much more limited extent, of currants and gooseberries.

In the district to which this article primarily applies, it is the ambition of every cottager to rent or feu a piece of ground whereon to grow fruit; and, though it may appear paradoxical to say so, it is on fruit grown in comparatively small quantities on an acre or two of land that the surest and, proportionately, the largest profits are made. The risks run by a small grower are less, the expense of cultivation is comparatively smaller, and he has greater certainty of finding a market for his fruit than the large farmer; while, naturally, he is not so harassed by the difficulty of obtaining labour.

The great centres of fruit cultivation in Scotland are the Clyde valley, Perthshire, and, to an increasing extent, the neighbourhood of Aberdeen. The farm with the working of which this article is primarily concerned is situated in Perthshire, and the observations as to the cultivation, picking, and despatch of the fruit apply more especially to that district, though—*mutatis mutandis*—the system is much the same in the other districts. Moreover, since the cultivation of gooseberries and currants has not hitherto thriven there—growers being discouraged partly by the length of time elapsing before the bushes become productive, and partly by a blight which has attacked them—these fruits may be dismissed with the remark that the enterprising grower who can afford to wait a while for his harvest will, if he can successfully combat the blight,

reap a rich harvest, since the limited supply of both fruits, and of currants in particular, ensures good prices being obtained.

To grow strawberries and raspberries profitably on anything like a large scale, there are three things essential. The farm must be situated within a sufficiently short distance of a station, to admit of the fruit being easily transported to the markets; it must be near enough to a town to ensure a constant supply of labour on a large scale; and, finally, it is obvious that the land must be well adapted for the culture. It is a somewhat curious fact that our ideas as to suitable soil differ materially from those of our southern friends. Here it is thought that the best ground for growing strawberries is a light gravelly soil—for choice, reclaimed moor or woodland—which to the Kent or Hampshire farmer would appear most unlikely to produce good crops.

RECLAIMING LAND.

The process of reclaiming moorland is, as may be supposed, a costly one. The first operation consists in what is known as 'trenching'—that is, turning over the ground with spades to a depth of two or three feet, according to the character of the soil, great care being taken to avoid breaking through the crust into the subsoil proper. Trenching is usually done by piecework, at the rate of not less than one shilling per pole; and the cost per acre is therefore at least eight pounds. The result of the trenching is to leave a most unpromising-looking surface, which to the eyes of the casual observer resembles nothing so much as a shingly beach. The next step is to try and equalise to a certain extent the balance of power between earth and stones by gathering up a few tons per acre of the latter. The amount of stones that can be taken from the surface of an acre of ground without materially altering its appearance would afford a good subject for the delectation of the statistical fiend.

STRAWBERRIES.

Having spent as much money as he chooses on this stage of cleansing his Augean stable—and, in our opinion, the less the better, since, do what he will, at least half of the soil consists of stones—the farmer proceeds to get rid of some of the superfluous weeds by planting a crop of potatoes—one of the best patent weed-killers known. The ground is then ready for planting with strawberries, which should, if possible, be done in autumn, but is as often as not deferred till spring—the middle of March or April, according to the season. The ground must

first be thoroughly manured—no small item in the farmer's expenditure, the proper amount of manure being from thirty to thirty-five tons per acre, at an estimated price of six shillings per ton. There is a very considerable degree of skill required in the apparently simple operation of planting; and, as the whole future of the plant depends upon it, the utmost care must be taken. It used to be the custom in this district to use an implement bearing the somewhat dubious-sounding name of 'dibble,' which consists of a sharpened peg of some two or three inches in diameter, with a cross-piece at the top. With this the planter made a hole in the ground, and he then proceeded to insert therein the roots of the plant wrapped closely together. This was a barbarous method of planting a strawberry, with its spreading fibrous roots, and has been generally abandoned in favour of the orthodox method of using a trowel. It is usual to leave a space of about ten inches between each plant, and of not less than thirty between the rows; for the tread of the strawberry-picker is not delicate like that of Agag, and even with this interval it is heart-rending to see how many berries his remorseless feet crush into a pulp.

It might be thought that, having once planted his fruit, the farmer had only to sit down in its shadow, so to speak, and enjoy the profits. The reality is very different. There is hardly a month in the year in which he must not be working among it. The ill weeds, which proverbially grow apace, seem to increase with lightning rapidity in a strawberry field. In the autumn and spring large gangs of workers are employed for weeks in weeding. The weeds are collected in baskets and burnt, and you flatter yourself that never another will dare to show its head in the field. It is a fond delusion; at the first shower there spring up as if by magic chickweed, bindweed, thistles, docks, and all other abominations. And so the weeding process is repeated again and again *ad nauseam*; and unless it is constantly and efficiently carried out, good-bye to the hope of having a remunerative crop. In addition to the labour just mentioned—since this form of cultivation affords a good example of the survival of the fittest, and many plants fail to survive the inclemencies of the season—the vacancies in the rows have to be filled up, which is usually done by training the runners of the survivors over the vacant spaces.

The chief enemy which growers have to face, apart from weeds, is frost. Hardly a year passes in which the crop of the early varieties is not decimated by late frosts, and it is occasionally almost totally destroyed. In the evening a field is white with strong healthy blossoms, as if it were sprinkled with snow, and next morning a careful examination reveals that most of the blossoms have brown and shrivelled centres, which will never develop into fruit.

The varieties of strawberries which are principally grown in this district are two: the Rifleman, a small early berry, deliciously sweet, which is said to make the best jam; and the Elton Pine. The last-named is a late variety, producing much larger fruit with a slightly acid flavour. The size sometimes attained by these berries is remarkable, and it is said that six or seven selected at random have been known to weigh a pound. Other varieties, such as the Garibaldi and the Royal Sovereign, are also being cultivated; and it would appear from the marked falling off in crops of late years that some new variety is badly wanted. It is an unfortunate fact, which is certainly true as regards the reclaimed moorland, that when once there has been a crop of strawberries taken from the ground it will never bear the late variety to much advantage again. Apparently they absorb some substance out of the ground which cannot by any known process be replaced. Experiments have been tried by taking a five years' rotation of other crops off the ground and then replanting it in strawberries; but the result has never been satisfactory. Of course the small grower must be contented with the inferior results produced by repeated planting; or when his plot of ground has been exhausted for strawberry cultivation, he may plant it in raspberries.

The yield per acre from the virgin soil used formerly to be most astonishing. From two to three tons of fruit per acre was no uncommon crop; and in those days of big prices the profit was very large in spite of the fact that the productive life of the plants is so short. But nowadays, for some unknown reason, which cannot be wholly ascribed to the inclement seasons of the last two or three years, the yield per acre has diminished to a remarkable extent, and is very often less than a ton. It must not be assumed that all or even the greater part of the fruit grown in this district is grown on the virgin soil redeemed in the manner described above. A great deal is grown on ordinary agricultural ground which has been reclaimed at some remote period; but certainly the best results have been obtained from the new land. Whether it is worth while to go to the expense of reclaiming ground which, after bearing its one crop of fruit, is practically useless for other agricultural purposes is a question open to doubt; more especially as it is almost impossible wholly to eradicate broom and whins, and if left to itself the ground will in an incredibly short time lapse from civilisation into savagery.

RASPBERRIES.

Turning to the case of raspberries, the lot of the grower would at first sight appear to be a more happy one. They possess this great advantage over strawberries, that the bushes are more or less of a permanency. How long they

will go on bearing if properly cared for is hardly known. In gardens bushes of thirty or forty years old may be seen producing as good crops as five-year-olds, and the cultivation in fields is still too young to estimate what is their limit of profitable production. The expenses of growing them are, however, greater, and go far to reduce the margin of profit; and, moreover, they take longer to attain to years of discretion and productiveness. While good results are obtained in the light gravelly soil so well suited for strawberries, raspberries thrive better on a richer alluvial soil. It is usual to plant them after cleaning the ground with a crop of potatoes, as in the case of strawberries, the young plants or suckers being cut away from the old bushes in autumn. They should be planted at intervals of three feet, in rows about five feet apart. This space is necessary not only to enable the pickers to move freely about without treading down and breaking the young canes, but also to admit of the passage of a horse for weeding purposes. When only grown in small quantities it is perhaps best to train the bushes on stakes, as in a garden; but the expense and trouble of doing this on a large scale is so great that the large farmer usually trains them on two galvanised wires, the top one being at the height of four to five feet from the ground. As in the case of strawberries, the farmer's labours have only begun when he has planted his raspberries. The weeding process has to be carried out with the same unflinching perseverance.

After the fruit has been picked, the old canes and some of the young ones are cut away, and such of the latter as are to form the bushes for next year are tied to the wires; the number left in each bush varying, according to the fancy of the grower and the strength of the plant, from five to ten. This operation, as may be easily supposed, requires both trained judgment and manual skill. An error in not selecting the best canes or clumsiness in tying may ruin the whole crop. The smaller canes are simply trained upright against the wires, care being taken not to tie them so loosely as to admit of their 'waggling' too much (in which case a gale of wind may do great damage by snapping them off when heavily laden with fruit), or so tightly as to interfere with the free passage of the sap. As regards the treatment of the taller canes, opinions differ. Some years they grow so luxuriantly as to attain a height of seven or eight feet, and manifestly they cannot be treated in the same fashion as their smaller brethren. There are some who cut off a foot or two of the canes and train them straight up the wires, and think that thus shorn they bear as well as when left their full size. Others—and theirs is probably the better course to follow—have a system of arching, or 'bowing,' as it is technically called; but this again is a process requiring great skill. You must humour the

cane, commencing to curve it gradually from the root in such a manner that the bush resembles the shape of a fan. Too often the unfortunate canes are trained straight up for three or four feet, and then roughly bent and twisted horizontally along the wires, so that the stem ultimately becomes utterly gnarled and distorted.

INSECT AND OTHER PESTS.

Every three or four years the raspberries must be treated to a plentiful dose of manure, and an allowance of forty tons per acre is not too much to give them. But even with the kindest treatment, they too often disappoint expectations. It is true that, thanks to their long tap-roots, they do not feel the effects of summer droughts so much as strawberries. Nor does the frost affect them to any appreciable extent. A far greater danger is that the young canes will flower and even fruit in autumn. The canes which do so are usually the strongest and comeliest; and if the farmer is careless enough to select them as his mainstay for next season he will have but a miserable crop. There may often be seen in a row of bushes thick with foliage and hanging with fruit a number of withered dried-up sticks. These are the canes which have wasted their strength and energy to no good purpose in flowering the previous year.

But, apart from this danger, there are others and worse to be apprehended, for which there is practically no remedy. There are at least three insect pests which too often destroy the promise of the season. The first of these is the Raspberry Moth or Borer, which, when in the form of a small caterpillar, pierces the soft, juicy part at the base of the buds, and prevents the shoots from expanding. There can be no doubt that the harm done by this caterpillar is sometimes very great. It may be somewhat alleviated by forking into the ground at the roots of the bushes a mixture of soot and lime, in the autumn or early winter; but the only real remedy is the somewhat drastic one proposed by the Board of Agriculture—namely, cutting down and burning the infected canes.

Another enemy who does less real mischief, though his appearance is more alarming, is the Raspberry Beetle, who employs himself in eating out the heart of the berries while still in bud and in flower. But since these beetles only attack the individual flowers, and their capacity for food is not inexhaustible, the mischief done by them is less than it would appear to be, though at times they are seen in such myriads that it would seem likely they would destroy the whole crop. Spraying with paraffin appears to discourage but not to destroy very many of them, owing to the fact that they have wings, which they use with considerable agility on the approach of danger. The beetle is in appearance something like a dark and rather dissipated-looking ladybird.

Last, and worst of all, is the much-dreaded Raspberry Weevil. He is a clay-coloured animal of about three and a half lines long, with dark-red legs, and is said to have 'pitchy, twelve-jointed antennæ furnished with clubs.' His character is as bad as this somewhat formidable description of his appearance would lead one to conjecture. These weevils in the daytime live in the earth at the bottom of the bushes, whence they come out at night in immense numbers to feed. They are not content with nipping off individual berries, but bite half-through the stem of a cluster of ten or twelve, so that the damage they will do in a single night must be seen to be believed. No remedial measures are of much avail. They do not come out by day, and if you

hunt for them in the earth, they either pretend to be dead, when they are practically indistinguishable from the surrounding soil, or burrow out of sight with an alacrity which would put an armadillo to shame. Some growers send out men at night to hunt them with lanterns and cloths soaked in paraffin. These they hold under the bushes and tap the wires, whereupon the weevils fall down into the cloths. It is a fascinating sport; the weevils rattle down like hailstones, and there is great satisfaction in burning your enemy in bushels, for that is the practical effect of the paraffin upon them; but it is marred by the feeling that you might as well be trying to bale out, say, the Mediterranean with a teacup.

A GAME OF WEI-CH'I.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.



WHEN these explanations had been made, I understood why Wang had successfully imitated Archimedes, who, according to the Latin Syntax, was so absorbed over some problem of defensive mechanism with which to protect his city that he did not perceive that the enemy had already entered it. (A similar absorption, by the way, is one of the chief dangers in the game of *wei-ch'i*, as it is in chess. And I was able to form at least an excuse for his hopeless toil, because I was already aware of his arduous literary studies: he wanted to raise himself to the rank of a 'literate,' or (not to fool with pedantic obscurities) a gentleman. For I must tell you that a knowledge of the game of *wei-ch'i* gives a man a greater standing in the polite world than a knowledge of the classics. None the less, this ambition was less intelligible than that of humane letters, because it was scarcely credible that an unlettered man would ever have an opportunity of entering the society of players. I pointed this out to him.

'You savvy good, master,' he replied admiringly. 'You very much savvy China pidgin.' Pidgin is a catholic and inestimable word; see how it serves here for that untranslatable abstraction, 'society'! 'But I tell you why, *tung chia*. In my count-a-lie'—

In Hunan, to cut him short, there was a high military official, General Ho, to wit, commandant of the provincial troops at the capital city of Chang-sha, who five years previously had offered a reward of a hundred taels (twenty pounds) to any fellow-provincial who should succeed in beating him at a game of *wei-ch'i*. Now, this challenge was not, of course, addressed to his fellow-officials (the pleasure of meeting a good player would be of more importance than a pecuniary prize to any true 'son of the 19-square

board'); it was held out as an incentive to the graduates of Chang-sha (perhaps the principal seat of classical erudition in China) to study the game, and it was well known that the General was wont to make a donation of from ten to fifty taels to those who accepted his challenge and made a fair show, though beaten; even fifty taels being sufficient to support a student for a year, the minimum time of exclusive practice considered necessary to play a fair game at *wei-ch'i*. And this challenge was open to all; the General, one of the very few military men who was also a 'literate,' would be probably more pleased to see the son of a coolie accept his challenge than the son of a viceroy. This was Wang's opportunity—a rare and beneficent one, but of a sort which is always being held out in other lines of endeavour by a paternal bureaucracy. If he could accept the General's challenge, and make a fair show; if, by some incredible blessing, he could *beat* him, his local fame would be secure for all time, like the fame of a graduate who has passed his third examination at Peking, and whose name is preserved on tablets in immortal honour of his village; and with the education he had already given himself, a victory would undoubtedly let him through one of the back-doors of the bureaucracy, without having taken his degree. All this sounds very medieval in our ears, like the prizes offered for painting and music in old Germany, which opened the doors of fame to humble talent; but China is still medieval, in some things even antique. Now is the time to preserve such medievalisms, for they are about to dip over into the modern slope.

On learning that Wang had so practical, though remote, a goal for his ambition, I immediately entered into the spirit of his dream; I not only secured him a certain number of hours of uninterrupted tranquillity daily in one of my own

rooms, but assisted him still more by taking a personal interest in the game, and frequently posing as his opponent. Although I did not pretend to master the intricacies of the board, my 'new blood' was of considerable value to him, for hitherto the poor fellow had always played against himself.

For three more years Wang continued in my service, and never for one day, except at New Year time, did he intermit his patient, persevering study of the game. Sometimes, it is true, a spirit of despair crept over him as the bewildering complications of the board grew with the increase of the lines, and then he would grow sick, and more than once I feared it would be the death of him. I was obliged to support him with wine and delicacies, and I did it willingly, even anxiously, for I was beginning to regard him with all the vigilant interest of a prize-fighter's trainer. This remote and mysterious contest, which, for all I knew, might have already lapsed through the General's death or indifference, penetrated me with the vague iceberg romance of Eastern idiosyncrasy, and I declare I was as anxious for his victory as he was. You cannot refrain from admiring, and gradually believing in, a fixed purpose, no matter what its object; there is nothing in all humanity so sublime and god-like as this common trait of tenacity. Wang had now mastered the 18-line board, and was preparing to tackle the full one.

But, alas for Wang! his brain was not entirely narrow enough to be concentrated on a foot-square board to the exclusion of his country's ill-fare. Ever since the war he had been concerned with the vital question of China's future, which no enlightened Chinaman living in daily contact with Europeans could pretend any longer to ignore. Wang now understood and spoke English well; and while waiting behind my chair at my own table and those of others—for it is the custom to take your boy with you when you dine out—he had gathered from our conversation a very clear impression of the intentions of European nations. And he did not favour the notion of the dismemberment and servitude of China. A good deal of utter bosh has been talked about the Chinaman's lack of patriotism. I doubt if so much national pride exists elsewhere. Wang was a thoroughly enlightened man; knew all about civilisation, and knew its benefits; knew Englishmen and Americans, and cordially admired them; and his unhesitating decision was, that the ancient policy of his country of driving the foreigner out of it was its only salvation. I argued this with him again and again; but his answer always was: 'We are as good as you; we want you as friends, as merchants, as teachers; but we do not want you for masters. And until we have first driven you out, we are not in a position to invite you.' I pointed out the difference between the Chinese army and the Japanese, by way of example; but

he appositely replied that the Japanese had conquered the Chinese army, but had not ventured to settle in China. 'All your armies together,' he said, 'cannot spare more than a million men to garrison the coast; and what are one million against a hundred million in the long-run?' As usual, his single-mindedness persuaded me; and, while not admitting that violence and the interruption of trade was good, I granted that we could not occupy China by force if the Chinese people resented it as a nation. This difficulty of forming a national opinion in a few years stopped him; but, none the less, he became a conspirator.

When the Germans occupied Kiao-chao, and the Russians New-chwang—confound the abominable jumble of journalistic spelling!—Wang became badly troubled; he worked at his chess-board feverishly, but he conspired as well. Then came the news of Yu Man-tzu's rebellion in Sze-chuan, embodying the Young China party's creed of ousting the obsolete Government and asserting China's independence of foreigners. 'I very sorry, master,' he said one day, 'but I must go.'

'You will be a great fool, Wang,' I replied; 'better wait and see how things turn out. You are no soldier, you know.'

'It no belong soldier pidgin to lead a nation,' he replied. 'It want a clever man, who have brains, and know what he fight against. I must go.'

I laid my hand on the *wei-ch'i* board. 'And leave this?' I said. 'You more better stop to learn the 19-line, and then perhaps can talky General Ho. Form a party, win over some high officials, and you will have something to go upon.'

Wang gazed sadly at the board; I knew it cut his heart-strings to abandon this safe and solitary study of his growth. 'You no savvy Chinese official,' he said mournfully; 'he never betray the Emperor. If he do, he betray rebel to get back again. Only can speak to the people.'

In short, Wang left me, and took the up-steamer to Hankow, whence he could now get steam passage to Ichang, if not all the way to Chung-king. Chung-king is the true centre of China, and will probably become the capital of the new Chinese Empire when the great contest for national independence begins. It stands on the Yangt-ze, over a thousand miles from its mouth, accessible to trade, but not to invasion, by reason of the gorges and rapids between it and Ichang; it is in the province of Sze-chuan, and has for some years been open to foreigners by treaty. On his way up, Wang proposed to stop at Yochow and take native boat by the Tung-ting Lake and Siang River to his natal place near Chang-sha, there to open a 'lodge' among his always turbulent fellow-provincials of Hunan. Peaceful and unassuming as he was, he was just the man to gain an immense influence as a demagogue. He 'talked reason;' that is everything in China. And a

cautious, thoughtful leader is just what Chinese rebellions have always lacked, because any prudent man has always known that they are foredoomed to failure. Effete and unarmed as the Chinese Government is, no rebellion, not even that of the Taipings, or of the Mohammedans in Yunnan, has ever really shaken the dynasty at Peking. But now, at last, rose a prudent man, far better versed in foreign politics than any member of the Tsung-li-Yamen, who recognised that for the first time a rebellion was demanded of *patriotism*. As I had been ready to back him for the *wei-ch'i*, so was I now ready to back him to raise a national party in arms, a thing which has never yet occurred in the history of China. Rebellions hitherto have sprung from the discontent of failures. I knew, of course, that he would fail; but I believed that, if he escaped decapitation for a year or two, he would set a ball rolling that would wipe the Manchu eunuchs off the face of history. I was not without anticipations of having a finger in the pie myself.

It must not be supposed that I had all this time been remaining idly at Kiu-kiang buying curios. The war had rather put an end to that business, owing to the anti-foreign feeling aroused, which rendered excursions into the interior unsafe; and I was not one of those drummers who buy all their specimens through the help of a *compradore* and in the shops of Hong-kong and Shanghai. Besides, the war had given me larger fish to fry. The air was full of the everlasting railway, telegraph, and mineral concessions; and I was acting as agent for a certain syndicate to construct the much-talked-of trunk-line between Hankow and Peking. This business shortly took me to Wu-chang, the capital of the Liang Hu (the two Hu provinces, Hunan and Hupeh, which form one viceregal satrapy, like the two Kiang); Wu-chang is opposite Hankow, the tea-port.

At Wu-chang, to my great interest, I was brought into personal contact with the identical General Ho of the *wei-ch'i* challenge; and the challenge, I learnt incidentally, was still open. Ho had been appointed director of the steel-rail works, positively in active progress, for the Chinese Government now hugged itself in the belief that since railways had been proved by the war to be a necessity, China was able to build them herself. Ho was a subtle, impenetrable, resolute, but withal courteous and pleasant man, perfectly at ease with foreigners, and not in the least interested in their politics or inventions. He had not the slightest belief in the railway, and was employing the

foundries in casting cannon, and using the steel rails as breastworks in a new fort he was constructing to command the approaches to Hankow; in justice to him I must state that, in addition to the directorship of railroads, he had also been appointed Imperial Commissioner for the Defence of the Upper Yang-tze, and had doubtless received his private instructions as to which of the two matters was the most pressing. Ho was, in fact, owing to his literary standing (unusual in the military class) and his connection with the high conservative faction of Hunan, in considerable favour just now at Peking; for it is a singular thing that at all the crises in the foreign relations of China—crises which invariably result in the tardy admission of new encroachments—it is the old bigoted anti-foreign party which sways the councils of the empress. Thus it happens that at the moment of writing, when China is about to remove the last barriers which obstruct its modernisation, conservatism is more rampant at the palace than it was during the Opium War.

My tale does not progress, and I dare not say anything more about the 'affairs of the nation,' although just now they are brimful of romance. Finding that the syndicate would be simply wasting money in applying for their concession, I resigned their agency, and entered Ho's service as translator of European works on fortification. His comments on this modern art were often intensely interesting; and, in spite of their antiquity, they were always shrewd. Thus, for instance, he was sceptical about long-range guns, which would hit so accurately at distances far beyond human vision; and he turned the tables on me by quoting Gordon's own advice to the Peking Government, to arm their troops with muzzle-loaders. A month later came news of the first disquieting success of Yu Man-tzu, and simultaneously of a rising of Hunanese, led by Wang Lai-chee; and it was again the General who was appointed to chastise these rebels. Ho made no to-do about the matter; suppressing so-called rebellions had been the principal business of his life; and he knew the ropes far too well to disturb himself or his leisurely duties. He issued the stereotyped proclamations, and sent the stereotyped periodical reports of victories for insertion in the *Peking Gazette*, and sat still and waited; and in due course of months the rebellion fizzled out, and a few score of unfortunate prisoners were brought by boat to Wu-chang. Among them, and honoured with a wooden cage as a ringleader, was poor Wang.



THUNDER-STORMS AND HOW TO PREVENT THEM.

By R. J. J. IRWIN.



THE ever-advancing science of the present day would seem at last to have recognised the all-important part which electricity plays in the ordinary routine of everyday life, and to be learning slowly though surely not only to enslave it for the general good, but also to safeguard the community against the many dangers which lurk beneath its potent agency.

Already we have begun to look upon telegraphs and telephones as inventions of the past, and to turn on the electric current as naturally as we do the gas in cases where a brilliant light is desirable. Again, should we require intense heat in our manufacturing processes we have immediate recourse to the 'battery,' and we even harness the electric giant to our tram-cars and motors, and compel its assistance in the perfecting of our photographic discoveries.

Thus far electricity is but the docile slave of man, who deliberately produces it for his own use and benefit, and whose only care need be that his creations stop short of actual Frankenstein proportions. *Home-made* electricity we might indeed call it in contradistinction to that other and more terrible kind which is made, not indeed 'in Germany,' but in a country remote from our terrestrial sphere and by the hand of an All-wise and Omnipotent Creator.

Of our earth-made electricity it may truthfully be asserted that it is reducible to certain well-known laws and limits, and is capable of being measured by recognised standards of intensity and power; but what known scientist can fix the length of the spark or determine the electrical potency of the lightning-flash?

Grand, however, as it undoubtedly is to watch the lightning and listen to the reverberations of the thunder, we each and all of us—say what we will—instinctively dread it, knowing it to be so frequently destructive to life and property. Now, this being so, I hope to do more than interest the general public by showing how a simple rearrangement of the so-called 'lightning-conductor' will do much towards making it an infallible *dispeller* of all thunder-storms, by enabling it to deprive the atmosphere of one of the component parts of those dreaded electrical disturbances.

To the most of us this lightning-conductor is a familiar object, which inspires us with a sense of safety if (during a thunder-storm) we enter a building to which it is attached. We no doubt have been brought up with the idea that if a flash of lightning were to visit our immediate neighbourhood it would infallibly make straight for the 'conductor' and through it pass quietly and harmlessly into the ground! This,

doubtless, is what it was *intended to do* by the accommodating engineer who prepared such a convenient passage for the visitor, for—as you may remark—the metal rod, or rope as the case may be, is most carefully insulated from the structure, which merely serves as a high point of vantage to carry the metallic road which the electric fluid is expected to traverse.

Now, is this preconceived notion of ours the correct one? I mean, is it absolutely correct in every particular? Personally, I think *it is not*. In fact, for many years I have held some very decided views on the subject; and in order to show that in my opinion thunder-storms really *can* be averted, I purpose explaining those views as clearly and in as *unscientific* language as I can.

Perhaps I should begin by explaining what lightning is; but were I to attempt doing so, I know I should be deafened with the indignant exclamation of '*It's electricity*' shouted at me from far and near. In adopting this answer as correct, however, I will merely remind my readers that there are different kinds of electricity, as we learned in our schooldays, and that, instead of being identical with the 'home-made' article I have above alluded to, the lightning-flash more nearly finds its counterpart in the *frictional* electricity which lecturers use for Leyden-jar experiments, and produce by the rapid rotation of a plate-glass disc between properly prepared rubbers.

Many of us will doubtless have witnessed with pleasure experiments of this kind, and will have had our memories refreshed on the subject of *induction*, or the production in another body, and without contact, of an electricity dissimilar to that experimented with. That is to say, we will have seen how 'positive' electricity obtained direct from the glass disc will *induce* negative electricity in an adjacent body upon which it acts through some non-conducting medium such as dry or heated air. The familiar example of this is the Leyden-jar, which, when charged (internally) with 'positive' electricity, has upon its outer tinfoil surface an *induced* 'negative' fluid capable of producing a brilliant spark when allowed to approach sufficiently near to the positive conductor.

Well, then, in the lightning-flash we have, on a large and magnificent scale, a perfect counterpart of the Leyden-jar discharge, in which the earth has played the part of the *outer* tinfoil coating, carrying on its surface a powerful charge of the 'negative' electricity *induced* thereon by the 'positive' contained in the overhanging cloud.

Before, however, we replace upon its shelf our old-fashioned friend, the Leyden-jar, I will ask you to assist me in making with it a simple experiment which will go far to prove the truth

of what I am about asking you to believe. It is this: I place the jar upon its stand and attach it in the ordinary way to the electric machine from which I proceed to charge it. Before doing so, however, I connect the outer coating of the jar with a brass knob which I place within a few inches of that other knob which remains in contact with its interior, and I find, as I work the disc of the machine, that when a sufficiently powerful charge has been imparted to the jar an automatic discharge occurs and a brilliant spark passes between the two knobs. This, of course, is what I anticipated, inasmuch as, the resistance offered by the non-conducting air-medium having been overcome, the two electricities have automatically reunited.

I now substitute for the first-named (or may I call it the 'negative'?) knob a cluster of brass points, and once more proceed to turn the handle of the machine with the intention of charging the Leyden-jar as before. The result this time, however, is simply *nil*! No discharge takes place, notwithstanding that the glass disc is revolving even more rapidly than before; and upon using the discharging rod I find that the jar is *really* as empty as it appears to be. Yet the electric connections of the jar have not been interfered with in any way, and the brass points occupy the same position as the knob for which they have been substituted. What, then, has occurred to prevent the discharge and brilliant spark we at first witnessed? Why, simply this: the 'induced' electricity has been draining away through or from the points as quickly as it became formed, and quietly reuniting with the 'positive' fluid which was being deposited on the inner coating of the jar. In fact, the process has been much the same as when water is poured into a sieve.

We may now put away our Leyden-jar and apply the lesson learned from it to the thunder-cloud, the earth, and the lightning-flash; the one being, as I have told you, the counterpart of the other. The earth, you will remember, occupies the position of the outer coating of the jar, or the one to which the spikes were attached which prevented the electrical discharge taking place.

'Exactly so,' I will be told. 'I see and understand it all now.' But the lightning-conductors we see around us are so many clusters of spikes projecting from the earth, and yet the thunder-clouds and the lightning seem to disregard them altogether. In explanation of this I simply say that 'something in the way in which our electrical appliances are constructed is wrong;' and I now propose to devote the remainder of my paper to pointing out to you what that 'something' is and why it is wrong.

The generality of persons, I think, know little, if anything, of a lightning-conductor beyond what they can ordinarily see of it—namely, that it consists of a copper band or wire rope which is generally fastened to a building with glass or earthenware

insulators, and that it has a lot of spikes at the top and runs into the ground at the bottom. This, I take it, is a generally correct description; to which I may add that after running a few feet into the ground it is usually attached to a plate of copper about three feet square and about a quarter of an inch in thickness. Now, in all this—so far as it goes—the only thing really wrong is the insulation and the earth-connection.

I look upon such an instrument as incapable of producing any (or at least any very appreciable) beneficial results, and I would merely say of it that 'if it does you no good it will do you no harm.' To my mind the real use of a lightning-conductor—or, as I prefer to call it, a '*lightning-protector*'—is in no way to attract or carry away the electric fluid from the clouds, but to discharge or quietly pass off into the atmosphere the 'induced' electricity from the earth and from the buildings, &c., upon it. The general substance of the earth, it must, however, be remembered, is not a very good conductor—I mean as though it were altogether made of metal—so that with a lightning-conductor, constructed as I have described, the induced negative electricity passed off towards the cloud is in reality little in excess of that existing in and about the copper-plate.

Hence it is that our lightning-conductors, so called, are not of more apparent utility, and seem, as I have said, to be completely ignored by the thunder-storms. Of course I am quite prepared to be told that they frequently are of great good, and save buildings by conveying in safety to the ground the actual lightning discharge, which otherwise would have completely wrecked them. To such persons I would merely say that were a lightning-flash to really strike their 'conductors' it *could not possibly* disperse itself through the earth without digging a big hole at the point where it left the metal and entered the ground. I may further assure them that in all probability the lightning would completely *fuse* the conductor in its attempt to pass along it from top to bottom.

As I have endeavoured to explain, then, in order to convert our 'lightning-conductors' into *lightning-protectors* we must, in the first place, do away with insulators altogether (as has already been done in some few instances), and connect them as closely as possible with the roofs of our buildings and with all metal eave-gutters, rain water pipes, and lead flushings, &c.

I attach especial importance to having this roof-connection as perfect and extended as possible, inasmuch as the tension of induced electricity is always greatest at the point nearest the inducer; and hence during a thunder-storm there is more of it, so to speak, about our roofs and spires and high places generally than on the actual earth-surface itself. Next, as regards the connection of the lightning-rod with the ground—for, of course, it is quite correct that it should be

carried on down and into it—the object aimed at should be not so much to take it to any depth below the surface as to make the connection as complete and extended as possible—as, for instance, by attaching it to iron gas and water mains and the services therefrom, or even to iron railings which themselves have an earth-connection. A perfect connection with tram-lines or railroad metals would consequently be a very desirable one to have. I may explain, as a fitting termination to this portion of my subject, that electricity invariably passes along and is found upon the *surface* of any body or conductor instead of in its actual substance, and hence a flat ribbon or band of copper (as affording a greater superficial area) forms a better ‘conductor’ than one of cylindrical form.

Having thus remodelled, as it were, our existing appliances in connection with electrical disturbances, and thereby increased their efficiency, we may be perfectly satisfied that much has been done towards ensuring our safety during thunder-storms, and the robbing of the angry elements of their terrors. It remains, however, to be seen what further steps can be taken towards lessening the dangerous recurrence of the lightning-flash or even preventing it altogether.

If, then, you have clearly understood the gist of the foregoing paragraphs, you will, I think, have little difficulty in following my reasons for advocating the adoption of the following measures. My readers will, I trust, accurately appreciate the atmospheric condition of our surroundings when a thunder-storm threatens, and will bear in mind that, owing to the inductive influence of the overhanging cloud, not only the ground we walk but even we ourselves (as shown by our headaches), and everything else thereon, become highly charged with *negative* electricity with which the *positive* fluid of the cloud is endeavouring to reunite so as to establish an equilibrium.

Now, as I have shown, it is towards the rooftops and the higher points of the surrounding eminences that this terrestrial electricity becomes attracted, for the same reason and in the same manner that iron or steel are attracted by the magnet; so that to prevent the lightning discharge, by causing a gradual and harmless

reunion of the opposing electrical forces, all that we need do is to provide a sufficient number of metallic points through or by which the induced electricity may pass away. The number of so-called ‘lightning-conductors’ which at present exist would of course—when remodelled in the manner I have described—constitute a goodly number of such points; but these might be efficiently and almost indefinitely supplemented at a comparatively trifling outlay by the adoption of the following suggestions:

In the first place the ridges or apexes of our roofs should invariably be covered with *iron*, made in lengths, and similar in form to the earthenware tiles now in ordinary use, but having attached to them at suitable intervals *sharp* metal spikes, which may be so arranged as to form a portion of any ornamental pattern that may be desired. These ridge-coverings should be attached by wrought-iron straps (running either under or over the slates) to the ordinary metal eave-gutters, which latter must in turn invariably have a close metallic connection with the top ends of the rain-water pipes and hopper-heads instead of being only laid into them as they generally are. The aforesaid wrought-iron straps should be firmly screwed to the spars or rafters, and connected with both eave-gutters and metal ridge-covering by bolts and nuts. Finally, all chimney-stacks and ornamental finials, &c., should carry on their highest points clusters of spikes in metallic connection with the iron ridge-coverings aforesaid, and similar to those at present used to complete the tops of our so-called lightning-conductors.

In conclusion, I beg earnestly to offer a word of advice to every one having to do with lightning appliances, and that is to be always most particular in keeping the terminal spikes both *clean* and *sharp*, as much of their efficiency is found to depend upon their being maintained in this condition. With this parting injunction I leave my readers to think over for themselves the reasons I have put forward in proof of the assertion that thunder-storms can be prevented. The question is—Would the adoption of these suggestions have the desired result? As an architect I have had some experience of these matters, and *I believe it would*.

HIGHLAND SEERS.



IT is easy to ridicule the idea of any human being possessing the power of peering into the future, and no doubt many self-styled prophets, wise after the event, have been impostors pure and simple. But that genuine manifestations of a phenomenal prescience have existed, and do exist, there can be no reason-

able doubt. The common explanation of this attribute is, that the possessor of it is endowed with an abnormally acute intelligence, which suggests the occurrence of future events, hidden from the mental view of the ordinary man. But that explanation is obviously incomplete and unsatisfactory.

Where, then, lies the explanation of *clairvoyance* or second-sight? That is a question which has

exercised the minds of wise men in all times, and it may be doubted whether a satisfactory answer has yet been given. The suggestion may, however, be made that, as in rare instances men are gifted with genius (which, after all, is something more than a mere 'capacity for taking pains'), so, in still rarer cases, may there be men upon whom the gift has been conferred of discerning—within a very narrow compass, it may be—certain events which lie hidden in the womb of the future.

In the Highlands of Scotland the gift of second-sight was, until comparatively recent times, a cardinal article of faith among the people. In the more remote parts, indeed, it is still firmly believed in; and at the present day one may meet men and women who are popularly believed to have 'the sight.'

It can be readily understood that among a people who, by nature, training, and environment, are superstitious a belief in the occult should be prevalent. But superstition and a belief in second-sight need not necessarily go hand-in-hand. Dr Johnson, in his *Tour through the Hebrides*, devotes particular attention to the subject. Superstitious to a degree, he strove to reconcile with his strong common-sense the deep impression left upon his mind by the evidences which he saw of the gift possessed by the seers, and the extraordinary accuracy of their 'sight.' He summed up his conclusions thus: 'By the second-sight seems to be meant a mode of seeing, superadded to that which Nature generally bestows,' and consists of 'an impression made either by the mind upon the eye or by the eye upon the mind, by which things distant or future are perceived and seen as if they were present.' Martin, who is our principal authority on the Hebrides of the past, gives his impressions thus: 'It—the sight—consists in seeing an otherwise invisible object without any previous means used by the person that sees it for that end; the vision makes such a lively impression upon the seers that they neither see nor think of anything else except the vision as long as it continues, and then they appear pensive or jovial according to the object which was represented to them.'

A peculiarity about those who saw, or were supposed to see, a vision was, that they kept their eyelids erect and continued to stare until the vision vanished. Martin gives an instance of a seer in Skye, the inner part of whose eyelids was turned so far upwards during a vision that after the disappearance of the object he found it necessary to draw them down with his fingers; and cases are on record where the seer found it desirable to employ others to draw them down for him!

Incomparably the greatest of Highland seers was Kenneth Mackenzie, better known in the Highlands as Coinneach Odhar, who lived and prophesied during last century. He was a native of the island of Lewis, but migrated when young

to the mainland, where he attached himself to the household of his chief, the Earl of Seaforth. Coinneach was, for a man of his station, very intelligent, and it is not unreasonable to argue that some of his prophecies may have been the outcome of his natural shrewdness. He foretold, for example, the construction of the Caledonian Canal at a time when no such scheme had been mooted by any engineer of his day. But how can one explain the wonderful fulfilment of the disasters which he predicted for the Seaforth family? It was his last prophecy, and was uttered when on his way to the stake, there to be burnt alive as a wizard, by order of Lady Seaforth. He had given mortal offence to that lady by conveying to her, at her own request, the result of a vision which reflected upon her husband's constancy. The explicit nature of Coinneach's last prophecy is shown by the following record of it. These are the seer's words: 'I see into the far future, and I read there the doom of my destroyer. Ere many generations have passed, the line of Seaforth will become extinct in sorrow. I see the last male of his line both deaf and dumb. I see his three fair sons, all of whom he will follow to the grave. He shall sell his gift lands, and no future Seaforth shall rule in Kintail. A black-eyed lassie from the East, with snow on her coif, shall succeed him; she shall kill her sister, and she shall be the last of the Mackenzies of Seaforth. In those days there shall be a daft Lovat and a buck-tooth Chisholm, and they shall be the last direct males of the line. When these things are, Seaforth may know that his sons are doomed to death, and that his broad lands shall pass away to the stranger, and that his race shall be no more.'

Every detail of this prophecy was fulfilled more or less literally. Francis Mackenzie, Lord Seaforth, the last male of his family, was deaf and dumb, the result of an illness which he had contracted: 'I see the last male of his line both deaf and dumb.' His three sons all died before their father: 'I see his three fair sons, all of whom he will follow to the grave.' He was obliged, on account of financial difficulties, to sell his Kintail property—'the gift lands,' as they were called—which, according to tradition, were gifted by Alexander III. to the progenitor of the Mackenzie family, Colin Fitzgerald, who saved the king's life when hunting: 'He shall sell his gift lands.' He was succeeded by his daughter, Lady Hood, whose husband, Sir Samuel Hood, had died in India. As she was in widow's weeds when she returned to England, the seer's prophecy that a 'black-eyed lassie from the East, with snow on her coif, shall succeed him,' came literally true. The prophecy that she should kill her sister was not literally fulfilled; but in view of the fact that her sister died as the result of a carriage accident when Lady Hood (afterwards Mrs Stewart-Mackenzie) was driving, the

prediction came to pass in a sense, after all. The 'daft Lovat' and the 'buck-tooth Chisholm' of the prophecy actually lived during the time of the last Lord Seaforth. The concluding part of Coinneach's prediction has come too true; for the 'broad lands' of the Seaforth family have indeed 'passed away to the stranger.'

Coinneach Odhar's sayings have been current in the Highlands for many years, and even at the present day they have a limited currency among the West Highland peasantry. They were not unknown to Sir Walter Scott, who makes reference to them in some of his letters (*Lockhart's Life*).

Tradition says that the gift of second-sight was acquired by Coinneach by means of a white stone which he found on his breast one day upon awakening from a hillside slumber. It was

asserted that this stone gave the possessor miraculous power, and was used as a kind of telescope for peering into 'the dim, uncertain future.' When the seer was on the way to his death, he threw the stone away, after uttering the fatal prophecy about the Seaforth family. It is said to have fallen into a pool of water which is now Loch Ussie. At the bottom of this loch (so tradition has it) the stone shall remain until an Elisha, with well-defined characteristics, shall succeed the Highland Elijah. The successor, who is to find the magic stone inside a pike, has not yet appeared; so, presumably, the stone will remain at the bottom of Loch Ussie until he does. For all the successors of Coinneach Odhar have indeed been 'minor prophets' in comparison with him.

NO MAN'S LAND.

I may not hear the summer rain upon the parched ground
fall,
Nor can I watch the shadows wane when sinks the great
red ball;
Though hosts on hosts of startled ghosts troop ready to
my call.

THE wind rustles through the poplar-trees that sway in
the garden hedge;

The little blue-tit has his hole in the wall and his perch
on the window-ledge;

The holly-tree kisses the warm red bricks, as it always
used to do;

And the horse-shoes lie where we laid them down, a
motionless, mocking crew.

The grass on the lawn, so dank and long, is the grass
that once was ours—

Ours in the desolate autumn gales, ours in the summer
showers.

Six bonny days out of seven it lay, a carpet white,
yellow, and green,

While the seventh was claimed by a jingling fiend, the
conquering mowing-machine:

I hear it now as I hear the birds in the apple-trees
chatter and call,

As my footsteps sound on the worn old paths that never
could weary nor pall.

The peonies burst in the summer's prime 'neath the
smiling sunny sky,

Their heavy heads hang down to the earth that will
cover them up when they die.

The chinks in the tottering summer-house let the trick-
ling rain-drops in,

While the spiders are spinning silvery webs from the
ceiling down to your chin.

The lilac shadows the privet hedge, purple and spotless
white:

Does it smell as sweet as it used to do in the days
beyond our sight?

The stars come out, and the sparrows hush in the
sheltering holly-tree,

The owls 'tu-whoo' in the stackyard dim, and the fox
barks distantly;

But far away, where the firelight falls, and shutters hide
Charles's Wain,

I hear the blackbirds whistle and sing in the sun after
heavy rain,

And I see the growing daffodils spring and the bright
beech-buds unfold,

Or watch the sea birds hover and sink when the east
wind sweeps the wold;

And if I tire of the dawning year, and pine for a
summer day,

'Tis here as soon as my thought is sped, to brighten the
gloom and the gray.

The morning breaks on the yellow corn, golden as gorse
in bloom;

And there comes the clang of the reaper sails as they
gather the wheat to its doom.

The partridges rise with a whirr and a cry as I trample
the stubbles down,

And the guns ring clear where the leaves are sere and
the fern is a rich ripe brown.

When the year lies dead and the snowflakes come to lull
Mother Earth to sleep,

And diamonds deck the sun-kissed fields, where daisies
may not peep,

The sun goes down in a blaze of red, and I wander
homeward away,

To dream that To-morrow 'twill be the same—To-morrow
is never To-day.

To-day is claimed by the waves and the tide; 'tis only
written in sand,

But memory knows no time nor tide: her kingdom is
No Man's Land.

B. M. DANBY.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE WILD SWAN OF AUSTRALIA.



THE legislative councils of most of the Australian colonies have proclaimed stringent regulations for the preservation of their native animals. The kangaroo, the emu, and the swan are now protected by nearly all the colonial governments, and rigorous restrictions have been issued against their being captured, killed, or hunted; and yet, notwithstanding these official enactments and the more sensible fact that these animals have become very scarce, they are still to a considerable extent hunted in the outlying districts whither the usual course of judicial supervision cannot be expected to extend.

The kangaroo and the emu are typical of the fauna over the whole area of Australia, whilst the swan may be considered particularly characteristic of the western portion of the continent. The first settlement in the western colony was made at the mouth of the river then christened and thenceforward known as the Swan River, and the capital of the colony is situate on this same river; and although, with the growth of the metropolis and its seaport town, the extensive settlements on the river, and the general increase of population, it may be difficult in these days to discover even a single specimen of the swan species anywhere in those localities, there are other parts of the colony where the birds may still be met with in flocks of hundreds.

One has only to glance at a Western Australian postage-stamp to see that the swan is officially recognised as the emblem of the colony. It has been not an entirely unknown thing for some cynical and ill-disposed individuals from amongst that money-making class of people who, under the name of prospecters, visit the colony to look for gold, and whose experience of the western lands is confined to the arid plains of the inland districts, where water is a scarce and costly commodity, and food is obtainable only in the form of tinned goods, to deride the idea of any living animal being used as a representation of the

colony, asserting that the only true and correct emblems of so inhospitable a land are a water-bag and tin-opener! Slight inclination have people of that class, possessed of little but self-considerate and mercenary ideas, to realise the comparison between the dry, sterile tracts of back-country, which form the goldfields where they had fondly hoped their fortunes were to be found, and the beautiful rich alluvial districts of the south-west coast, renowned for its equability of climate and fertility of soil. It is in these parts, where creeks are plentiful and pastures rich, that the tamar and the wallaby, the ibis and the crane, the opossum, the pelican, the duck, and the swan, delight to have their retreats; and it is here also that the perfection of the colony's flora as well as fauna is to be looked for.

The native swan of Australia is not the very beautiful white bird which adorns so many of the English waters, but the more ordinary-looking black swan which is invariably an exhibit of our Zoological Gardens, and is noted more especially for its fierceness and strength. As far as appearance goes, the black swan is certainly not as attractive as its more ornamental cousin, neither would it lend so picturesque an addition to an English landscape; but when seen in its native state, sailing in large flocks peacefully, contentedly, and apparently with perfect unanimity of inclination on some sheltered lagoon, amidst surroundings of rising country clothed with rich herbage and thick virgin forests, its presence and appearance is most impressive, and causes one to feel that the beauties of the scenery around would count for little without the living complement of feathered creatures so sedately and gracefully gliding along the water's surface.

It is a matter of comparatively little trouble to obtain views of these birds in their immense flocks, but the true difficulty is to get them within gunshot range; and in hunting the black swan it must be remembered that the sport is not simply a pleasure and a pastime—the birds

are sought after for a very practical purpose, and their acquisition is of considerable value. It seems hardly needful to refer to their down, but it may be mentioned that that obtained from the breast of these black swans is exceptionally beautiful and snowy white, the outer and coarser black feathers being removed before the down itself is exposed. Although the extent of one breast is small, the covering is so wonderfully thick and spreading that it can be divided up into many yards' length of the finest and softest swansdown.

Supposing we are located for a time in the south-western districts of Western Australia—let us say at Albany, that picturesquely situated and clean little town on the shores of King George's Sound, well named the health-resort of the colony—how are we to set about gaining a glimpse and possibly a shot at these native swans? If the season happens to be towards the end of summer, a day's outing in a buggy and pair some twelve or fifteen miles to the westward towards the Torbay or Wilson Inlets can generally be depended on for affording a good view of one or more flocks on the lakes in the distance; but if the unsophisticated visitor takes out his gun in the hope of obtaining a shot, he will find these distant glimpses a very different matter to the feat of getting the swans within range.

He may wade for hours in the shallow water, hoping to get within even two or three furlongs of the birds, without success; he may divert them from one quarter of the lake, and by the exercise of much exertion and great speed may head them as they are making for another quarter, only to find, however, that his intention has been quickly detected by the ever-wary birds, which turn in a body as if with one impulse and glide away to a distance again, leaving him to wonder at the marvellous keenness of their intellect. He may even, with the assistance of companions, try to circumvent them by posting his men at various points on the lake shore, and at a given signal making a simultaneous descent towards the flock in the centre. In this way he may manage to keep the group in a more confined space and get a trifle nearer to the birds, but with little extra advantage. Perhaps our would-be sportsmen have taken care to employ the stratagem of bearing green boughs for the purpose of disguising their distrusted human nature; but the artifice will prove ineffectual. They will wade on laboriously in the shallow water until, gaining confidence in their leafy covering, they begin to feel their blood rising and throbbing through their veins in increasing excitement as they gradually approach their quarry, when—the space on the lake being now too restricted to allow of their usual evolutions—the whole flock of birds with one accord take to flight, and they soar away up and up, until almost out of sight. One realises how impossible

it would have been to believe that those distant specks were in reality anything more than a group of the tiniest birds. Our dejected sportsmen are then left to gaze and wonder at the marvellous strength of wing these wild birds are possessed of!

If all the usual methods are so equally unsuccessful, how is one to get at these birds? Well, it is not a matter of one outing, or even of three or four days, but rather of weeks; there is only one plan to be adopted, and this, to be successfully carried out, will need perhaps a whole month's attention and care. One must proceed in this way: a raft, flat-bottomed boat, or some such craft must be got quietly and cautiously down to the shore of the lake which the swans frequent—the very best time of day for accomplishing this first step being the early morning soon after dawn, when the birds will very probably be away feeding up some adjacent creek. Great care must be exercised at all times not to disturb the birds, and so cause them to be even more timid and wary than usual. The next step is to thoroughly screen our dingy or raft with dark, thick boughs to prevent any object or any movement inside being observed. The craft thus equipped had better be left quietly on the shore for a day or two, when it can be moved a little, say along the edge of the lake, the intention all along being to get the birds thoroughly accustomed to this new addition to their surroundings, encouraging them in the belief of its innocuous and inanimate character. Gradually the boat may be moved about more, and allowed to drift on the lake, but must always be brought back to shore after its daily cruise, as everything would be upset if the birds once caught sight of a human form wading to or from the craft. It will in all probability be three or four weeks before the swans have become used to this branchy structure and its movements; and until it can be manifestly seen that they entirely disregard its presence it will not be safe to allow it to drift down towards them. This is the last precaution, and then for the grand coup! With three or four shots from each gun in the boat an excellent bag should be assured; but good-bye to the chances of any other party getting near the birds for many a month to come!

This mode of procedure may seem to have the demerit of tediousness and wasteful expenditure of time; but the spending of a few weeks under canvas in the free wilds of Australia, in the closest contact with the picturesqueness of untouched nature, is a delightful and health-giving recreation which must be experienced to be appreciated. When there is added an extra zest in the shape of a novel and engrossing sport, there can be no more inviting and invigorating relaxation from the routine of one's more prosaic and conventional life.

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER VIII.—THE LAST MESSAGE.

IN truth, Kennett himself was none too soon. The new-comers dashed round the corner within a minute of his departure—six peace-officers in all, well armed and mounted; and behind three of them, having evidently been picked up by the way, were perched the postillions and Joseph.

Staring hard, they pulled up and saluted.

'You would have been of more service ten minutes ago,' said my lord sharply. 'We have been waylaid by a couple of pads, and this gentleman is wounded. We must get him to the nearest inn with all speed.'—

'Had we not better carry him to his own house?' I suggested, with his daughter in my thoughts.

'Is it close to this?'

'Not more than a quarter of a mile.'

'The Dower-house be it, then! I have my own scratches to examine—oh, they are not serious, but I am not young enough to neglect them—and so I care not how quickly we seek shelter. Besides, we have his feelings to consider—and Miss Hollingworth's.'

Half-an-hour earlier this intimate acquaintance with the circumstances of Sir Charles would have amazed me beyond measure. Now it seemed so natural that I spared it scarce a passing tribute of wonder. I was more surprised by an incident that presently happened. Joseph was fussing round, as if to make amends for his recent conduct; and, having fetched the cloaks of the late combatants, he pressed forward with an object that he had picked up beside them—to wit, Sir Charles's mask and false beard. The man had some intelligence, and I noticed his glance wandering inquiringly to my cousin's prostrate figure. But my lord was not one to be caught napping. He thrust the mask carelessly into his pocket, and then addressed the servant in his sweetest tones.

'So you have returned to your duty?' he asked. 'Well, I have this bit of advice for you—that unless you wish to be whipped at the cart's-tail from Newgate to Tyburn for your cowardice, you will keep a still tongue in your head about your doings to-day.'

Joseph shrank back, abashed and frightened. With him no better method could have been adopted to prevent a disclosure of the truth.

And apparently such was my lord's intention. He permitted the officers no time to grow inquisitive. The coach having been dragged from the ditch without much difficulty, he despatched four of them forthwith in ostensible pursuit of the pads, and ordered them to report to a justice

whom they would find at Devizes; and he had even the forethought to ask them to search out the nearest surgeon—at Seend or elsewhere—and send him post-haste to Langbridge Dower-house. And if the main road were hardly likely to lead them to success—well, he had doubtless other reasons for indicating it.

Two men remained behind for his escort, and with their help Sir Charles was gently placed in the coach. He was still unconscious.

The coach was stopped for a minute or two at the gate of the Dower-house, while I went on alone to warn its inmates of that which was coming. The house looked strangely gloomy to my eyes in the darkness of the overhanging trees; the nature of my mission lay heavy on my spirit; and I had to summon all my resolution to carry it through without faltering. And my task was not lightened when my knock was answered by Kitty herself.

'You, Cousin George?' she exclaimed. Then, catching a glimpse of my tell-tale countenance, a note of anxiety came into her voice. 'Dad—something has happened to him!'

'You must be brave, Kitty,' I said, taking her hand. 'Your father has had a duel with Lord Kynaston'—

Her face blanched. 'Oh! he is not dead?' she cried.

'Not that,' I said. 'But he is wounded—badly, I fear, but we cannot say yet.'

I could perceive that she dreaded the worst, and thought for an instant she would break down. Yet I dared not mislead her, and my faith in her courage was vindicated.

'You are keeping nothing back?'

'Nothing—I know I can trust you to be calm. Now you must get his room ready. He will be here in a minute.'

She rallied nobly at the necessity for action, and at once set about the preparations, calling the maids to assist her; and, in the meantime, I made an opportunity to ask Mrs Herbert to receive my lord and attend to his comfort. The matter was not one with which, just then, I cared to trouble Kitty.

I need hardly have concerned myself. When the little procession presently arrived, she had eyes for nothing save the inanimate form of her father; and as he was carried to his room by myself and one of the officers—who, I had learnt, professed some skill in surgery—she accompanied us upstairs, holding his hand. But, reaching the landing—whence, looking back, I observed my lord being ushered into the parlour by Mrs Herbert—I begged her to stay there until we

had undressed and examined the wounded man. Her suspense must have been hard to bear, but there were measures to be taken which would be still more painful to a delicately nurtured girl. At first, however, she would not hear of it.

'Only for a little!' I pleaded. 'Believe me, Kitty, 'tis for the best. You will but hinder us.'

Then she submitted. 'If I must,' she said. 'And you will let me know quickly, George?'

I gave her my promise; and, with a last glance at her father, she retired. Thereafter our grim work was soon accomplished. The result may be told in a word. My worst anticipations were realised: the hours of Sir Charles Hollingworth were numbered. For the right lung was pierced, and although there was little flow of blood—in itself a doubtful symptom—the indications of the end were too many and too plain to be mistaken.

Having done what we could for him, an effort was used to bring him back to consciousness, and at last was successful. Opening his eyes, he recognised me. Then his gaze rested on the officer; and, not wishing to excite him unduly, I signed to the man to leave the room.

'Ah! I remember it all now,' said he as I leant over him. 'But how did I come here, George?'

'I have the responsibility of that,' I replied. 'Now, you must not move. We have sent for a surgeon, and you are under my orders till he arrives.'

The old smile returned. 'Our positions are changed, then? Well, you had the better luck. I'm bleeding inwards—I knew it from the beginning, George—and not all the surgeons in England can do me any good.'

For a little he lay silent. Then:

'Shall I call Kitty?' I asked him.

'Not yet,' he said. 'I have a word for you first. . . . You will find your valuables in the top drawer there, George—I had always, of course, intended you to have them again. You forgive me that affair? We had news of a messenger for Kynaston, and were after the papers. The rest belonged to the part I was playing, but had I not discovered your name from some letters in your pocket-book—well,' he added, laughing feebly, 'you might not have been rescued so opportunely by Mr Morell! . . . And to think that Kynaston had me in the hollow of his hand all the time! If I had only guessed it— But there! 'twas a crack-brained scheme at the best, and has had a fit ending. If it weren't for Kitty, I should not be sorry to be quit of it all. . . . Poor Kitty!' he went on presently. 'Her only friends are the Sisters at St Cloud—and I have little to leave her but a good name. There will be nothing for her but to go back to the convent, and till she can do so—will you promise to see to her, George?'

'Have you not forgotten that she has other friends—her relations?' said I, revolting from the mere idea of a convent life. 'My mother, for one, would be happy and proud to welcome her as a daughter—indeed, she would never forgive me if I failed in my duty. You will let me take Kitty to her, Sir Charles?'

His hand sought for mine on the counterpane, while his face brightened wonderfully. 'If you would, George!' said he. 'Now I believe that, after all, our meeting was providential, and I can die easier.'

Then I slipped out to Kitty, drawing the door to after me. She was waiting on the landing, and her eyes questioned me with a pathetic little look. But what had I to tell her?

'I am no surgeon, dear'—

She cut me short. 'Oh! I can bear to hear the worst—now.'

'He is quite conscious, and may live for a few hours,' I said gravely. 'You will not talk too much?'

I opened the door, and heard a sob strangling in her throat as she ran to the bedside and fell on her knees beside it. My own eyes, to confess the truth, were not too clear.

'Don't weep, little one,' Sir Charles was saying as I turned away. 'The parting is bitter, but . . . you have your life before you.'

His voice was weaker when I was recalled, a few minutes later, to the bedside.

'We have taken you at your word, George, and settled it all,' said he, 'and from this moment you are Kitty's guardian. I leave her to your charge with the utmost confidence.'

'And I will spare nothing to prove myself worthy of the privilege,' said I. 'But you have spoken enough, Sir Charles. Now you must rest for a little.'

'Does it matter much?' he asked. 'Well . . . a single minute, and I promise obedience. Listen, Kitty! The Prince must be warned—at once, do you understand? There were other plans, and Kennett is too hot-headed—and he must be told that Kynaston knows of his presence here, and has him surrounded. Implore him, as my last request to him, to do nothing more if he values his neck; to flee from England without an hour's delay! . . . And be quick, dear! Even now it may be too late. . . . Ah!'

A thin trickle of blood came from his lips, and he dropped back insensible. His heart was still beating fitfully, but all my attempts to revive him were unavailing.

'Can we do nothing?' cried Kitty, appealing to me.

I shook my head: there was nothing to be done save to watch—for the end.

'And the Prince?' I asked after a time.

'The Prince? . . . Oh! I had forgotten. *Must* I go, George? Yet I cannot leave dad—*thus*.'

'He is still at the Hall?'

'Yes.'

I had a sudden impulse. 'If you wish it, Kitty, I will go instead,' I offered. 'I heard the message, and 'twill be better than sending a servant.'

'But you would never find the way through the park in the darkness,' said she, hesitating.

'As to that, one of the maids can easily be my guide.'

Then she agreed, and did so gladly, and I went immediately to carry out my self-imposed duty. While I was waiting in the hall for the maid I was joined by Mrs Herbert, and from her learnt that my lord was closeted with Joseph in the parlour. I had no mind to disturb him just at that moment; and, my guide appearing with a lanthorn, I sent Mrs Herbert upstairs to Kitty, and set forth.

Outside, the officers and postillions were walking their horses up and down the avenue, and trying to keep warm by dint of exercise and much profanity.

'Mighty cold, sir!' remarked one as we passed. 'You can't say if we shall be here long, perhaps?'

'It depends upon his lordship,' I replied, and could give him no further satisfaction.

The night had fallen, but, with a clear sky and the reflection from the snow underfoot, our way was sufficiently plain, and the lanthorn almost a superfluity. The first stage, across the garden to the little bridge, was already familiar to me; and thence we had seven or eight minutes' brisk walking ere we came within view of the lights of the Hall. There, convinced that I should be able to return alone, I dismissed the girl homewards.

A couple of horses were standing in front of the house, ready saddled, and the main-door was wide open. Approaching it, the first man that I perceived was Kennett himself. Habited for riding,

just as I had last seen him, he was pacing the great, dimly-lit, armour-embellished hall; but at sight of me he stopped, and his face flushed a dull red. Then his hand wandered—instinctively, it seemed—to his sword.

'I can guess your errand, Mr Holroyd,' he cried before I could speak. 'But if you come from Lord Kynaston, let me warn you that we shall not be taken alive.'

'You have guessed wrongly,' I replied, misliking his tone. 'I am not here on business, but with a message from Sir Charles.'

'Ah!' A quick breath of relief escaped him. 'The wound is not serious, I hope?'

'He is dying,' I said shortly. 'The message is for the Chevalier. Can I see him?'

He looked as if he were about to deny all knowledge of such a personage, but betought himself in time that I had other information.

'Impossible!' he exclaimed.

'He is still here?'

'Is it not enough, sir, that you cannot see him?' he demanded, suspicion showing in his eyes. 'If you give me the message, be sure he shall receive it. And, for the rest,' he cried, his temper flashing out, 'your presence in this house is cursedly unwelcome!'

'I have not lacked proof of it,' I retorted. 'As to the message, I have nothing to add. It must be delivered to the Chevalier himself—and to nobody else. If it be not, the blame will be yours for any consequences that may follow.'

I know not how the dispute would have ended had we been left to ourselves, but at that moment 'twas broken in upon by a calm voice behind us.

'Who is this gentleman, Mr Kennett?' it asked.

Turning, I beheld the Chevalier.

FRUIT-FARMING IN SCOTLAND.

PART II.

THE FRUIT-MARKET.



FROM our last article it may be seen that the cultivation of both strawberries and raspberries is itself no sinecure, and that it is no easy matter to produce a good crop of either fruit. Having got his crop, however, the further question remains, How is the farmer to pick and dispose of it? His difficulties with regard to the latter point are by no means small. The small grower, with his acre or half-acre of ground, can always reckon on finding a market for the comparatively small quantity of fruit which he can supply.

He can either sell it for eating purposes, in which case it is usually sent to be sold on commission in the markets of the large towns, or he will have no difficulty in finding a ready sale for it with the jam-makers. But the large grower, who despatches every season from eighty to one hundred tons of fruit, has a more difficult task. Accordingly, every year before the fruit is ripe the grower and the boiler and the ubiquitous middleman begin to haggle over terms. There is perhaps no commodity of trade which is subject to such fluctuations in price as is fruit. The last three or four years have afforded an excellent illustration of this. The price of strawberries in these seasons has varied from ten pounds to thirty

pounds per ton, and that of raspberries from fifteen pounds to the phenomenal rate of forty pounds. At the former prices the cultivation would not pay its expenses, while at the latter the profit would be handsome. How can the grower decide what price he is to hold out for? He cannot wait, with his fruit rotting on the ground. He is perfectly sure that if he stands out for a higher figure prices will go down, and he is equally sure that if he sells at the prevailing rate they will go up; and he has excellent examples from former years illustrating the truth of both his convictions. The mere fact that his own crop is a poor one is no criterion as showing that others are equally poor; and it is the most difficult thing to obtain anything like a reliable report as to the character of the general crop, it being the interest of growers to depreciate and of boilers to exaggerate its size. Another difficulty is to determine the quantity of fruit which he is safe in selling. He meets this as far as possible by selling a certain amount which experience shows him should be well within his margin, and disposing of the remainder as a balance. But since the amount of his balance is necessarily uncertain, the price obtained for it would be lower than that which he would get for a fixed quantity, and the temptation to sell within a very few tons of his estimated crop is strong. A shower of rain at the critical time may make all the difference between ability and inability to fulfil his contracts, and the sanguine man who trusts to luck may find himself with his contracts unfulfilled and not a berry left to supply the deficiency, while the timid man is gnashing his teeth at finding that he has a large and comparatively unremunerative balance.

FRUIT-PICKING.

As, year by year, the area under fruit cultivation increases, there is an increase in the difficulty of picking the fruit. It is absolutely essential to be within reasonable distance of a town; but even so the supply of pickers is no longer equal to the demand. A farm of seventy or eighty acres in fruit will require a constant supply of from one hundred and fifty to two hundred and fifty pickers; and even the latter number, in the height of the season, when the raspberries and late strawberries are ripe together, cannot cope with the fruit, tons of which are sometimes lost from inability to pick it. The pickers are divided into gangs of from thirty to seventy, and are under charge of an overseer, who has his hands full in keeping them at work, and checking as far as possible their voracious appetites. His position calls to mind that of a slave-driver; but, unluckily for the grower, his powers are limited by the knowledge of the pickers that if they are unduly driven they have only to cross into the next field, where they will be welcomed with open arms by the rival farmer. The work begins at

about 6 A.M., and is continued, with an interval of an hour for dinner at midday, till 4 P.M. Wages vary from about one shilling and eightpence to two shillings per head, irrespective of the quantity picked. It would appear to be a far more satisfactory arrangement to pay them by the work done, at so much per basket; but in this district no one has yet been able to introduce that system. When the crop is in full swing each picker, if well worked, should be able to gather something over three-quarters of a hundredweight of late strawberries and half a hundredweight of raspberries. It may easily be seen that the small grower, who is able both to weed and to pick his crop with the aid of his family and perhaps half-a-dozen hired hands, has not to meet the difficulties of the large farmer, and that his profits are proportionately larger.

In picking fruit for eating purposes the pickers either carry baskets holding from five to seven pounds, in which the fruit is sent direct to the market, or else gather it into those small punnets containing about a pound, the appearance of which in shops is so familiar to the eye. These punnets are then packed in crates or boxes containing four or five dozen. It is only fair to the retail fruiterer to say that the mysterious law of physics, by which the large berries invariably gravitate to the top of the basket, appears to hold good when the fruit is gathered by unsophisticated rustics, to be sent to market, almost as surely as when it has been prepared for retailing to the public.

FRUIT FOR THE JAM FACTORY.

The method of picking to send to the jam-maker is the same with both raspberries and strawberries. The pickers carry a large basket slung round the neck, which they partially fill with fruit and empty into pails brought round by men specially detailed for the duty. The fruit is then transferred to juice-tight kegs or barrels, and in them is sent to the jam-maker. These vary in size, but are usually constructed to hold about one hundred weight of fruit. It may come as a shock to the consumers of bought jam to learn that the fruit out of which it is made is treated in this cavalier fashion; but it is astonishing to see how fresh and sweet a cask of good honest Scotch fruit will be on its arrival after a journey of thirty-six hours—that is, if it has been picked dry. Unfortunately it is not always dry in Scotland, and a hundredweight of wet fruit, after being jolted over three or four hundred miles in a goods train, is apt to present a somewhat uninviting appearance. Still, if used before fermentation sets in, it makes very nearly as good jam as the dry fruit.

If only Scotch or English fruit were used by the boilers the consumer would have no reason to complain. If he were to see the quality of the foreign fruit with which too many of them

doctor up their jams he would certainly hesitate before eating. To save a few shillings, a boiler will use barrels of foreign fruit, which he picks up at a low price, and which is nothing more nor less than a seething mass of fermentation, no more fit for human food than any rotten fish condemned at Billingsgate. That some strong measure is required to meet this ever-increasing abuse is certain, in the interest not only of the home-grower, whose margin of profit grows smaller year by year, but also of the consumer, who has a right to expect that his jam shall not be adulterated with this poisonous stuff. Any attempt at obtaining further legislation on the subject is met by the old parrot-cry of protection; but it is surely not demanding very much to insist that jam made either wholly or partly with foreign fruit should be marked as such. If once the public would realise the nature of the stuff which they are sometimes called upon to eat as 'home-grown jam' the evil would not be tolerated for a moment. Even if the provisions of the existing Merchandise Marks Acts were more thoroughly enforced, a great deal might be done to check the evil. Much might be done by railway companies in cheapening their freights, so as to enable home-grown to compete in the market with foreign fruit; and it is only fair to them to say that in the last year or two they have shown some disposition to do this. It must be understood that this indictment is not intended to apply to all jam-makers; but it is an undoubted fact that it does apply to many, and that the quality of the foreign fruit thus used has in no wise been exaggerated in the present description.

LOSSES AND CROSSES.

The quantity of fruit which is despatched all over Scotland, to the north of England, and to Ireland, in the manner described above, is enormous. Given three hundred pickers, picking their proper quantity, one grower will send off his seven or eight tons a day. With so great a quantity, each barrel having to be separately addressed, mistakes must sometimes occur; and, in dealing with such a perishable commodity as fruit, a misdirected barrel may be a total loss to the grower. The picking season is indeed an anxious time for him, and every day brings its cares. One boiler telegraphs to say that his works are closed for a week owing to holidays, and that he cannot take fruit during that time; another that he can only take fruit despatched by an early train; and a third that he has already more on his hands than he can boil, and that he can take no more at present. They one and all,

with surprising unanimity, try to avoid taking fruit gathered on Friday or Saturday, and seem to be entirely oblivious of the fact that it will go on ripening and going to waste on both these days, and even on Sundays also, as much as on any other days in the week. As they have only a short day at their works on Saturday, the boilers expect the fruit to stand still and await their convenience at the beginning of the week. The grower naturally does not see the reasonableness of this, and hence arise many bickerings, and much profit to the telegraph department of the revenue and occasionally also to the legal profession. At the end of a day spent in struggling to extract a reasonable amount of work from lazy pickers, in despatching numerous telegrams to obstinate boilers, and in wrestling with the intricacies of the traffic systems of pig-headed railway companies, who refuse to guarantee connections, the unfortunate farmer is inclined to wish himself well out of the business. Fortunately for his sanity, the season is not of long duration; six or seven weeks see the end of it, and he may then sit down for a short time and count his profits, if he have any to enjoy.

PROFITS.

It cannot be denied that these profits in some individual years are large, and in such they amply repay the trouble and expense of cultivation. They are, however, by no means so large or so regular as they would appear to be to the casual observer, who notes that the farmer may get his ton or two of fruit per acre, and calculates that with reasonable prices he should have a gross return of forty or fifty pounds per acre. The expert who has made an accurate study of the trade—who estimates the expenses of planting, weeding, and picking, and who realises the constant anxieties and heart-burnings which accompany the cultivation, the losses resulting from the inclemencies of the season and the insect pests, and, lastly, the uncertainty whether anything like a fair price will be obtained for the crop—will be disposed to agree with the writer of this article that the lot of a fruit-farmer is not altogether a happy one. The truth of the matter is that this trade, like every other in the country, is being overdone. It is only under very favourable conditions that it can at this date be carried on profitably on a large scale. In short, fruit-farming, while it still affords an opening to a man who will count the cost before he takes it up, is no longer—if it ever was—the farmer's panacea; and the wise man will pause and reflect before following Mr Gladstone's advice to rush into fruit.



A GAME OF WEI-CH'I.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.



WANG'S long-cherished ambition of meeting General Ho and accepting his challenge to play a game of *wei-ch'i* was brought within reach by the very act which renunciated it. He had abandoned the *wei-ch'i* board for rebellion, and rebellion had brought him a prisoner into the presence of Ho.

After due consideration I ventured to intercede for Wang, although, by acknowledging that he had been in my employment, it rendered me also a suspect.

'I should be pleased to help you, Kê Hsien-sheng,' Ho replied; 'but you must know that this is a case beyond my powers of interference. The man is at present my prisoner; but when the instructions come from the Board he will be handed over to the civil authorities. If you think you have any sound plea, you may speak to my friend the Chik-fu.'

I knew this Chik-fu, who was named Ta Yüeh; he was an almost nightly visitor of Ho's, being a *wei-ch'i* maniac. But he was not a man I would think of expecting mercy from, being fat, avaricious, and deceitful. Small as my acquaintance was with him, I already guessed, from my frequent presence during their game, that there was something which attracted him to Ho's *yamen* more powerful than the General's *wei-ch'i* skill; and that was the General's *wei-ch'i* board. Ta's chief hobby was curios; he had a fine collection of antiques, and he knew the intrinsic value of them. And Ho's board was probably the most precious curio in the length and breadth of China. It was made of common white porcelain, set in a rude ebony frame, and the men also were mere shapeless pawns of chinaware; but it was of great antiquity, and—this was its value—it was authentically believed to have actually belonged to Confucius. Instead of black and white squares, those which should have been black were darkened by close and beautiful small writing in the epistolary character, each of the 162 squares containing a verse from the master's classics. These were supposed to have been written by a pupil under the great philosopher's own dictation, probably before he revised the 'proofs,' so to speak; for here and there they varied by a word or phrase from the standard text, and it was not credible that any student would commit such a sacrilege or betray such an ignorance as to misquote from the Sacred Bible. Besides, very ancient commentaries were in existence on this identical board; and, finally, a large seal-character *Kung* was carved on the bottom of the ebony—the signature of the master himself. The value of this board, then, was literally inestimable, for I

doubt if such a relic could have been sold for cash without serious danger from the Board of Censors; but if allowed to be auctioned, I believe it would have fetched one thousand pounds. I have not the slightest doubt Chinese connoisseurs would give nearly all they possess to obtain a relic which virtually ennoble the possessor, and such relics become family heirlooms, just as certain jewels do among our own old families. The only way for a foreigner to obtain genuine antiques is to 'be in at the death' of an old family, to wait until they are hard-up, and then very delicately to hint at a mortgage on the heirlooms.

'I could not venture to speak to Ta Lao-yeh,' I replied. 'I am in your excellency's service at present, and I can only intercede with your excellency. This poor Wang! *Wei-ch'i* is responsible for his fault. He came back to Hunan to accept a certain mandarin's challenge at the game, for which he has been studying nearly five years.'

'Ah,' said Ho, 'is that so? I never yet heard of *wei-ch'i* turning a man into a rebel, unless, indeed, it reminds him that China was formerly ruled by Chinese. I will inquire into it.'

Thus it came about that a state-prisoner was permitted to play against his jailer for his life; for it was held that if Wang could beat Ho it would prove conclusively that he could not have found time to be a conspirator. I will not say that any promise was made to this effect; but as he had not yet been proved guilty of rebellion, a virtual promise was made that he should be proved innocent. My evidence of his good behaviour for four years previous to his departure would be supported by the exhibition of his skill; 'And besides,' the fat Chik-fu added slyly, 'a hundred taels will always go a long way in a state trial.' The General did not commit himself to anything; a rebel's life had grown to be a trifling matter in his estimation; but a good game and a flattering proof of the utility of his long-standing challenge were of importance. 'Play with a single mind, Wang Lai-chee,' he said. 'A successful crown to your long study is more desirable than a paltry question of law.'

Thus reassured, Wang commenced the game of his life. Just at first he was naturally nervous, to say nothing of being out of practice and in ill-health; but on the whole these things were really all in his favour. The interval that had elapsed since he last touched a pawn had removed the staleness of long training; and the danger of his position, the disappointment of his failure, and the change from overstrained activity to a narrow, tranquil concentration, all served to sharpen his wits and fortify his natural caution with a certain desperate will. The General captured the first

corner without difficulty, and as he did so I shuddered at the stern, contemptuous eye he rested on his prisoner. The capturing of a corner is the simplest stroke of the game, only requiring two moves; but as the moves are made alternately, it is equally easy to frustrate. Ho placed his first man on one of the two points; Wang should have occupied the other, or made a counter-demonstration against another corner. Instead of doing so, he placed his man by the side of Ho's; and it was at this exhibition of ignorance that the General's eye seemed to say, 'You do not know the game. Woe for you, my man.' Seven moves later Wang laid down his pawn and said quietly, 'I eat your excellency.'

With three men he had drawn a line across the captured corner, thus scoring three points—the corner, and the two occupied by Ho. He had turned his mistake into a stratagem. The General evacuated his positions with an approving nod, and thenceforth looked to himself. By the end of the first night's skirmish Wang was accepted both by his opponent and Ta, who was umpire, as a respectable antagonist.

The game, I must add, was played on the famous 'board of Kung Fu' which I have mentioned; this was one of the privileges held out by Ho to aspirants in his original challenge ten years ago, and Wang had proved his acquaintance with the matter by reminding him of it. This alone was something for a student to boast of in after-years, that he had actually played on 'Kung's board.'

This fact proved an intense attraction to the Chik-fu, Ta. Ho had, I believe, shown him the relic on his sombre ebony cabinet; but it was a very different thing to see the precious plaque daily used before his eyes, under the bright light of the electric lamps with which I had been instrumental in furnishing Ho's *yamen*. The game was continued nightly, and every night Ta was present, however pressing the work at his own *yamen* in connection with Wang's rising; and every night the greedy acquisitiveness with which he eyed the board seemed to increase, until I was really alarmed lest he should steal it. On the third night Wang had enclosed thirteen points to the General's ten; they played very slowly now, and each isolated position was taken and retaken, mined or outflanked, before it was definitely secured and left for new developments. At the beat of the first watch (between one and two in the morning), when the play ceased for the night, Ta beckoned to his pipe-bearer, who went out to the Chik-fu's sedan-chair, and returned with something wrapped in a cloth.

'What is this?' said Ho, passing a hot-water towel over his face, as he always did after play, dropping it back in the basin, and taking his water-pipe from another attendant. 'What surprise have you got there, Yüeh?'

Ta Yüeh displayed a very costly *wei-ch'i* board

of jade, set in a copper frame with gilded legs, beautifully carved. 'A wager!' he cried playfully; 'it is very certain you are getting beaten, General, and I desire to stimulate your skill. My board against yours that you lose; come now—*hao pa?*'

The General examined the jade board. Its intrinsic value was great, and the enamelling of the lines and coloured squares exquisite and rare. The three hundred men were also all of jade, white and green, admirably carved in imitation of the 'warrior' statue at the Ming Tombs, and representing a considerable weight of that most costly of stones. The General was not a collector of antiques, and was more pleased with things of showy value; but the Kung board was an heirloom.

'Positively, I swear you are afraid of being beaten!' said Ta when Ho refused; and with a little badinage he secured his aim; and Ho, who could not believe that he would not win, accepted the wager. To a certain extent he was a just man, and I think the argument which persuaded him was that it was unfair that he should play without risk, while Wang was playing for his life. But he may have supplemented his justice by the consideration that his only risk was exchanging a relic he dared not sell for one he could, and at a good price, too.

A large number of pieces were now on the board, and Ho confided to me after his visitor and prisoner had gone that he was uneasy lest some one should tamper with the game. During the day the table was always left *in statu quo*, the door of the room being locked. I suggested that, considering the importance this game might have for future students, it would be a good idea to photograph the board nightly, so that the whole course of the game could afterwards be printed for their use. Ho liked the idea, and gave me permission to fix my detective camera in the square lamp of coloured glass hanging over the table, focussed downwards; in this way he had only to press the air-ball which hung down a little lower than the bead tassels of the lamp, and so secure a negative of the play at any time. I took one that night to get the focus, and developed it to prove my suggestion in the morning. The apparatus was fixed during the day.

During the day I also obtained the favour of visiting Wang in prison. He had been lodged, together with the rest of the captives, in the common jail at first—a large, tumble-down cattle-pen, too filthy to describe. When the game began he was removed to a solitary cell, both in order that he might be able to present himself in comparative cleanliness, and to escape the questions of his fellow-prisoners, who would interpret his nightly examinations, unaccompanied by marks of torture, as a proof that he was betraying them. The Chik-fu, as prefect of the capital *fu*, superintended the prisons; and after the wager he

immediately saw to it that Wang should be comfortably housed and fed, as the stakes depended on his condition.

Wang informed me that he was in dire misgiving about his relatives. It is the first principle in Chinese criminal investigation to secure all the near relatives of the accused; and he knew that the Chik-fu had already despatched his runners to Kiu-kiang, on the strength of the information I had given about him. About his wife's family he did not care so much, for they had always sponged on him and derided him; but concerning his brothers he was very anxious. If they were arrested at the porcelain factory their chance of re-employment would be gone even if he could absolve them of all suspicion of complicity. But he had an idea that if he won the game of *wei-ch'i* the General would never forgive him for being the cause of his losing the famous old porcelain board. But if the General could get an exact duplicate of the board he could conceal the loss from his relatives, if he *should* lose, and be more secure from theft if he retained it. Besides, a good imitation of an antique is always valuable.

Now, Wang believed that, with the assistance of his brothers and certain materials they could obtain at Nau-chang, he could imitate the plaque. He had closely studied it during the play, and he knew both the clay, glazing, and blue required. His business during his service in the imperial factories was that of imitating antiques; and the chief difficulty in the present case, that of a certain dullness in the clay and crackle on the glaze, he had already mastered in copying an old saucer sent down from the emperor's collection. Imitation, it must be understood, is not a fraud in China; it is an art. A good imitator is considered a higher artist than an originator.

Wang, therefore, wanted me to convey a letter

to his brothers, telling them to come to Wu-chang with the requisite materials, and then to suggest the imitation to Ho. The knowledge of the secret alone would probably be sufficient to obtain for them the General's protection.

I promised to do this. I saw several objections to the idea, flaws of obvious common-sense which are always manifest in the far-seeing subtleties of the Asiatic intellect; but I forbore to urge them. I cannot tell you how sorry I felt for the poor fellow, and how elevated he had grown in my respect. I perceived now that I had had for my servant a poet, an artist, a dreamer, a man of considerably higher attainment and finer clay than myself. There was something foredoomed and tragic in his calmness. He was tranquil, clear, and quietly insistent; but his deep-sighted eyes and transparent pallor told me that this practical foresight of his was the result of an unnatural fever, and that his sudden immersion in active affairs had been a shock and improper strain on a mind naturally sedentary and introspective; and his anxiety about his relatives, his indifference to himself, bespoke that unconscious premonition of the clairvoyant intellect which is more alarming to the practical man than any actual danger.

I sent a trusted servant and former friend of Wang's post-haste to Nau-chang by the first down-steamer, and within a week his brothers had arrived. I then suggested to Ho the advisability of copying the porcelain board, since Wang believed he could do it; and Ho entrusted it to him. He had Wang removed to his own *yamen*, and the three brothers closeted together at work during the day. He made a plausible excuse to Ta concerning the substitution of a commoner board, without, of course, giving him the least hint of what was doing. Meanwhile the game proceeded.

INVISIBLE LIGHT.



HE thoughtful have scarcely yet recovered from the astonishment caused them by the discovery of the power of the Röntgen rays, and have not yet, indeed, quite realised the magnitude of the outlook opened up by the invention—an outlook whose horizon is, in fact, widening every day.

That such a discovery should be the precursor of further revelations on similar lines was a foregone conclusion; and among these must be noted the successful experiments made by Monsieur Le Bon, the French scientist, reported recently in the *Science Française*. The Röntgen rays require delicate and costly instruments, which are not within the reach of all purses or all laboratories; it is therefore good news for those

interested in such studies that M. Le Bon announces that without an electric current, without a Crooke's tube, by the aid of a simple petroleum lamp alone, it is possible to render objects visible, even though concealed by absolutely opaque coverings—to realise, indeed, all the marvels of the Röntgen rays.

He has been experimenting for some time in this direction, and has made some very striking and surprising discoveries. The first, which originally met with little credence, but which he has since, it is said, successfully demonstrated, is an entirely new conception of light. Henceforward we shall have to admit that all sources of light furnish rays invisible as well as visible to the human eye. Up to the present it has been supposed that the 'X' or cathodic rays alone

possessed this power; but this idea has been proved erroneous. A candle, a lamp of any sort, a match even, furnishes two sorts of light—the one limpid, clear, luminous; the other non-luminous, invisible, which has very stupidly been named *lumière noire*—‘black light,’ or ‘dark light.’

The characteristic property of this invisible light—a property which it shares with the X-rays—is its power of penetration, its faculty of piercing opaque substances. Its existence is to be proved, according to the French scientist, in the simplest way, and with the most rudimentary of apparatus. For this experiment all that is required is a petroleum lamp, which is enclosed in a case made of sheet-iron, and a fragment of any printed journal. This paper is placed in a wooden box, which is then so arranged that it stands close against the metal sides of the case containing the lamp. M. Le Bon has discovered two processes by which the journal can be read while still enclosed in the box. The first of these, which takes the longer time, consists in adjusting in the front of the wooden box a sensitised plate, which, when developed in the ordinary photographic manner, reveals the text of the paper. By the second method the printing may be read immediately, in the most complete obscurity, and although entirely concealed by the wooden box. To demonstrate this, the lamp and newspaper having been arranged as previously described, a screen covered with sulphuret of

zinc is placed in front of the box. This becomes luminous, and reveals distinctly the printed characters.

What really happens is this: The invisible rays emitted by the petroleum lamp have penetrated both the sheet-iron case and the wooden box, and have reached the fragment of newspaper; and as the lamp-black, which forms one of the ingredients of printing-ink, prevents their passing, the letters are faithfully reflected on the screen. They appear like shadows on its luminous surface, illuminated by the rays that have not been intercepted.

This experience seems to prove beyond denial the existence of an invisible light with great powers of penetration, and which is always to be found as an accompaniment to visible light. The case may be simply expressed thus: There are really no opaque bodies; all substances are transparent; but, our eyes being blind to the invisible light, we fail to recognise this translucency. Like the X-rays, this newly-discovered light will operate on photographic plates, as well as render sulphuret of zinc luminous in obscurity; but it has not the same force of penetration as the Röntgen rays, and the latter will therefore be of greater service medically. The great difference between the two is that the invisible light penetrates objects very slowly. It has been noticed that as long as sixty seconds have elapsed before the radiations have reached the screen.

THE RAVEN OF FLAMBORO’.

By ALICK MUNRO.

I.



ONLY once kissed Dorothy Lassen, and that was on the day when she told me she was going to marry Colin Magrath. But then, unfortunately, I am old enough to be Dorothy's father; and, as she takes a cruel delight in recognising the fact, I was immediately pardoned. Therefore, with the perverseness of an elderly lover, I lost my temper—simply because I saw I had not annoyed her in the slightest.

Dorothy laughed, and promptly put my name at the head of her list of devoted and unreasoning slaves; whereupon I recovered my temper, and accepted the position and its responsibilities.

Before her engagement had lasted a month Dorothy was in trouble, and of course she came to me for help. She walked straight into my office, and, taking not the smallest notice of the clerk who was with me, plumped down into my arm-chair, and burst into tears.

I dismissed the clerk hurriedly.

‘My dear child!’ I said in consternation, ‘what on earth is the matter?’

‘Oh, Mr Rudd!’ she sobbed; ‘it’s Colin. He has been arrested.’

‘The scamp!’ said I energetically. ‘What for?’

She looked up at me angrily, I think. ‘Mr Rudd, he didn’t do it.’ And then came another tornado of grief.

‘Of course not!’ I pronounced soothingly; ‘I know he didn’t. But you haven’t told me yet *what* it is that he didn’t do.’

‘They have arrested him for murder.’

‘What?’ I cried, and for a second wondered whether she was hoaxing me.

‘They say he has killed his brother. But he didn’t—he didn’t!’

‘Killed his brother?’ I repeated wonderingly. ‘I thought Colin was an only son.’

‘There’s a brother Robert, but he has lived abroad for a long time.’

‘Ah! And is never spoken of! Then there are reasons?’

'Yes.'

'Do you know their nature?'

'No. But what do they matter?' she cried impatiently. 'How can I save Colin?'

'Tell me the facts.'

Now, Dorothy Lassen is a brave girl; consequently she dried her eyes, and gave me a summary which would have done credit to a *Times* paragraphist. Colin Magrath had gone to Bridlington to see his brother, who had sent for him on urgent business. They went out together in a small boat. Next morning the boat was found on the shore, half-way between Bridlington and Flamboro' Head. There were footmarks in the wet sand, leading from the boat to the face of the cliff, where they were lost above the tide-mark. They were the footprints of one man only; and as Robert was not seen again, and had not paid for the boat, the waterman gave information to the police.

During the course of the next day a straw hat was picked up in the water, with Magrath written on the lining. A search was made; but they found nothing more until after the storm of Friday, when a body was washed ashore. It was battered almost out of recognition by the waves; but the doctor who gave evidence at the inquest proved that a large gash in the hair just above the right ear was covered with matted blood, and must therefore have been made some time before the man fell or was thrown into the water. Death, in the doctor's opinion, was due, not to drowning, but to a violent blow on the head with some sharp instrument. 'And,' sobbed Dorothy, breaking down again, 'they dare to say my Colin did it! Horrible! horrible!'

'What is Colin's story?'

'That his brother landed him near the Head, and then started to row back to Bridlington alone.'

'Do you know of any quarrel between them?' I asked.

Dorothy caught the implied suggestion, and the look she gave me made me feel caddish and small.

'Mr Rudd, Colin simply couldn't quarrel with anybody!'

I shook my head, but didn't dare actively to dispute the theory. Besides, I had never met the young man.

'I will go and see him,' I said, 'and make arrangements for his defence.'

'Oh, thank you!' cried Dorothy; 'I knew you would. And tell him that Dorothy knows he is innocent.'

II.



STARTED on my mission feeling sorry for young Magrath, and I returned with my toes itching to kick him. He received me coolly enough; and the very first glimpse I had of his face set my back up. I have, I am sorry to say, contracted

the bad habit of reading people's expression—a seductive amusement, but dangerous.

I introduced myself, and gave him Dorothy's message.

'Ah!' he said. 'She knows I'm innocent, does she? Really, Mr—er—er—Rudd, I think you said—doesn't that strike you as rather strange?'

I stared at the fellow in amazement.

He laughed softly. 'You don't follow me? Yet the point is obvious enough: How can she know anything about it? Why, my dear Mr Rudd, I don't even know as much myself.'

'Really!'—I began, and then stopped, utterly dumfounded.

'Of course,' he went on suavely, 'I shall plead not guilty. It's always the best thing to do in these cases. By the way, am I right in presuming that you wish to offer your services?'

'That,' I said stiffly, 'was my intention; but of course if'—

'Oh, not at all. I shall be delighted. But I had a notion that touting was forbidden in your profession.'

'Sir!'

'I was wrong? Ah, well, I frequently am. You must remember I'm an outsider, and professional etiquette has been known to puzzle even the initiated. I perceive we shall be great friends, Mr Rudd.'

'Do you?' I retorted hotly. 'I am vastly obliged!'

'Not at all; not at all. Merely a case of natural affinity. You show enterprise in extending your *clientèle*; and I admire you for that enterprise, because, as my present position perhaps suggests, I am myself a man of energy. You start? My dear sir, in that nervous movement I detect another bond between us; you are, like myself, a man of scrupulous honour. Consequently, you would scorn to identify yourself with my interests if you thought me guilty. I congratulate you, sir! The sentiment does you credit, and I hasten to relieve your mind by assuring you that the reference to my present position was used merely for the sake of the illustration; there is no implied confession of guilt in it. Besides, I think I told you I meant to plead not guilty.'

The impudent cynicism of the man revolted me, and I consider it a great proof of self-control that I did not lose my temper. But for Dorothy's sake, I would have closed the interview there and then.

'Understand me, sir,' I said frigidly. 'I am here because I am Miss Lassen's friend, and for that reason alone I am willing to do my best for you. Otherwise, your refined insolence would'—

He interrupted me with a laugh. 'What! A humorist too! Really, Mr Rudd, you are a man worth knowing! "My refined insolence!"

Charming, I assure you. Paradoxical perhaps, but quite good. You are fond of epigrams?'

I made an impatient gesture.

'Ah, a quick temper also, I see! Quite right, Mr Rudd, quite right! A man is all the better for being a little bit touchy; it is a quality which commands respect.'

I was beginning to show my anger, and that is a thing which, in business, I never allow myself to do.

'Excuse me,' I said; 'we will, if it is all the same to you, postpone this analysis of my character.'

'Certainly, my dear sir, certainly—though I admit I abandon the discussion with regret. The study of human nature is to me always enthralling.'

'Even when the rope is dangling round your neck?' I could not help suggesting.

'Even if the said rope were tightening, Mr Rudd. But you seem to have misunderstood the situation. I am in no danger.'

'You have a defence, then?' I asked eagerly.

'N—no,' he drawled. 'I can't say I have.'

'Then I confess I don't understand you.'

'My dear Mr Rudd, you are not showing the perspicacity I should have expected. If my unfortunate brother has been killed—and, mark me, I don't necessarily admit the fact—there is no proof whatever that I am his murderer. You must see that.'

'No direct evidence,' I admitted.

'Exactly. And no circumstantial evidence of any importance. They have stumbled on one or two links, I allow; but one or two links don't make a chain, even in the optimistic legal mind.'

'Others may be forged,' I remarked grimly.

'Pooh! No. I happen to know that they won't.'

'How?'

'Ah! you must excuse me; that is my secret. You have been good enough to volunteer to undertake the case; but you must expect no assistance from me. Take my advice and treat the whole matter as a joke. I myself am quite convulsed with the humour of the situation.'

'Indeed!' I retorted hotly. 'I confess I can't find anything funny in it, either for you or for Miss Lassen.'

'Poor Dolly! she has no sense of humour. By-the-bye, that reminds me: will you do me a favour? Kindly write these six words, "*The raven is hungry: feed him.*" Put the message into an envelope addressed to Mona, care of Mrs Amos, Tobacconist, Filey; and I shall be eternally obliged. I would not trouble you, but unfortunately the Post-Office does not offer its usual facilities to Her Majesty's temporary guests.'

I wrote the words down mechanically.

'You will do it?' he went on. 'Thank you!

And now, don't let me detain you further; I have immensely enjoyed this interview. You'd rather not shake hands? My dear Mr Rudd, your discrimination is wonderful. Good-bye for the present.'

He bowed me out of the cell, and I returned to my office, walking at the rate of five miles an hour to cool myself. I have never been nearer committing an assault in my life.

III.



HEN Magrath's case came on everything went against him, and I by no means shared his jaunty confidence in an ultimate acquittal. There was one very painful incident. Dorothy, contrary to my strongly expressed advice, was in court; and when the prisoner was led in she rose and stared at him with her eyes widely dilated, and a look of deathly terror shining in them. Then, in a low, clear voice, which was heard all over the court, she pronounced the words, '*That man is guilty!*' and dropped down in a dead faint. There was a sensation of course, and she was carried out of the court.

Her cad of a lover was the only one who was not affected. He laughed cynically, and I quite failed to persuade myself that his laughter was hysterical.

'So the fair Dolly has revised her judgment of me,' he said lightly when I visited him in his cell after the trial. 'Really, I'm afraid she is fickle, Mr Rudd.'

'You miserable cad!' I growled angrily. 'I believe you're guilty.'

'Of course you do—since the lady says so. You're a man of gallantry, I see. By the way, did you post that letter for me?'

'Yes,' I answered sullenly.

'Then I have to thank you. Now, I wager Mona will not be so ready to believe evil of me.'

'Who is Mona?' I asked suspiciously.

'Ah!' he laughed; 'it's safer not to tell you. A man of your high sense of honour might find it impossible to keep the secret.'

'Look here, Mr Magrath,' I said. 'I need no further proof that you are a scoundrel; but I have not quite made up my mind whether or not you are a murderer. You refuse to give me any help, so I warn you I shall try to do without it. And if my investigations result in my having to throw up the case, I don't know that I shall be sorry.'

He changed colour, but whether through anger or fear I could not tell.

'Turning nasty, Mr Rudd? Bah! You will find out nothing.'

'You hope so,' I said viciously, and watched the effect of my words.

'The prisoner is not bound to incriminate himself,' he quoted evasively. 'What shall you do?'

'Interview Mona. I am curious about that hungry raven.'

'Oh, that's it, is it? Well'—and he drew himself up in a theatrical attitude—'villain, I defy thee! Do thy worst!'

'I will,' said I cheerfully, and left him.

IV.

MRS AMOS, Tobacconist, Filey, was not disposed to be communicative. She didn't know who I might be, to come pokin' my nose into what didn't concern me, and she wasn't going to tell me nothing—not she! So I could just take my ounce of 'navy cut' and my change, and walk out of her shop as fast as I liked!

Her probity, I saw, was not to be corrupted by blandishments, so I took another line. Putting on my keenest look, I murmured mendaciously the one word 'Detective.' The old lady caved in at once.

'I'm sure, sir, I beg your pardon; but I didn't know you was a police gentleman. I 'ope as poor Mrs Magrath isn't in any trouble.'

'Mrs Magrath is the person who receives letters addressed to Mona?'

'Yes, sir. They lodges with me.'

'They?' I asked, with incautious eagerness.

'Her and her husband; only Mr Magrath has been away for the last few days.'

'Ah, exactly! I forgot her husband,' said I, and tried to conceal my surprise. 'Will you tell Mrs Magrath that a gentleman has called to see her on business? You need not mention the fact that I am connected with the police.'

'She's out, sir—went out just before you came; but I expect you could catch her up. She mostly walks along the cliffs towards Flamboro.'

'How shall I recognise her?'

'Easy enough. She's got a white basket with food in it for the sea-gulls, which she says she's sorry for, because the poor things looks so wild and hungry.'

Food! Could it be for— 'How often has she done this?' I asked quickly.

'Only yesterday and to-day, sir.'

It was for the 'raven!' I took a hurried leave of the obliging Mrs Amos, and started in pursuit of Mona.

Now, I yield to no one in my admiration of moonlight effects on the water, especially as seen from a Yorkshire chalk-cliff; yet, but for the fact that I was able from a distance of over eighty yards to see everything that Mona did, I should not now be in a position to declare whether there was a moon that night or not. At first my anger against the scoundrel who had so deceived my little favourite kept all other thoughts out of my head, and afterwards, when I came in sight of my quarry, the task of seeing everything without being seen was quite enough employment for even a legal brain.

The lady walked fast and far—too fast and too far for my comfort. But I put my years in my pocket, and tracked her like a young spaniel. She led me to within a mile of the Head, and then stopped. Crouching in the shadow of a thorn hedge, I was able to watch every movement. She took a parcel from her pocket, and then, having tied a long piece of string to it, lowered it, as it seemed to me, straight down into the solid earth. I waited and wondered. For a minute she stood motionless, in the strained attitude of one who listens intently. Then, giving a little gasping sob, she hurriedly snatched up her basket and started running quickly back towards Filey; and when I lost sight of her at a turn of the path she was still running.

I went to explore the place where I had seen the parcel disappear. It was a rough piece of ground, covered with sharp jags of limestone, and overgrown with a clinging tangle of brambles; but not a sign of opening could I see except an old rabbit-hole. I poked my stick into this to try its depth, and found that even when I thrust my whole arm in I could still wave the stick freely about inside. A strange sort of rabbit-hole this! I bent down to the mouth of it and whistled a bugle-call; the sound was doubled and redoubled in the hole; and after quite fifteen seconds I still heard a faint echo of the call coming back to me as a mysterious whisper from the depths of the earth. The rabbit-hole must be in communication with one of the limestone caves of Flamboro! I could not discover any indication of an entrance below; but as at that point there was no beach, and the sea even at low-tide washed the base of the cliff, it was quite possible that there might be a water-covered mouth to the cave. I marked carefully the appearance of the cliffs nearest to me, and then hurried back to Filey at a pace which, for a man of my years and profession, was not dignified, and in daylight would hardly have been respectable.

Late though it was, I managed to persuade a boatman who had the reputation for knowing ever inch of the Flamboro' cliffs to take me by water to the place where I had found my rabbit-hole. I pointed out the spot to him, and asked if there was a cave.

'Yes, sir; there be,' he said. 'But you can't get into it till the turn of the ebb, and that'll be a good three-quarters of an hour yet.'

'Then we will wait,' said I.

'Askin' yer pardon, sir, it's a queer time o' night to go cave-huntin'. What is it yer after?'

'A man.'

'Hiding, is he?' said the fellow philosophically. 'Well, he's chosen a rum place.'

I thought of Mona's terror and of my unanswered call.

'Heaven grant he be alive!' I murmured.

When the tide reached its lowest point we rowed to the cave's mouth. The distance from

the arching roof to the water was barely thirty inches.

'No use, sir; the boat won't go in. So'—he added, with a gleeful chuckle—'unless you've a mind to wait here till the next spring-tide, you can't touch the poor beggar.'

'How deep is the water?'

'Happen three feet.'

'Then I shall wade. Give me the lantern, and wait for me.'

I jumped overboard; the water hardly reached above my knees; but before I had gone five steps it began to deepen rapidly, and I thought I should have to turn back. All at once, however, the cave opened out, and I saw a steep shelving beach on the left, for which I made; and then stood, gazing with a shrinking horror at the weird scene around me. The feeble light of the bull's-eye lantern which I carried made the gloomy recesses of the cavern appear by contrast only the more vast and fearsome in their threatening silences. I wondered in what corner of all this black immensity I should find that which I sought. A shadow at a little distance caught my eye; I crept forward to see what it was. There before me lay a man, to all appearance dead; and the face, feature for feature, was that of the jeering scoundrel who had so lately bowed me out of his cell.

V.



AS soon after my return from Filey as possible I went to see Dorothy, for I judged that hers was the anxiety which it was my first duty to relieve. I found her utterly unnerved by excitement and grief. 'Child,' I said kindly, 'I have good news for you; I have proofs that Colin Magrath did not kill his brother.'

She looked at me in a dazed sort of way that was very pitiful. 'I don't understand,' she said simply; and then, in a weary tone, 'I forgot; you don't know. That man is not my Colin.'

'What!' I cried. 'Then who is he?'

'Robert, the brother.'

'Robert! Then the man I rescued from the cave'—

She interrupted me with a cry. 'You have found Colin? Oh, Mr Rudd! tell me you have found my Colin alive!'

'I suppose so,' said I. 'That is, if'—

'Take me to him,' she demanded.

Now Dorothy was ill, and in my opinion ought to have been in bed; but none the less I could not refuse her. I told her all I knew, and drove her to the station in time to catch the Filey train. Then, as there were several things which I did not understand, I went to interview the prisoner.

'Glad to see you, Mr Rudd,' he said jauntily. 'How is my *fiancée*?'

'Your brother's *fiancée* is quite well, Mr Robert Magrath,' I replied pointedly.

'Ah!' he laughed, 'so you have found me out. Really, you'll make quite a good detective in time. What else have you discovered?'

'I have rescued a raven which was at the point of death.'

'Very pretty, Mr Rudd, very pretty! The metaphor, however, was mine in the first instance, I believe. Still, Mr Rudd uses it aptly, as I should have expected he would.' He bowed to me ironically. 'Well, I suppose we may as well conclude that, thanks to you, my game is up. *Væ victis*. I bow to my conqueror. Is there anything in which I can further oblige Mr Rudd?'

'Tell me your motive for imprisoning your brother.'

He hesitated for a second, and then replied lightly, 'Money, of course!'

'I don't believe you,' said I.

He shrugged his shoulders. 'You don't? Even when I tell you that my brother is insured for twelve thousand, and has foolishly made no will? I have friends who would have released him when I had got beyond the reach of extradition law,' he added significantly.

'No,' said I. 'You're a scoundrel, I know; but not *that* kind of scoundrel.'

He flushed, and I believe that it was pleasure and not anger which called the blood to his cheeks.

'Thank you,' he said simply; and then with a laugh: 'Well, I'll submit another motive to you: I had a score to pay off against my brother, because some years ago he behaved badly to me—or I behaved badly to him. Choose which theory you like; one of them is the truth, but you'll never find out which. I won't tell you, and I don't think Colin will. Any other information, however, which I can give you I shall be delighted'—

'Mona?' I asked.

'Is my loving and very obedient wife.'

'And the man who was washed ashore?'

'Is a puzzle to me too. And, by the way, with regard to him, I played my hand atrociously. I should never have identified him as my brother. It was a false card, and the police trumped it when they, very naturally, arrested me for the murder.'

'Do you know, Mr Magrath,' said I quite honestly, 'against my own will I admire you? Your impudence is so beautifully consistent.'

'Ah!' he said, with a mock sigh; 'then I have not lived in vain. "Approbation from Sir Hubert Stanley"—you know the rest.'

That was my last conversation with Robert Magrath. The murder prosecution of course fell through, and Colin would allow no other to be instituted. It was subsequently proved that the

body which was washed ashore was that of the victim of a tragedy on board one of the boats of the North Sea fishing-fleet. I have recorded the story elsewhere.

I never solved the other problem. Colin would tell me nothing; and even my little friend Dorothy, at her husband's bidding no doubt,

always managed to change the subject when I showed signs of becoming inquisitive.

After all, there are some secrets into which even the dual character of solicitor and friend of the family does not entitle one to pry. To be perfectly ingenuous, I must confess that I have not found them very numerous.

THE 'PREACHING-PITS' OF CORNWALL



SCATTERED throughout the length and breadth of Cornwall are innumerable disused mine-shafts, as might be expected in a county whose mining industry has existed for considerably over twenty centuries. When the lodes of tin and copper gave out, or became too poor to pay for the working, the mines were abandoned, leaving either innumerable yawning chasms or shafts hundreds of fathoms deep to scar the face of the country. In time the woodwork which had been placed as a lining to the shafts to support the sides rotted away, and, as a result, the sides caved in and fell into the shaft, and so formed a pit. In many cases the 'run-in,' as this caving-in is termed, formed a perfectly circular pit in the shape of an inverted truncated cone, sometimes measuring over a hundred feet in diameter at the surface, and from thirty to forty feet in its greatest depth. Where the ground was more 'rubbly' the pit would be wider and deeper.

When the great religious revival under the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield took place, Cornwall was one of the counties in which the movement took deep root. Chapels sprang up very quickly; but until these were built the revivalists looked about for places in which they might worship without molestation. Some genius saw great possibilities in these 'run-in' mine-shafts, and so the 'preaching-pit' became an accomplished fact. The bottoms of the pits were levelled, and on the sloping sides rude seats were formed by cutting the earth into tiers of steps and covering them with turf. A high bank was raised at one side for the preacher, and an opening was cut so as to give easy access to the pit. In some cases a railing was erected round the outer edge, having an entrance-gate.

In these rude, improvised amphitheatres, eminently suited to the rough, emotional nature of the Cornish miner, revival services were held, and hundreds of converts were 'brought in,' as the Cornishman terms it. With nothing but the blue sky above and the green grass below, the pit crowded tier above tier with solemn-faced religionists, listening with bated breath to the denunciation of the sinner and the exhortation to flee from wrath eternal; the young, dark-haired,

blue-eyed lads and maidens sitting hand-in-hand, as is the custom with Cornish lovers, and their elders nodding and shaking their heads as they agree or disagree with the remarks of the preacher, occasionally emitting a groan or an 'Amen;' while over all, the gathering gloom completes the solemnity of the scene, and makes it a fit subject for the brush of a Rembrandt. Then, when the hymn, rolling from a thousand throats and echoed from the pit-sides, had been sung, followed by the prayer, in which the entire spirit of the supplicant was poured forth with violent gesticulations and contortions of body, to the accompaniment of 'Amens,' groans, and 'Hallelujahs' of the believers, mingled with cries and shrieks from the 'unsaved,' it would seem as if the spirit of the ancient Druids had survived through the centuries in this remnant of Britain's ancient people.

These 'preaching-pits' are all situated in West Cornwall. That at Gwennap, near Redruth, is the largest and best known. It is forty-seven yards in diameter, and will accommodate ten thousand people. In Wesley's time it was very much larger. Others are situated at Newlyn East, near Newquay, and at Indian Queen's, near Truro. The pits are not now regularly used as places of worship; but on Bank Holidays special services are held in them, and they are used also on the occasion of a Sunday-school treat. At such times they are well worth visiting.

A SONNET.

So soft your words were when you went away,
So smooth your brow the while you said good-bye,
So deep the tranquil candour of your eye,
So calm the peace that like a halo lay
Around your head. Had you no wish to stay
A little longer with us? or a sigh,
The while the death-mist and the grave drew nigh,
To mourn the fleetness of your shortened day!

Had earth no joys wherewith to tempt you, sweet?
Was life so heavy with its weight of woe
That, in the turmoil of the market-street,
You should be weary ere the sun was low?
Was Earth so sad it could not stay your feet?
Or Heaven so fair that you were fain to go!



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SAPELLI ON THE NIGER.

By HAROLD BINDLOSS.

THERE are many malaria-haunted swamps along the West African coast; but perhaps the largest, and certainly the most important to European trade, is the waste of mire and mangroves about the Niger mouths. The number of these deltaic arms no white man exactly knows, for between the six-mile-wide rivers there stretches for nearly three hundred miles from Lekki to Opobo an interminable maze of winding creeks, some mere stagnant ditches oozing among putrid slime, and others tidal waterways through which a three-thousand-ton steamer may pass. In many places for leagues and leagues the dingy mangroves rise out of rotting mire where even the Jakkery bushman fears to set his foot; but interspersed among them lie tracts of cotton-wood forest with strips of yellow sand where the trading factories stand perched on piles about the water-side.

For some five months each year—though the duration of the seasons is uncertain—forest and swamp are alternately swept by tropical deluge and rolled in clouds of steam. Then, when the cool rush of the Harmattan which follows dies away, the whole delta lies sweltering in fervent heat, and the emanations sucked up from the rotting swamps bring sickness and death to the European who breathes them. Yet this undesirable region commands the easiest route to a vast tract of Northern Africa; the exports of the delta alone are large; and, as a natural consequence, in spite of climatic ills, there are many white men dwelling in isolated groups throughout the Niger swamps. They are representatives of the three classes who have ever done the most to extend British dominion and some measure of civilisation into the waste places of the earth—the adventurous trader, outpost officer, and the missionary; while at Sapelli the manner of their life and the work they do may be clearly seen. There are, of course, other and larger stations, including Akassa, headquarters of the great Chartered Company, and

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Calabar, seat of the government; but one greatly resembles another, and Sapelli is perhaps the farthest outpost of the Niger Coast Protectorate, lying, as it does, on the fringe of a land which a little while ago it was death for a white man to enter.

Early one morning the writer with two companions stood on the veranda of a trader's house beside the Sapelli River. We were glad to reach the open air, for our match-boarded quarters reeked with the mingled odours of stale tobacco, kerosene oil, and rotting wood, and the mosquitoes had rendered sound sleep impossible. No one, however, is cheerful at 6 A.M. in Western Africa, where a white man wakes up wondering if he has the fever, and the prudent swallow a quinine tabloid before their early coffee, while the nervous man may be seen leaning over the veranda with a thermometer-stalk projecting from his mouth. If the mercury registers within a degree of 98 he is satisfied, while if it marks 100 that man wears an anxious face all day. There are few Europeans in the Niger delta who have not a thermometer somewhere concealed about them.

The dwelling was of the usual type, a white-washed wooden building resembling an exaggerated hen-roost, perched on piles to escape the worst of the malaria, with four bare rooms on the same floor opening into the veranda running round them. Close at hand was a similar luxurious residence, and farther away the red roofs of two others could be seen rising above the trees. Beyond a narrow clearing the great cotton-wood forest stood like a wall, the massy trunks rising two hundred feet above their buttressed roots, and creepers draping each giant limb. Beneath there flowed a swift river, clear as crystal, strange to say, and starred with floating blossom; while beyond a fringe of reeds upon the other bank the columnar stems and feathery fronds of oil-palms rose from out the tall lilies at their feet, wreaths of steam eddying among them. As usual, the air was clammy with moisture, and heavy with the smell

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of steaming earth, spicy odours from the forest, and the rankness of rotting leaves. Even at that hour one felt mere breathing to be an effort, and exertion of any kind an impossibility. There is, however, little opportunity for listless indolence at a Niger trading-station; and as we shook off the lethargy, two young clerks, mere boys, whose haggard faces nevertheless bore the stamp of suffering and endurance, descended the creaking stairway, and a distant 'chunk-chunk' of paddles came down the misty river.

The sun was lifting itself, a disc of burnished copper, above the rim of the forest when we stood upon the river-bank watching a swarm of ebony-skinned Krooboy labourers from the far-off Liberian beaches straggle towards oil and gin sheds, and we knew that a flotilla of trade canoes were coming down. The coolness of the dawn is soon past in Western Africa, and the early sun-rays scorched our faces when a line of dug-out canoes swung round a bend and drove towards us, the water foaming about their bows, and the naked crews hissing as they dipped the flashing paddles and brought them up against the gun-wales with a simultaneous 'chunk.' On they slid towards the landing, unwieldy craft some thirty feet by seven, loaded to the water's edge with oil and kernels, and propelled by huge negroes with curious devices in blue tattoo standing out in relief upon their naked skin, and hair knitted up into endless plaits. In the stern of each there crouched two or three fighting-men, curved-edged matchets or long-barrelled flintlock guns glinting beside them; while upon a wattled platform of every third or fourth craft, the headman trader to whom this detachment belonged stood pompously erect. He, as a rule, was gorgeously and wonderfully arrayed in crownless silk hat, cast-off mate's uniform, or scarlet infantry tunic which refused to meet across his brawny chest, with anything from pyjamas to cavalry boots upon his naked limbs. These were the smaller traders, unsophisticated 'bushmen,' for the more important headmen generally attire themselves in duck garments of sober fashion. Then, as usual, there was trouble brewing in the swamps, and the oil-carriers knew that their only hope of bringing their goods through safely was to travel well armed together.

One of the young clerks watched the flotilla converge upon the landing, and then, with a brief 'And now the fun begins—a roaring trade to-day,' hurried towards the oil-shed. The clerk was right. There was space for only five or six canoes alongside the landing, and a score of clumsy craft were shooting towards it as fast as the whirling paddles could drive them. Now the Jakkery, like most negroes, has no idea of method and less of order. Therefore the crew of each canoe endeavoured to get their craft first alongside by the primitive means of driving her through or over all that lay between, and a scene of wild confusion followed.

The hollowed cotton-wood logs drove crashing together, the river-men howled and smote with paddle-haft or clawed at each other's throats, the smaller craft were swamped between, and miscellaneous cargo began to hurtle through the air. The headmen appeared to be anathematising each other in many tongues; while the factory agent, who had previously paid for some of the goods, and now saw them being spilt wholesale into the river, leaned over the veranda above and hurled impartial abuse at all. When the strongest had won first place, and the rest were laving what the Krooboy calls 'blue eyes,' and fishing their property out of the water, the writer and his companions hurried towards the kernel-shed in advance of a howling mob, to see the trade begin.

Here the clerk stood beside a big tub measure, or 'cooler,' hung on trunnions; and after the usual fight for precedence, the servants of each headman flung basket after basket of greasy palm-kernels, black objects half the size of a filbert, into the measure. They were all immense fellows, with arms and chests wonderfully developed by labour at the paddle, but having the weak lower limbs of the canoe-dweller. As each lot was complete, the headman received a stamped brass tally as a voucher for so many measures, and we presently moved towards the oil-shed.

There the other clerk, bathed in perspiration, was weighing sticky yellow oil. The place was already as hot as an oven, and between the sickly fragrance of the oil, the smell of raw rubber, which is one of the worst in the world, and other savours, the state of its atmosphere cannot be described. Yet this youth worked there in heat and steam twelve hours a day, suffered regularly from fever as a matter of course, and his salary was sixty pounds a year, which it will be admitted he earned.

The trade-store, or 'shop,' would not be opened yet, and the writer, having an appointment with one of the Protectorate officials who ruled that district, turned towards the lower landing.

A light and beautifully-modelled canoe, the product of the combined skill of a Liberian Krooboy and Fanti craftsman from the Gold Coast—for no Niger-man could have turned out work like that—lay alongside the bank. The writer, saluting the lieutenant of Protectorate troops and acting vice-consul, whose friendship he had gained by advice on sails and gear on an earlier visit, stepped gingerly on board; and setting the big lugsail, we slid away down the shimmering river towards a distant swamp. The reflected glare was dazzling; the starry lilies which curled over beneath the bows resembled blotches of intense brightness, while a glancing of superheated air danced over the crystal water, and the tired eyes turned thankfully towards the vistas of steamy, creeper-choked forest that opened up between the tall palms on either side.

By-and-by the scene was changed, for the dry land gave place to mangrove swamps; and, lowering the sail, we paddled into a tunnel-like opening winding away into the dim green shade. The lieutenant did not know where that creek led to, though it was fully eight feet deep, but there are thousands of unknown waterways winding through the Niger delta. The water was thick and yellow like pea-soup. On either hand the slimy mangrove tentacles rose like arches out of noisome depths of yeasty water and bubbling mire, the white stems stretching away into the distance, and olive-green foliage interlaced above.

So still and strange was the whole scene that it affected one almost like a nightmare, until it was a positive relief to come upon the handiwork of man again. A little basket-work house stood raised on piles above the mire, with strings of charms not good to look upon hung upon it, while from a wand above dangled a symbol of the Ju-Ju mystery, a bunch of reddened rags. Sapelli lies on the fringe of a region where every kind of fetich cruelty is rife, and into which, before the fall of Old Benin, few white men had ever set their foot. This house, like others which stud the Niger creeks, was erected in honour of Amalaku, the river-god, and as a resting-place for the wandering ghosts, who would otherwise—so the natives say—strangle belated oil-carriers, or smite them to death with intangible spears. They are confirmed in this superstition by the fact that occasionally a canoe, in which a strong man, upon whom no trace of violence can be found, lies dead, is occasionally met drifting down the stream. The Ju-Ju men may, nevertheless, be able to explain the mystery of the canoes. The lieutenant frowned as he passed the hut, probably because he knew that in spite of his efforts the power of the Ju-Ju is greater than that of the government in the remoter swamps; and the writer shuddered, for he had heard many ghastly tales from traders, white and black, about the worship of the river-gods.

Presently, as we threaded our way through banks of ooze where the creek widened out, the horny head and rough-barked shoulders of an alligator rose slowly out of the mire, and we knew that the chance we sought had come. Two rifles lay in the canoe, a Martini and Lee-Metford, and the writer seized the former, for he knew that if one desires to 'stop' a creature of any size, it is necessary to use the shock of a fair-sized projectile. Pitching the blue barrel forward, he dropped his cheek upon the stock, and squeezed the trigger just as the last of the horny scales disappeared into the slime that sucked about them. There was a jarring crash, and almost simultaneously with the thin, shrill ringing of the Lee-Metford he heard the thud of the Martini bullet crunching through the bone. There is no mistaking this sound; and as to alligator scales turning a ball at close range, the

idea is out of date in these days of high explosives. We saw an alligator drilled through back and side at full eighty yards, from Warri river-bank, by a Martini bullet, and a Lee-Metford would perforate a row. There was a great splashing ahead, and then something floundered away amid churned-up mud into the mangroves, and the writer felt half-inclined to scramble across the matted roots in chase, but the lieutenant knew better. As he pointed out, one slip would be sufficient, for no swimmer could escape from the grasp of that plastic mire, and we left the stricken beast alone. Afterwards we ate our lunch in a little steaming basin, and then paddled back towards the river to wait for the launch which was to call and tow us back.

It was late in the afternoon and fiercely hot when the writer joined his companions in the factory compound again, and witnessed scenes very similar to that which he has already described in 'An Incident of the Niger Trade,' *Chambers's Journal*, February 4, 1899.

A little of that experience goes a very long way, so we elbowed a passage to the door and strolled towards the gin-shed, one of the party gasping for breath, which was hardly to be wondered at. The doors of the galvanised shed were wide open, and a line of naked negroes, and probably slaves, were carrying down the green gincases upon their heads, while the youth who had officiated over the 'cooler' kept a careful list of all, the goods being delivered on account of oil to follow.

This gin, which is one of the staple imports of Western Africa, costs twopence-halfpenny or less per quart wholesale, is made in Germany from potatoes, and, judging from the effect it has upon a rash white man, might be fortified with vitriol. Lagos alone takes millions of cases, and immense quantities are unloaded at Akassa and New Benin. There is no doubt that to the European at least the stuff is deadly, for the writer has a vivid recollection of more than once seeing a seaman, who had purchased it surreptitiously ashore, brought back to his steamer, not intoxicated, but raving mad. Nevertheless, the effect it may have upon the negro—who will take a bottle of black draught for a dose, and smilingly ask the surgeon for more croton-oil—is probably not very much.

The young white clerk, who had been weakened by fever, seemed almost in a state of collapse; but, as he said, there was no one else to do the work, and, ill or well, he must keep tally of those cases until darkness fell.

Sapelli has not the large salt-trade to be found at Akassa and New Benin, though some is sold; but from the whole delta thousands of bags of Cheshire salt go inland, across wide lagoons and up leagues of yellow river. Then the white crystals are packed in fibre cylinders, and carried on the heads of slave-gangs through the steamy forests, each sable potentate cutting off an inch

in return for the doubtful privilege of passing through his dominions, until at last the Arab bears the remnant, which is worth its weight in silver and has cost many human lives, eastwards towards the Nile and north towards Algiers on his camel-trains. In Africa, as elsewhere in the older world, distance is not considered. After the burning of a small stockade upon the Niger, and in several battles with Soudanese raiders in Senegal, beautifully damascened twist guns and finely-tempered swords were found, apparently the work of Indian or Persian artificers. How they crossed endless leagues of scorching desert and forest, or by what route they came, no white man knows; but the Arab trader could doubtless explain, for his commerce extends very far across the little-known regions of the earth, and in much of Africa his dominion and influence are supreme.

Europeans have settled upon the West African coast for four hundred years and more. Government official and missionary have done all that in them lay, and yet in the Niger swamps the Jakkery lives as he did from the beginning, and the negro of the seaboard is still, generally speaking, an ignorant savage. On the other hand, where the older civilisation of the East, even though it be debased by superstition and incorporated tradition, has touched the negro, a change is at once apparent. The Moslem and semi-Moslem nations of the hinterland are generally people of high intelligence, dwelling in strong-walled towns, tilling the ground, practising industrial arts, and organised into military nations instead of hording in rickety clusters of huts, a mere rabble of cut-throat tribes. It is from these alone that every soldier and trusted government servant is drawn; but the influence of Islam in Africa is a subject which cannot be treated here.

Later, having permission from our canoeing friend, we rowed off to the government hulk, *Hindoostan*, headquarters of the two Protectorate officials then ruling that district, for it was a 'justice-palaver day.' Descending to what had once been gun-deck, and was now courtroom, we settled ourselves to see and listen, and the surroundings were striking. The courtroom was, of course, stiflingly hot; through the wide ports a lace-like tracery of green palm-fronds could be seen rising against the crystalline blueness, while the reflected glare of the river shimmered through steam upon bulkhead and beam. A crowd of oily, perspiring negroes filled the place, some ironed and awaiting trial, and others crouching moodily still until the suit they had brought to be decided according to the justice of the white men should be heard, while a few big Yorubas stood grimly on guard, with rifles in their hands. Here, also, the air was almost unbreathable; moisture trickled down the boards, and the deck-beams sweated splashing globules from overhead. It is characteristic of Western Africa that even on a

day of fervent heat everything reeks with damp, the clamminess increasing with the temperature.

Upon a dais our friend and his companion sat like statues, the one leaning forward with the perspiration trickling from his hair upon the hand which supported his aching head, while the other sat upright, listening wearily while a Jakkery interpreter rendered the story of a native witness into fantastic English—this case was adjourned for further evidence. Then we heard one man sentenced to three months' useful labour making roads—the punishment he dreaded most—for firing at an oil-canoe; and another story pointing to fetich murders; and finally one of our party whose nerve had given way before turned very white. We helped him up on deck, sick and faint, and spasmodically abusive of all things African, and lounged beneath the awnings until, when the court was cleared, we bade the officials farewell. One of them smiled when he inquired if the would-be trader had recovered, and hinted that he would encounter many more trying things than that; while the other, struggling against a shivering fit, nodded grim approval. And so we rowed away, and the writer never saw either of the kindly pair again—for both were distinguished by the courtesy which almost invariably marks the Protectorate official. One still does good work among the Niger swamps, at another station now, and the other sleeps his last sleep beside a misty African river.

When darkness closed down suddenly upon river and forest, at about six o'clock, we dined with the factory people on skinny fowls and palm-oil chop, a spicy compound of fowl and fish, mangoes and yams, all swimming in thick yellow oil, with preserved fruit in cans. It is strange to be given canned pine-apple as a treat while finer ones grow abundantly at hand, but on the West Coast fresh pine-apple is said to be a dangerous thing to eat.

Later, the moon rose up above the palms, and we lounged upon the wide veranda, watching the woolly fever-mist creep forth from the forest across the shimmering river, and the fireflies flashing among the night-flowering lilies below. Beneath us the Krooboys crouched about their dying fires, wreaths of blue vapour curled across the palms, and the occasional croon of a Liberian chanty or the monotonous tapping of a monkey-skin drum came sharply through the stillness. Then, as the last red glow flickered out and the weird music ceased, we bade our hosts farewell, and departed in a canoe towards our steamer, lying farther down the creek. And so the visit to Sapelli came to an end.

[Since this article was written, by the passing of the Royal Niger Company Bill, the former Crown colony of Lagos, the Niger Coast Protectorate, and the Royal Niger Companies Territories are destined to become one large colonial area, under the three governments of Lagos, Southern Nigeria, and Northern Nigeria.]

THE LOST CAUSE.

CHAPTER IX.—CONCLUSION.



HE Chevalier was within a few yards of us, having apparently come from an open door to our right, and, like Kennett, was booted and cloaked for riding. If he had overheard our discussion, as he must certainly have done in part, there was no sign of it on his placid countenance. But he seemed to me to have grown older and more careworn since my last view of him, while his expression was that of a man who had suddenly lost all hope, and had not yet resigned himself to his lot.

For a minute Kennett was too greatly taken aback to answer. Charles Edward drew a little nearer, regarding me keenly.

'Who is this gentleman?' he repeated, and for the first time I noticed that his tongue had the slightest taint of a foreign accent.

'His name is Holroyd,' said Kennett almost roughly, 'and he is an underling of the Secretary of State.'

The statement, that might have meant so much to him, had no visible effect. 'Of Lord Kynaston?' he asked, bowing courteously. 'You have a message from him to me, sir?'

I had made up my mind what attitude to adopt towards him, and so replied with the respect due to his birth, but otherwise simply as one gentleman speaking to another. 'Twas for him to decide if he were to remain incognito.

'The message is from my cousin, Sir Charles Hollingworth, who is lying mortally wounded at the Dower-house,' said I, and gave it word for word, omitting only the phrase that reflected upon Kennett's discretion.

To do the Prince justice, his first thoughts were rather of Sir Charles than himself.

'There is no hope for him?' he inquired.

'I fear not, sir.'

'I am deeply grieved,' he said, more moved than, from his reputation, I should have expected.

'One after another,' he went on, half to himself. 'What unhappy fate is it that dooms my best friends to lose their lives in my cause?' Then, after a moment's deliberation, he turned to his follower. 'Sir Charles is right,' said he quietly; 'and there is nothing for it but to obey him. Will you see to the change in our plans, Mr Kennett?'

But Kennett, who was manifestly not too well pleased by his decision, demurred. 'If your Royal Highness will permit me a word in your ear'—

Stepping aside, they conferred together in a whisper, and Kennett appeared to be urging some scheme that was unpalatable to the other—probably one with which my coming had interfered,

although I could not guess, and never discovered, what their intention had been. At last the Prince's voice rose somewhat.

'No, no—a thousand times no!' he cried. 'We should only drag others to ruin and death—like Hollingworth. And for what? Let us drop the mask. I have seen it myself since I came here—that success is hopeless. The cause is lost, and we cannot fight against destiny. . . . Say no more, my friend. I have had it in my mind all day, and now I am fully determined.'

'There is still my objection,' persisted Kennett as they turned again towards me.

'As to that, Mr Holroyd may advise us.' To me: 'Mr Kennett would like to have an assurance that, in following Sir Charles's advice, we shall not be molested by the Government.'

'While I have no claim to speak officially,' said I, 'I feel sure that you will meet with no hindrance.'

'Not even from Kynaston's cordon?' asked Kennett. 'What warrant have we that they will not stop us?'

'Lord Kynaston has not consulted me in this matter, and so I am not aware of his instructions. But I think it hardly likely that his men will stop Mr Kennett and his friend, riding openly.'

'And, in any case, we must run certain risks,' said the Prince in a tone that precluded further debate. Then he addressed me in his most gracious manner. 'I have to thank you for a notable service, sir,' said he, 'and to beg that you will lay me under still another obligation. Will you take my answer to Sir Charles, if it is not unhappily too late? Pray tell him that his last request must be sacred to me, and that his Prince will never cease to cherish the memory of the bravest and most loyal of his friends. And if all is over, will you tell Miss Kitty that her grief is very near to the heart of one who has not too many friends to lose?'

There are few faults with which the world has not credited Charles Edward Stuart, but in this case one could not doubt his perfect sincerity; and I cannot believe that a man who could so feel for another at a crisis of his own life was altogether bad.

'Will you let me thank you again, Mr Holroyd?' he added when I had bowed my acquiescence. 'Under another star it might have been my good fortune to be as well served by you as my kinsman is.'

Therewith he proffered me his hand, and—well—I am not ashamed to admit that, Whig as I was, I raised it to my lips. Let the action stand, if it please you, for a token of sympathy with fallen greatness! 'Twas the only interview

I have ever had with the last of the Stuarts, and I went from it with an abiding impression of the charm and princely dignity that he had shown under most untoward circumstances.

I was not yet free to return to the Dower-house. Kennett accompanied me from his door to the border of the park, and there pulled up.

'A minute, Mr Holroyd!' he said; and then, abruptly, 'What of Miss Hollingworth?'

'Well, what of her?' I asked, on my guard.

'Have any arrangements been made regarding her in the event of her father's death?'

Certainly one could not complain of his lack of directness. His right to inquire was more open to question.

'Surely that is a matter for her relations?' said I.

'Meaning yourself?'

'As one of them.'

'But a friend may be allowed to ask? And I have reasons. You may be aware that I am a suitor for Miss Kitty's hand'—

'With Sir Charles's sanction?' I put in rather anxiously; for the fact, albeit not unsuspected, was not quite to my liking.

'Not precisely,' he admitted, in some confusion. 'I had intended speaking to him for some days past, but the late business prevented me; and that being so'—

'Oh! it need be no secret that by Sir Charles's wish she will make her home with my mother henceforth.'

'With your mother?' He whistled ruefully.

'And I must see the Prince safely abroad, while, I suppose, you will be under the same roof with her. You'll admit 'tis hard luck for me, Mr Holroyd! . . . Well, remember that my claim stands. If you had a whole shoulder I should like to make it good here and now!'

I could not pretend to misunderstand him, and had even a feeling of admiration for his honesty.

'Are we not forgetting the person chiefly concerned in all this?' I asked him. 'The decision must rest with Kitty herself; and, for us, we have our pretext already. And, if you care, I can promise you that my mother's door in London will be open to you, and, whether you come to see my cousin or to demand the fulfilment of our engagement, you will always be anything but "cursedly unwelcome!"'

'You mean it?' he cried.

'Assuredly I do.'

'Then, some day soon, I will avail myself of the permission,' said he, gripping my hand.

So we parted—for good. For, after all, he never came to London. Long afterwards, when I had the best of all right to know, I learnt the reason from Kitty. He had written to her a few weeks later, and her answer had been so decisive that he had immediately joined the Prince abroad. He died there of a Roman fever many years ago.

As I entered the room the broken murmur of Sir Charles's voice told me that he was in a delirium. Mrs Herbert was quietly weeping; Kitty sat, pale and dry-eyed, with his hand in hers. Motioning me forward, she made room for me by her side. We did not speak, for the shadow of that which was now so near was upon us.

The minutes ticked out from a clock on the mantelshelf, and the weak voice ran on unceasingly. Through all the tangle of inconsequence, 'twas to the old Yorkshire days that the feverish brain recurred again and again, and the names of wife and daughter were never long absent from his tongue. Towards the end, however, there was a change. His mind seemed to rest at the last battle in which the fortunes of the Stuarts had been staked. Now it wandered little, and I could almost see the fatal field of Culloden as the dying Jacobite fought it out in detail, and could feel his cry of despair as the hopes of his party were scattered for ever by the breaking of the Highland ranks.

'The right is broken—tell Murray to bring up the Macdonalds, or the day is lost! . . . On them, Keppoch! There is still a chance, if—My God! the cowards are retreating! . . . The horse! Why does the Prince not charge? . . . All over? No, by heaven! . . . Get the Prince away, Sheridan—quick! quick! here are the dragoons—he must not be captured. Then for one more blow for the old cause!'

And at that, with a great effort, he raised himself from his pillows, and his voice rang out with a marvellous strength and clarity in this shout:

'God save King James!'

Then the dominant note of his busy and varied life was still uppermost at the last; and, with a rush of blood from his mouth, he fell back. Kitty flung herself on the bed in an uncontrollable outburst of sobbing, and I passed gently out and left the women with their dead.

Lord Kynaston was awaiting me in the hall. He was ready to depart, but at sight of my face drew me into the parlour.

'So it is over?' said he.

'He died a minute ago.'

'Well, 'tis the ending of an old tale. I am a good hater; but, do you know, George, I am almost sorry for that thrust. Peace to his soul!' He mused for a moment or two, and then: 'You will stay here until everything is done, I suppose?'

'If I may.'

'Why, of course! And the daughter?'

'She and Mrs Herbert will go to my mother's—for the present,' said I, not quite ingenuously.

He seemed to understand, and patted me kindly on the arm. 'That is the proper course, my boy,' said he. 'Miss Kitty will never forgive me: 'tis a woman's privilege. But, for me, I can

have no feud with the daughter of Marjorie Clifford. When the time comes to petition for the restoration of the Hollingworth estates—and it need not be long—you may take it that my influence will not be exerted against her.’

‘I thanked him, and, in truth, was well convinced (as events proved) that ’twould be all-powerful on the other side. Then, as in duty bound, I mentioned my visit to Langbridge.

‘Ah! I was told of that,’ he replied.

‘I went with a message from Sir Charles to Kennett and a guest of his,’ I continued. ‘They are starting to-night for foreign parts, and I ventured to assure them that, as far as I knew, no warrant was out to hinder them.’

‘Without authority—eh?’ he asked, his eyes twinkling. ‘As it happens, however, you are right. If I had wanted this mysterious guest of Mr Kennett’s, I could have had him days ago. It suits my purpose better to let him go, and welcome! He is useless for further evil, and, in the present state of affairs, we have no wish to excite the public mind by stories of Jacobite plotting—especially, as in this case,’ he added, ‘when it has come to nothing.’

‘Thanks to you, my lord,’ said I.

He smiled. ‘And thanks partly to the excellent information that I got from a traitor in their camp,’ he replied. ‘No, you have not his acquaintance; and, as he may be of still further service, I have no intention that you should.’

And the plot itself? As I gathered later, ’twas indeed a crack-brained and desperate scheme. It depended on the expected decease of the King, and had for objects the kidnapping of

the Prince of Wales and a revolt in the western and Welsh counties, where Jacobite principles were fondly imagined to be supreme. You know how it was strangled, but not before the Chevalier had been brought over to be in readiness, and many meetings held betwixt the returned exiles and their English sympathisers. My lord had bided his time, and at the proper moment had found means to inform the conspirators of his knowledge, and of the steps he meant to take on the morrow. This was on the evening of my arrival at Bath, and perhaps Kennett had just heard the news when I met him in the Pump-room. His attempt on my liberty may be explained by a doubt whether my lord was yet aware of the Prince’s presence, and the desire to prevent me from speaking until he was in safety. For the rest, the hint had amply sufficed: the plotters had scattered at once. The subsequent doings of my chief, and his motives therefor, have already been explained by himself.

‘And now, George, I must get on to Devizes,’ he said after some more talk. ‘I could not remain here, of course—even if the scratches had been more serious. With only a prick on the arm, and a grazing of the skin above my ribs, I have no excuse.’

I said good-bye to him at the foot of the avenue, and then turned back—to Kitty. She had need of me; and an intoxicating hope was springing in my heart that—perhaps not yet, but assuredly at some future time—it might be my happy lot to dry her tears.

THE END.

OUR MEAT-SUPPLY.



NOTWITHSTANDING the efforts of ultra-humanitarians and other advocates of vegetarianism, it is practically certain that meat will remain, as it has ever been, the chief article of human diet; and as the home supply does not keep pace with the demands of an ever-increasing population, it is probable that the imports to the United Kingdom of frozen meat will in the near future considerably increase.

The idea of preserving meat for future consumption is, of course, of very ancient origin; and various methods have in past times been adopted. The oldest and most primitive way was by drying, a process which is still extensively employed in hot countries. The next step was the use of antiseptics, such as salt, sugar, and vinegar. To come to more modern times, we have the various methods of preservation dependent on the exclusion of air, out of which sprang the tinned and potted meat trades, which have now reached such huge dimensions in America. But this is appli-

cable to cooked food only, and the two first methods to which we have alluded considerably lessen the nutritive value of the meat. Hence it was not until the invention, in comparatively recent years, of the cold-air chamber that a satisfactory method was discovered of preserving meat for lengthy periods in its original fresh state. That cold to a great degree prevents putrefaction has been common knowledge for centuries; but ice in its natural state can, of course, only be used for comparatively brief periods. The modern cold-air chamber first took shape in the late seventies, meat having become very dear in this country owing to the cattle-plague. Previously to this, the cold-air chamber had been employed in bringing meat to Europe from America; but the method of cooling the chamber was more primitive, ice being the main factor. The first importation of Australian preserved meat on record was in the year 1865, when a small quantity was brought over by a Mr John McCall. About 1875 ice began to be largely employed in connection

with the importation of meat from America, and in 1877 the total quantity of foreign meat received in the country amounted to 599,181 cwt.

It was in the following year that the introduction of the Bell-Coleman chamber—the air passed through which was for the first time cooled by compression—successfully solved the problem, and laid the foundation of a trade which has now reached enormous dimensions. Since 1879, by means of the Bell-Coleman, and later of the Haslam method, fresh meat has regularly been imported from America, the quantity to hand during 1898 being 65,872 quarters of beef and 2,340,442 carcasses of lamb and mutton. A carcass averages 56 lb.

Australia entered the trade in 1880, and the number of carcasses of mutton and lamb received from this source rapidly expanded from 13,771 in 1881 to 55,087 the succeeding year, and 1,263,422 in 1898. The beef imported last year from this colony amounted to 357,615 quarters. The first cargo successfully brought from New Zealand was in 1882, when the sailing-ship *Dunedin* delivered 4909 carcasses of sheep and 22 pigs, all in perfect condition, in spite of the exceptional heat experienced during the voyage, which occupied very nearly three months. The imports of mutton and lamb from New Zealand to this country during the year 1898 totalled considerably over two and three-quarter million carcasses, the beef to hand from the same source being 51,799 quarters.

River Plate made its first appearance as a meat-exporter in 1884, when 108,823 carcasses of frozen mutton and lamb were landed in this country. For the twelve months ended 31st December last, over two and a quarter million carcasses of Argentine mutton and lamb were received, together with 65,872 quarters of beef.

Some idea of the magnitude of the trade can be gathered from the fact that London alone possesses at the present time frozen meat stores with accommodation for 1,324,000 carcasses, while distributed over the remainder of Great Britain and Ireland there is storage capacity for 1,784,000 carcasses. Glasgow, in respect of a population of 715,000, has two stores, with a total capacity for 120,000 carcasses. It is noteworthy that Edinburgh, with its population of 293,000, had no cold meat storage accommodation until the present year. In all, there are in the United Kingdom sixty stores. Through these there passed last year over 475,300 quarters of beef, nearly 5,190,000 carcasses of mutton, and over one and a quarter million carcasses of lamb.

In transporting this vast quantity of meat from the producer to the consumer some one hundred and thirty steamships, fitted with the necessary refrigerating machinery, were engaged. The aggregate of close upon six and a half million frozen sheep and lambs imported into this country during

1898 contrasts with considerably under four million carcasses in 1893, less than two and a quarter million carcasses in 1883, and 400 carcasses in 1880. Expressed in hundredweights, our total imports of mutton and lamb in 1898 amounted to 3,314,003, compared with 3,193,276 the previous year, and 2,895,158 in 1896.

That this growth in the quantity of foreign meat delivered in this country has not had a greater effect on the prices charged by the retail butcher than has been the case is due to two reasons. Firstly, it must be borne in mind that the increase in the supply of meat has also been accompanied by an expansion in the demand. Since 1890 (and to go back to an earlier period would still further strengthen the argument) there has been, according to official figures, an expansion in the population of the United Kingdom of close upon three millions. This represents an increase in the eight years of nearly 8·75 per cent. Meanwhile there has been practically no alteration in the number of live cattle annually imported. The supplies of live sheep to hand have, it is true, slightly expanded; but a meat famine must inevitably have occurred had it not been for the frozen meat trade. The second reason why the progress of the trade has not been proportionately reflected in the price charged to the meat-consumer is that there exists, although, perhaps, not to quite the same extent as formerly, an unaccountable prejudice among the well-to-do classes against frozen meat. 'I must have English meat,' says the average individual of the upper and upper-middle classes; and although it is to be feared that his butcher is sometimes more human than honest, and sells his customer foreign meat, merely adding a few pence per pound to the price to satisfy that customer's prejudice, yet the effect is apparent in the comparatively small fluctuation experienced in the price of home-killed meat and in the margin between the two descriptions. We advisedly allude to the prejudice against foreign meat as unaccountable, for it has been proved beyond a doubt that frozen meat is, from the point of view both of nourishment and easy digestion, in all degrees equal to fresh meat killed in this country. The freezing process which foreign meat undergoes for the purposes of export in no way detracts from its nutritive value; and, indeed, the difference between frozen and home-killed meat of the same quality is perceptible only to the epicure or the expert.

Already, however, our imports of foreign mutton and lamb equal approximately 18,000 carcasses per day, or 32 per cent. of the total supply from all quarters; and as popular prejudice disappears beneath the proofs of modern science, it is probable that this rate will continue to expand, to the mutual benefit of the home consumer and the colonial producer.

A GAME OF WEI-CH' I.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.



WANG continued to play with rare prudence and skill. At the same time, each night exhibited an increase in his pallor and emaciation. He was eating very little, and I doubt if he slept well. He was beginning to feel the difference between an 18-line and a 19-line board, and was confused by the multiplicity of pieces; and probably his sleep was but a nightmare of *wei-ch'i*, which served him in lieu of practice, as opium serves one in lieu of imagination, at the expense of facility. Ho, on the contrary, was now perfectly in his element, with two hundred odd pieces on the board, and a complicated permutation of intricacies which warmed his generalship. He began to play much quicker than Wang, who required an hour for consideration, and yet was afraid of trying the patience of his adversary. They made about half-a-dozen moves a night. Ta Yueh was growing anxious, and his ferrety eyes cast menacing looks at Wang's downcast face. His favour had not been propitiated by the news that Wang's brothers had been forewarned, and had escaped.

The examination of the prisoners had meanwhile been concluded, and resulted in a clear verdict of open treason. The finding had been sent to Peking, and the execution of the men was only a question of a few weeks. But the case of Wang, as ringleader, had been postponed, since it was necessary to secure further evidence about him. The Chik-fu fluently assured him that he was quite safe, having no intention of losing the Kung board for want of a lie. Ho said nothing, but played impenetrably.

Every night, at close of play, the General pressed the suspended air-ball which photographed the board. Ta had been greatly troubled over this mystery; and Ho, at my suggestion, explained that it was a magnetic device of the foreigners which kept the 'men' in their places. He pinched it again on commencing play, and said that this removed the magnetic current. Every morning I developed the film, and the General compared results.

The game had at last come to a critical stage. Every move almost was accompanied by the words '*Chik ni*' or '*Yao chik*' ('I eat you'), which is equivalent to 'check' in chess, and which betokened that a space or a detached body of the enemy was surrounded and 'eaten up.' I could no longer pretend to follow the game myself, with two hundred and fifty men or more dotted all over the board; but I could see that it was not going too well with Wang. On the other hand, the General was suffering from intense anxiety, with difficulty masked behind his impenetrable coldness.

The truth was that, although he was eating up Wang's small detachments at every move, Wang had so admirably planned his game that the General needed all his ability to avoid or stave off a single large capture which would more than counterbalance all his minor successes. Wang was, in chess parlance, sacrificing pieces for the 'mate,' while Ho was constantly 'checking.' Being a lover of good chess, and having a 'bowing acquaintance' with *wei-ch'i*, I saw enough of Wang's game to feel an intense admiration for the poor fellow's nerve, courage, and concentration, in face of the awful stake hanging over him.

But when play ceased for the night, appearances, as I say, were against Wang. His position was excellent; but lack of practice on the full-sized board bewildered him, and it was becoming apparent that he could no longer keep a grasp on his own strategy. Once or twice he missed his opportunity; he forgot what he was playing for, and in his despair neglected his tactics to encounter those of his adversary. There was a triumphant glitter in the General's eye, and privately I prayed that he might win. I did not fear that he would be treacherous to an honourable conqueror, but I felt sure he would be generous to a vanquished opponent who had fought so well. He was playing to win, and no one could accuse Wang of playing to lose. Besides, if Wang lost, the General would preserve his board and his one hundred taels. Most assuredly he would find a means of preserving Wang's life in exchange.

The next day Wang finished the firing of his plaque. It was a perfect imitation. Only a microscopic examination of the writing on the squares would have shown a slight difference in the characters and here and there a fresher darkness of the ink. The same day, unknown to Wang and to myself, his two brothers were arrested and examined by the Chik-fu. The General was present at the inquiry, as usual. When the men declared their entire ignorance of their brother's conspiracy, the Chik-fu turned to the General, the General sternly nodded, and they were thumb-screwed. There would be no more manipulation of pottery for these poor mechanics for many a day. Under the torture they 'confessed'; that is to say, they racked their imagination to invent some revelations, and eagerly agreed to insinuating questions. To tell the truth, these brothers were not entirely worthy of Wang. They were simple and innocent enough in their way; but they were selfish and envious. When they found that the only result of their obeying Wang's appeal for their presence was that they were tortured, they were even vin-

dictively eager to incriminate him. This behaviour, I must say at once, is quite unusual in Chinamen; they are very loyal under the torture. But these men were not Wang's accomplices; and Wang had always been despised by his family for educating himself and for entering a foreigner's service.

On entering the cabinet that night the Chik-fu was particularly urbane to Wang. He assured him that he had that day obtained evidence which entirely exonerated him. His affability was, I presume, designed to put Wang in a good state of mind for the final bout. The General was irritable and cold. I don't suppose that he felt remorse for his own cruelty or his colleague's deceitfulness; but I think the proceedings of the day had made him impatient of feigning grace towards a prisoner. He sat down with a stern, set face and looked at the board. He instantly pressed the Kodak bulb, and looked sharply and suspiciously at Wang, and then at the Fu, and at me. He asked me for the previous night's photograph, and I gave it him; he glanced at it, and crushed it in his hand. There was something ominous in the air. Was it possible that Wang had tampered with the board?

It was Wang's move. He seemed puzzled and indecisive, and the General watched him relentlessly. Once or twice Wang took up a piece from the diminished pile at his side, and put it down again. The game, I think I have explained, is played by placing a piece on any vacant point you like on the board. The pieces are not moved from point to point.

Wang looked up, and shrank a little on encountering the cold, stern, suspicious eye of his opponent. 'Will your excellency forgive me if I am slow?' he asked pathetically. 'It is the first time I have played on a full board, and the number of pieces bewilder me. I forget where I was last night.'

'Take your time, Wang Lai-chee,' the General replied sternly. 'It shall not be said that Ho Tsui-fang has played unfairly even against a cheat; I am not surprised that you forget where you were.'

I was horror-struck at these words; they were obviously an accusation, and contradicted themselves, being distinctly intimidating. But Wang did not seem to take them as unusual. The expression which I have translated 'cheat' might equally be applied to him merely as a conspirator and rebel; and he took it with patient humility. On the other hand, if the board had been tampered with, his hesitation might equally be interpreted as guile.

At last Wang looked up with a strange light in his eyes. 'I think it must be your excellency's move,' he said gently; 'I do not remember'—

The Fu interposed noisily. 'No, no,' he said impatiently; 'your move, Wang *hsien-sheng*; your move. You have the game in your hands if you play carefully.'

Wang coloured painfully at the hollow courtesy

of the literate's title, for the first time given him by a mandarin.

'Wang Lai-chee,' said the General, 'it is your move. See that you do your best, or else I shall strike you in the face for a trickster.'

Wang returned his glance steadily, proudly, defiantly. Then he put down a checker, and said, '*Chik ni*.'

Ni means 'you,' and can be addressed by an equal to an equal. But it was audacity and defiance from a prisoner to a mandarin, although it is the usual expression in the game.

The move that Wang had made was victory. There still remained some vacant spots and spare pieces, but not enough to retrieve the General's loss. Wang's move, I learnt afterwards, was a masterpiece such as has seldom occurred in known games. It unexpectedly completed the enclosure of a large space of the board, already held in position by eight of the General's men. It gave Wang nine points, which could not be retrieved. It made him five points ahead, and his other positions were so good that there was not room for the General to make up this number even if he played alone.

The General pushed back his chair and called for his pipe, his hard eyes angry and inexorable. 'You have won,' he said. 'You were foolish to cheat, for you are a good player.'

'Cheat? I have not cheated!' Wang replied hotly, but in pitiable confusion.

'Go,' said the General, pointing sternly to the door which led to Wang's prison. 'Your money shall be paid to you.'

'My dear friend,' said Ta Yüeh, smiling, 'this is not like you. But you are not used to being beaten. I think it is a little hard on the poor man—is it not?—to deprive him of the last satisfaction he is likely to enjoy in the world. Why did you accuse him of cheating?'

'An extra piece had been placed on the board, Ta *lao-yeh*,' the General replied coldly. 'I had been watching this strategy'—he pointed to Wang's masterly *coup* in the centre of the board—'and I was aware of my danger. But I made note that two moves were required to complete the environment; I am sure of it, for I remember casting up the risks and deciding that I could postpone my counter-move for to-night. I do not say I could have stopped it; as you may observe, he had me here also, and it was a choice of evils. When we left off last night I was fairly beaten in positions; but war and *wei-ch'i*, as you know, often depend for the finish on moral qualities which rise superior to position. I admit that your champion has out-manœuvred me; I had made up my mind in any case to treat him as the winner. But I was looking forward for this night's play to prove that courage and a cool head can retrieve an inferiority in skill. The very fact that this Wang should have had recourse to fraud proves my contention. He had lost his head and was not sure of himself.'

He would have won by one point in any case; now, as you see, if we had played to the finish, he could not fail to win by fifteen points.'

'But, my dear General, how is it possible that he should make a move unknown to you? Is he not your prisoner? Do you not keep the door locked, as well as employ foreign witchcraft to protect you? I am afraid, my dear friend, that people would say you regretted your wager.'

'The wager shall be paid, *Ta lao-yeh*. I will sign the document of transfer and deliver the board after the trial.'

Even while we were talking a messenger entered bearing despatches from Peking. After a proper obeisance before the imperial envelope, the silk was broken and the despatch opened. The General read it, and then passed it to *Ta*. The *Chik-fu* repeated the obeisance and read the edict.

'When the emperor speaks the private conscience is silent,' he said mysteriously.

The despatch was an order for the instant execution of all the accused. The *Sze-chuan* rebels had murdered a missionary, and foreign pressure called for instant proof that the Government was capable of controlling its own subjects. The *Nu-chang* mandarins were called upon to make an example in the presence of the foreign consuls of Hankow.

Wang was recalled, and informed that circumstances rendered it impossible to pardon him. His brothers had given evidence against him which confirmed his guilt.

'You have, however, nothing to regret,' the General said gravely. 'In consideration of your difficulties, I shall overlook the fact that you made two successive moves. I shall also pardon your foreign friend, my friend Mr Ké, who undoubtedly made the fraudulent move for you, he alone having access to the room during the day. Your victory will be duly published, and even reported to Peking, for I myself shall need exculpation for playing with a rebel. Doubtless you will receive a posthumous pardon. The hundred taels will be paid to your wife. Farewell, Wang Lai-chee!'

Poor Wang was thunder-struck. His eyes closed, and he sank on his knees and forehead. In a European you would have said he had fainted, but Chinese cannot faint from mental shocks, being deficient in nerves. 'Grace, *ta ren-ren*,' he murmured. 'Grant me the night to draw up a memorial myself.'

'It is granted,' Ho replied. 'Work to-night, for in the morning your brains will be busy.' This is a ghastly euphemism for decapitation. Wang withdrew.

Chinese justice proceeds with gruesome speed when once an imperial edict is issued. Ho and *Ta* retired to their respective offices and set their *shupans* at work. Before daylight *weiguans* were despatched to the consuls over the river informing them that the rebels guilty of the death of a

missionary had been caught and would be executed at sunrise, and that their excellencies were requested to be present, in order to inform their respective Governments that justice had been done.

Twenty-three of the prisoners were carried out to the execution-ground in baskets. Most of them were unable to walk, owing to the examinations they had undergone during the month since their capture. The women-folk of several were present, with the usual cups of opium-tea, which they put to the lips of their relatives—a merciful permission, exactly similar to the cup of hemlock of the Greeks. Wang, like Socrates, refused it; instead, he was allowed to stand erect, and he addressed a very touching, dignified speech of consolation to his accomplices, which they greeted with curses and revilings. His limbs, however, refused to support him in the procession to the death-place, and he was placed in a hired chair. The poor fellow was not of the stuff which can face the physical horror of death, although morally the most courageous of reformers. When the culprits, in their baskets, were arranged in a row, each so pinioned that his neck was forcibly bowed, without the use of a block, Wang lifted his head and uttered a wild and terrified appeal, asking that his petition should be read. The General, who was seated under a pavilion in his official robes, mandarin-hat with slanting plume, military plaque on breast, and top-boots of black satin, looked on him steadily, impassively, a figure of cold justice, and answered nothing. The French and Russian consuls were alone present, having, I suppose, instructions from their principals at Peking to this effect. Wang was at the end of the line. The executioner moved along, lopping off the bowed heads with his heavy sword. When he came to the end Wang was lying prone on the ground, already dead, I hope; for, as they could not raise him, the tired executioner made a sad hash of it.

So much for Wang, then. I don't know what moral I can draw from his bad luck, unless it is that you should never leave a thing half-done. It is very certain that if he had known the 19-line board as well as the 18-line, he would have at once detected the infinitesimal difference made by the addition of one pawn, and have refused to play until the game had been readjusted. I am convinced that the unauthorised move was responsible for his death.

And now I must tell you who made this unauthorised move. On developing my negatives later in the morning, I found two on the revolving film instead of one. The second represented a blurred head, out of focus, and a long-nailed hand extended over the board, holding a black piece. On the thumb of the hand was a scent-ring—a thick cylinder of hardened paste worn by fops. *Ta Yüeh*, the *Chik-fu*, wore such a ring. He had evidently pressed the bulb, believing Ho's

statement that without this precaution something mysterious would happen. Consequently he had photographed himself in the act of cheating. He had been afraid of losing his wager, and had 'assisted' Wang.

As soon as I could obtain an audience of Ho, who was ill-disposed to me now, I showed him the photograph, in order to exonerate myself and Wang's memory. He was interested. 'This is useful,' he said. 'I do not think it will be necessary to part with the Kung board after all.' He made no allusion to Wang whatever. He was not in the habit of remembering dead rebels.

During the afternoon the Chik-fu called, bringing with him the jade board. He was enjoying very delightful anticipations of his bargain, which he disguised by bemoaning the necessity of parting with his jade. It is customary in parting with historic heirlooms to hand the purchaser a document of the nature of a guarantee. Ho gravely laid such a document before Ta, who read it keenly, and expressed himself satisfied, laying it down on the table while he readjusted his spectacles, which he had taken off to read. Ho, in handing him the plaque, adroitly substituted another document for the one Ta had laid down. This document, I afterwards learnt, was identical with the original, with the exception of one word added. This word was 'copy' or 'duplicate,' prefixed to the words, 'the original porcelain board of Kung Fu.' Ta objected that the ebony stand was missing, but Ho quietly maintained that the stand was not mentioned

in the wager. Ta Yüeh therefore lost his precious jade plaque in exchange for a worthless imitation made by Wang. There was no friendship lost between Ho and Ta thereafter.

I myself left Ho's service immediately after the execution. Learning that both he and the Fu had decided to hush up the history of the game, liable to bring them into trouble at Peking, I took upon myself to make the matter public both through my consul and through Chinese sources. It is with great pleasure I have just learnt that both these gentlemen have been degraded. It was with still greater pleasure that, seeing the ex-Chik-fu in the streets of Shanghai some time ago, I jostled against him, and then knocked him down for his confounded impertinence.

Wang's petition, by the way, made no mention of himself at all. He had devoted his last night to pleading for the release of his brothers, exonerating them from all complicity by a masterly memorial. His brothers were released in consequence, and Ho paid the one hundred taels to them instead of to Wang's wife, to compensate them for the damage done to their thumbs. As usual with men disabled from work by torture, these two pitiable rogues are going to the bad, and will doubtless bring themselves under the sword in due course.

Such is the dry history of Wang. It lacks life, as I expected; none the less, I take it to be a fair exhibition of some of the inconveniences of being a Chinaman.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE OUTPUT OF THE MINT.



ANY curious and interesting items may be gathered from the last report of the Deputy-Master of the Mint, and we are able to glean a tangible idea of the wealth of the community when we read that there were melted down for coinage during the past year one hundred and ten tons of gold, four hundred and seventy tons of silver, and sixty-one tons of bronze. Some of this vast quantity of metal was destined for the colonies, but most of it was for home use. The sovereign still maintains its old boast that it represents twenty shillings' worth of gold; but with the silver it is different, one half-crown having an intrinsic worth of little over tenpence. There has of late years been an increased demand for pence; and this is due, curiously enough, to the popularity of the penny-in-the-slot device. The thoughtless loiterers at railway stations who purchase in this way pennyworths of chocolate or butter-scotch have no idea that in doing so they are in a small measure upsetting arrangements at the Mint. But

the principal machine which causes a vast amount of the bronze coinage to be locked up is the popular slot gas-meter, described in the August issue of *Chambers's Journal*. It is the general custom with the humble gas-consumer to buy back the pennies released periodically by the collector, and in this way tons of the bronze coinage are permanently kept out of circulation.

THAMES SALMON.

The improved sanitary condition of the river Thames since drastic measures have been taken with regard to the sewage of the Metropolis has caused fish to appear in some of the lower reaches where they have not been seen for years, and for this reason the hope has been expressed that the noble salmon might once more be made to thrive in London's historic river. It has been decided, at an influential meeting recently held at the Mansion-House, to commence the experiment of restocking the Thames with salmon, and a committee has been appointed to carry out the work. There are numerous fish-hatcheries in the neighbourhood of the Thames; and endeavours will be made to induce the owners of these

nurseries to hatch ova from foreign sources, and to turn the fish into the river when they are ready to go down to the sea. It is hoped that sufficient funds will be subscribed to carry on these interesting experiments for a series of years, and contributions are invited by the Thames Salmon Association, who have an account at the Counties Bank, Piccadilly Branch, London, W.

IRON ORE IN THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES.

The search for coal in the neighbourhood of Dover has resulted in the finding of a considerable bed of valuable oolitic iron ore, which is believed to extend over a very wide area. Analysis of a washed sample of the ore yields between fifty and sixty per cent. of metal, and it is quite free from sulphur or phosphorus. In Kent, Sussex, and Surrey the wealden ironstone was worked a hundred years ago; but this new ore, raised from the Dover coal-shafts, is of much richer quality. The iron industry which once flourished in the southern counties has left its impress on the local names of villages by the addition of the word 'hammer,' indicating the place where a forge was established—Abinger Hammer, for example.

THE CINEMATOGRAPH IN SURGERY.

The animated photographs which for some time have been the delight of thousands of sightseers and holiday-makers in all parts of the civilised world have now appeared in a new and, it would seem, a very useful rôle. A celebrated French surgeon, M. Doyen, has conceived the idea of picturing in this manner the various phases of an operation from the first cut of the knife to the final adjustment of the bandages, each detail of the work being so excellently shown that a mistake could hardly be made by a receptive observer. At a recent demonstration at the University of Kiel, before a select company of doctors and other scientific men, a complete series of these surgical studies were thrown on a screen, and excited great enthusiasm among those present. The only drawback that we can see to this method of demonstration is, that it is only applicable to operations of very short duration, for a cinematograph film of fifty feet in length—the usual size—is complete in less than one minute; while many a surgical operation, and notably those requiring the greatest care and skill, will cover a period of half-an-hour or more.

GOLD IN THE PHILIPPINES.

By many it is thought that the Americans, in acquiring the Philippines, have made a rather poor bargain, and that repentance may come too late. But it is possibly forgotten that these new Eastern possessions of our Transatlantic cousins may possibly develop into an El Dorado. It was the quest of gold that turned the attention of the Spaniards in this direction four hundred years

ago; but the natives were never really conquered, and there are yet many inland districts where no white man has set his foot. The natives themselves have a superstitious objection to disturb the ground, and the gold which they get is washed in the most primitive way from the streams. Much gold from this source, prettily worked by native artificers, is sold in the shops at Manila. Already mining experts have their eyes upon this promising field for prospecting, and we may feel quite sure that when peace is once more restored the auriferous resources of the Philippines will be scientifically assessed.

A NEW PHOTOGRAPHIC FILM.

Many have been the attempts to introduce a substance which shall effectually displace heavy and brittle glass as a support for the photographic negative image; and perhaps the most successful material yet tried is celluloid. This substance, however, deflagrates with great violence when brought into contact with flame, and it is suspected of exerting an injurious action upon the sensitive chemical emulsion with which it is coated. A new film which has recently been introduced from Germany, under the name 'secco,' is said to obviate these difficulties, while at the same time it is as cheap as the glass plates which it supersedes; and negatives taken upon it which have been submitted to us certainly leave nothing to be desired. The basis of the film is paper, which is coated first with india-rubber solution, next with collodion, and finally with gelatine emulsion. It is exposed, developed, and fixed in the ordinary way, and is then brought into contact with gelatine-coated paper. When dry, the paper support on each side is readily stripped off, leaving a finished negative weighing only a few grains per inch, but tough enough to meet all requirements.

FIREPROOF BUILDING CONSTRUCTION.

The London Portland Cement Company are introducing a new fireproof building material which has been in use for some time in Germany with the most successful results. It is called 'scagliol;' and although its exact composition is a secret, it is understood to be a compound of slaked lime, plaster of Paris, and other ingredients, which are subjected to chemical treatment; after which sand, ashes, or similar material is added. The inventors claim that it is fireproof and soundproof; and a number of experiments show that the claim to the first quality is well founded. The most striking of these was the ignition of three hundredweight of wood soaked with paraffin in a room built of 'scagliol,' the temperature speedily rising inside to two thousand degrees, as measured by a pyrometer, while outside the wall, which was only four inches thick, a thermometer showed no inclination to rise at all. Perhaps the most novel feature of 'scagliol' is the way it lends itself to a very simple method of wall or

partition construction where little weight is required to be carried. For this purpose the material is formed into slabs, with a deep groove all round the edges in which are holes at short intervals. The wall is built up with these in horizontal layers, and liquid mortar of special composition is poured into the tubes formed by the junction of the grooves so as to bind the whole construction into one solid erection.

TINNED HORSE-FLESH.

The British consul at Portland, Oregon, is responsible for the information, which is conveyed in his report for 1898, that a large business is being done in pickled horse-meat. Within the past two or three years, he tells us, large numbers of horses have been brought there and slaughtered, the meat being pickled and shipped overland to European ports. Some of it has been tinned by way of experiment; but the exact details of the industry are kept very quiet. There is among most communities a great prejudice against the use of horse-flesh as food, although the animal is a very clean feeder, and in that respect very different from some of the creatures whose flesh is prized as a delicacy. Apart from this prejudice, the flesh of the horse is coarse and stringy, and certainly inferior in quality to beef or mutton. If tinned horse-flesh is labelled as such, no one can complain of the new industry; but if it is fraudulently sold as something else the authorities can, under the provisions of the Merchandise Marks Act, speedily put an end to its importation.

MUSICAL PITCH.

The question is once more being raised in this country of the desirability of a uniform musical pitch. Some years ago the Philharmonic Society in London decided to lower the pitch of its orchestra to that universal on the Continent; and, although there was some confusion at first, the wisdom of that movement is now acknowledged. The great bar to the common adoption of the lower pitch is that its acceptance would render necessary the provision of new instruments by the various military bands throughout the country, and the alteration at great expense of organs both in concert halls and in churches. Pianoforte manufacturers have hitherto held a neutral position in this matter of alteration of pitch; but now, on the initiative of Messrs Broadwood and Sons, they are nearly all expressing their willingness to adopt the lower pitch, provided that the movement is a general one. The exact pitch of a sound can be accurately measured by its number of vibrations per second; thus, the old pitch would mean for the note A a piano-wire giving four hundred and fifty-four vibrations at a temperature of sixty-eight degrees Fahrenheit, while the lower pitch which it is proposed to adopt this autumn would mean only four hundred

and thirty-nine vibrations for the same note. The matter is one of great importance to singers, who have now to strain their voices in order to reach a higher altitude than that intended by the composer whose works they interpret, for those compositions were written when the pitch was even lower than that now to be adopted as the standard.

STILTON CHEESE.

In the making of Cheddar and other cheeses there is no trade secret involved, and the cheese is much the same if made in Cheddar itself or in far-off Canada. But with Stilton it is different, and this, the king of cheeses, is hard to imitate; indeed, it has always been thought that something peculiar in its manufacture gives to it its excellent qualities. In order to elucidate the mysteries connected with it, Mr J. M. Dugdale was recently commissioned by the Royal Agricultural Society to visit the Stilton district of Leicestershire and report upon the manufacture. The result may be found by those interested in the subject in the new quarterly number of the society's *Journal* (vol. x. No. 38). There seems from this report to be no royal road to the making of Stilton cheese, nor is there any great mystery connected with it. Mr Dugdale concludes that it is impossible to lay down any definite or precise rules regarding the manufacture so as to suit every case. It is really a matter of practical experience, each farm having its own method. If a maker knows how to rennet the milk properly, and how to get the right amount of acidity at the time of hooping, he has acquired probably two of the most important details in the process of manufacture of Stilton cheese.

OSTRICH-FARMING.

The rearing of the ostrich as a farming speculation is, perhaps, one of the most curious, as well as most profitable, of modern industries. From Africa, the home of the giant bird, the business has extended to California, where the climate is remarkably well adapted to the enterprise. In 1885 forty-two of the big birds were landed on American soil, and since that time they have increased and multiplied until at the present day they number upwards of two hundred. Mr C. F. Holder contributes to the *Scientific American* an interesting account of this farm in Southern California, from which may be learnt all about the manner of feeding, breeding, and rearing the chicks. The male bird shares with the female the care of the young, each covering the nest for a certain number of hours daily. The chicks are reared artificially, so that the parents may be kept at the business of hatching only; and in six weeks after they leave the shell they are tall and robust birds. The ostriches are reared solely for their feathers, which are taken from the living birds at stated intervals. There is no truth

in the legend that the bird hides its head in the sand on the approach of an enemy. On the contrary, they are both fearless and pugnacious. Neither is it true that they leave their eggs to be hatched by the rays of the sun; as we have already seen, they are most assiduous in their nesting-duties.

INSECTICIDE.

Young entomologists are well acquainted with the 'killing bottle,' which is an ordinary bottle in the bottom of which a little plaster of Paris, associated with a deadly poison (cyanide), is introduced. Any insect put therein immediately succumbs owing to the enclosed atmosphere of hydrocyanic acid. Professor Johnson, the State Entomologist for Maryland, has been applying with success the same principle to trees up to seventeen feet in height, in order to free them from the insects which infest them, without injury to fruit or foliage. In carrying out this fumigation process the tree to be treated is enclosed in a square tent made of a light wooden framework and oiled canvas, and one-fifth of a gramme of potassic cyanide is measured out for each cubic foot of space enclosed—at least that is the quantity of poison which has been found efficacious for a deciduous tree. It is said that any one can use the remedy without danger, a statement which is hardly justified when a most deadly poison is in question.

FURTHER PROGRESS IN WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

The French naval authorities seem to have taken up Marconi's method of conveying messages without the help of wires with the greatest enthusiasm. It has now been demonstrated that a ship moving through the water at various speeds can communicate with a station on land up to a distance of forty-two miles. Experiments have recently been carried on between a ship in the English Channel and two points on the French and English coast respectively. It was shown also that by a recent device either place could be cut out from communication, messages intended for one not being received by the other. In Vienna experiments have been made with balloons, which demonstrate that correspondence can be carried on between a balloon and the earth, or between two balloons. All these experiments go to show that the wireless method of telegraphy may prove most useful under certain circumstances, while for communication between stations where wires are available, the ordinary telegraphic apparatus cannot be approached either with regard to speed or efficiency.

NATURAL GAS.

We have all heard much of the gas which in many places in America issues in great volumes from the ground, and is extensively used both for illumination and for various industrial purposes;

and it may be that many of us have felt envious of this gift from mother-earth. But the phenomenon is by no means unknown in our own country. The discovery of a natural gas was made in East Sussex nearly twenty-five years ago, when a deep artesian well tube was found to yield gas as well as water. A still more important find of gas was made three years ago in the same district in a railway cutting near Heathfield station; and the railway company finding that the supply is of a constant character, and shows no sign of diminution, have decided to light their premises with it. Heathfield station will be the first in this country to be lighted in such a novel way.

MAHOGANY.

This fine old wood has been out of fashion until lately, having been superseded by teak, walnut, maple, and other inferior, if showy, woods. But the tide has turned; and mahogany, from being a drug in the market, is now at a premium, and is being freely used in all directions. Not long ago a single log of African mahogany was sold in Liverpool for the unprecedented amount of four hundred and eight pounds odd. A few years ago African mahogany was scarcely known; but through the enterprise of a Liverpool merchant, its merits have now been established to such an extent that mahogany from many other sources cannot now be imported to successfully compete with it. The great log referred to was bought for the purpose of being cut into veneers, which are now used in the United States to decorate the palatial railway cars of the Pullman Company and also the princely residences of New York millionaires. At home, too, the fashion is spreading, nearly all the up-to-date houses having mahogany doors as well as inner fittings. Some of the finest doors of this beautiful wood are those in the Naval and Military Club, which is situated in Piccadilly, and was originally Cambridge House, the residence of the present Duke of Cambridge's father. There are also some handsome doors and a beautiful mahogany staircase at No. 2 Grosvenor Square; and, indeed, the entrances along most of the fashionable thoroughfares are made of this wood. In Edinburgh, too, especially in Moray Place and Abercromby Place, there are some superb specimens of mahogany doors and pillars; and it seems probable that the ancient reign of this royal wood will be re-established and become more absolute than ever. Teak is hard and cold beside mahogany, besides being needlessly heavy. Walnut is a more fanciful wood, but lacks the richness of its older competitor; while maple is well enough in a bar or a ship's cabin, but not in a palace or a mansion, or even a club. There is a warmth in mahogany which is wholly lacking in most other woods, even so-called 'red' woods; there is a softness, too, which is never quite

destroyed even by the highest polish; and, along with these elegant qualities, there is a substantiality which even oak cannot display when used in the form of furniture and fittings. The time is probably a long way off when mahogany will cease to be associated with hospitality, and when the diner-out will be wholly comfortable with his legs under any other description of wood whatever!

ICE-BREAKERS.

Sir W. G. Armstrong (Armstrong-Whitworth Co.) writes to us correcting one statement in the article which appeared in this *Journal* for July on the new Russian ice-breaker, the *Ermak*, built by that firm. It was there stated that the scheme for conveying trains across Lake Baikal in Siberia by means of a ferry steamer had been abandoned in favour of a railway round the southern end of the lake. This, it appears, is not the case, as the steamer has been reconstructed on the shores of Lake Baikal, and was successfully launched on 29th June. Some further information as to ice-breakers was contained in a paper read by Mr H. F. Swan to the Institute of Naval Architects. The employment of ice-breakers, he said, was destined to become a very important factor in connection with steam navigation generally, and many ports which formerly were partially and even entirely closed during the whole of the winter would become available for commerce all the year round. He gave particulars of two vessels built last year which had been at work during the winter with eminent success. These were the *Sampo*, of two thousand tons displacement and three hundred horse-power, built for the Finnish Government, and the *Ermak*, of eight thousand tons displacement and ten thousand horse-power, built for the Russian Government. Ice-breakers were three times as powerful as any vessel previously built. The vessels were extremely strongly constructed, and subdivided into forty-eight compartments, whose water-tightness has been tested in the most efficient manner. Repeated trials had shown that with the *Ermak* and *Sampo* a pack of ice of practically any thickness could be negotiated. Experience with the *Ermak* showed that she had broken compressed ice eight feet three inches thick, and that she had gone through a field of ice of about forty inches with six inches of snow upon it at a speed of three knots. Moreover, she had been driven at a speed of ten knots through clear ice of twenty-four inches, while ice eighteen inches thick had little effect upon her. Immediately on her arrival in Russia word was sent from a northern port that a number of steamers were in great jeopardy. She at once proceeded there, and was the means of liberating thirty-three steamers of the aggregate value of a million and a half sterling. She subsequently returned to Cronstadt and St Petersburg, and was instrumental in relieving and facilitating the entry of forty steamers

several weeks earlier than if they had waited for the ordinary opening of navigation. These performances were a very clear proof of the commercial value of the vessel. A very important application of ice-breaking steamers was shown in their ability to form connecting-links with railway systems in crossing large stretches of water which it would be impossible or too costly to bridge.

Admiral Makaroff, of the Imperial Russian Navy, said the problem to be solved in building an ice-breaker for the required purpose was a difficult one, but English shipbuilders had proved that the difficulties could be overcome. He described the work the *Ermak* had accomplished while he was in charge of her, and said she had already been tried in the Arctic seas. It was intended in a little while to make further experiments in the Polar seas to see really how near a vessel of that description could get to the North Pole.

SEPTEMBER.

THERE, in the soft September sun,
The sleeping heather lay;
So sweet the silence, I—for one—
Wished all the world away.

My mood was neither gay nor sad,
But simply glad to be:
Contented, prizing what I had;
For once, forgetting thee!

The air, with soft, divine effect,
Breathed all my cares away;
The passion where my heart lay wrecked
Was a dream of yesterday!

And though I loved thee, dear, so well—
Ah! though I love thee yet!
My heart—how strange it seems to tell!—
Holds but a calm regret.

Thank God for Nature's wider scope:
She takes the fevered heart,
And tutors it to quiet hope,
From men and things apart.

She bids it watch her patient growth,
Her peace, her large content;
And learn the lesson, nothing loth,
So exquisitely sent.

ADA BARTRICK BAKER.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
- 4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

T O R P E D O - B O A T 240.

A TALE OF THE NAVAL MANŒUVRES.

By G. A. HENTY.

CHAPTER I.

QUEENSTOWN HARBOUR was looking its best on a bright day in the early autumn of 188-. Eight great ironclads were lying anchored in two lines. Inside these lines were half-a-dozen lighter and prettier ships-of-war, the cruisers, more or less fast, of the fleet, and still retaining the outward form of ships, which was more than could be said for the formidable monsters lying outside them. A number of screw colliers added to the life, though hardly to the beauty, of the scene; while moving to and fro among the larger craft were excursion steamers from Cork. A whole fleet of white-winged yachts, steam-launches belonging to the various ships-of-war, and white row-boats with from four to twenty oarsmen, swept along through the water. Now and then a torpedo-boat, carrying a great white wave at her bow, came rushing in from seaward, or steamed out again as if on a life or death mission. Four or five of these craft were moored side by side a short distance astern of the ironclads. Nearer inshore lay a great American liner which had come in half-an-hour before, and was now discharging her mails into a tender, while her passengers clustered along the rails surveying the naval spectacle with lively interest. A group, consisting of a gentleman and two ladies, were standing talking together on the upper deck.

'And you are quite sure you can get us the tickets for the ball, Mr Macnamara?'

'Quite certain, Miss Aspern. I knew from your father's letter that you were coming by the *Alaska*; and, as she was due here this morning, I applied at once to the committee for tickets for you, making sure that you would like to land here; so that, in fact, I have the tickets. But do not let that influence you, as the demand is unlimited, and I have already

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promised them should you not care about using them.'

'Then I think that settles it,' the young lady said in a clear, decided voice. 'Don't you think so, mamma?'

Mrs Aspern was no exception to the American rule that the chief end of women is to minister to the wishes and caprices of their daughters from the time that these are out of long clothes to that of marriage, and at once replied, 'Well, if you think so, Clemence; but is there time now?'

'Oh yes, plenty of time. It is fortunate now that we decided in the first place to land here, as our baggage is with the rest of the things for Queenstown. The captain said this morning that he would have it picked out, as we had changed our mind, and meant to go on to Liverpool; but I will go and tell him that our things may go on shore with the rest. Will you go at once, mamma, and tell Harriet to pack the things in the cabin? Tell her she must hurry up, for we shall have to go ashore in half-an-hour.'

'I have got my own steam-launch alongside, Miss Aspern, so you will have until the last possible moment. I think we may count upon an hour yet.'

'Thank you, Mr Macnamara; we can fix things up nicely by that time.'

Mr Macnamara was one of the principal merchants in Cork, and was correspondent and agent for Mr Aspern, a Cincinnati millionaire, whose fortune rested on the solid foundation of pork. Miss Aspern did not care about pork, but was fond of Europe, and made very frequent visits across the Atlantic, sometimes under the chaperonage of her mother, but more often under that of various friends of her father who felt it a distinction to have the wealthy heiress of Thomas Aspern under their charge.

The present was to be a short run, principally.

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SEPT. 2, 1899.

pally a shopping expedition to Paris; a dozen new dresses from Worth being declared by Miss Aspern to be a positive necessity for the approaching season at New York. As soon as her mother had arranged for her trunks to go ashore with the rest of the Queenstown luggage, she ran below and gave such effectual aid in packing the cabin boxes that in half-an-hour she was again on deck.

'I told you half-an-hour, Mr Macnamara,' she said, 'and everything is fixed up and ready to go ashore.'

'Then the sooner we go the better, Miss Aspern; because I imagine that your trunks will have been labelled on to Liverpool, and we shall want to see them relabelled for Cork. Can I be of any assistance in getting the things up?'

'No, thank you; the steward was bringing them up as I came along. Here comes mamma. Mr Macnamara wants to be off, mamma, so we had better say good-bye at once to the people we know.'

Another five minutes and the party were on board the steam-launch and making for shore.

'I hope you will bring us down here to-morrow again,' Miss Aspern said to him. 'I want to look at those ugly ships close at hand. I suppose they will let us go over some of them?'

'With pleasure, Miss Aspern. It is a sight worth seeing; and though we know—and he smiled—that in most things you are ahead of us, this is one of the things you can't see on your side of the water.'

'No,' the girl said carelessly; 'we haven't turned our attention that way. When we do, I reckon it will be about time for you to take a back seat. I met some of your officers last year at Montreal. I was staying there with a schoolfellow who has married a Canadian, and they were there at the time; they belonged to some ships at Halifax, and had got three weeks' leave. They were quite nice fellows, with no starch about them.'

'Perhaps you may meet some of them to-night, Miss Aspern. Of course the ball is given to the fleet, and most of the officers who are not on duty will be there.'

'Well, I call that downright pretty,' Miss Aspern said later on, as she entered the ballroom. 'That is what we want at home, mamma; we have nothing but black coats. They ought to keep some troops in New York, and dress them up in scarlet like that. It is real good, isn't it? We know what balls are at New York, Mr Macnamara; and I have been to them in London too; and I was at the President's reception in Paris, and there were plenty of uniforms there; but this mixture of blue and scarlet takes the cake altogether.'

'Now, Miss Aspern, shall I find you some partners?'

'Not yet,' the girl said. 'I get plenty of dancing. I should like to look on for a bit.'

The room was indeed full of men in uniform; and although the blue coat of the navy predominated, all the officers of the garrison were present, besides many others who had come down from Dublin and the Curragh. Mr Macnamara was therefore kept busy for some time explaining to Miss Aspern the uniforms of the various branches of the service.

'There,' she exclaimed suddenly—'there is a face I know—that naval officer, Mr Macnamara. He was one of those I met at Montreal; he is a Mr Winter. Please, fetch him to me. Only say a lady wishes to speak to him.'

Lieutenant Winter had no acquaintances in Cork, and his face expressed some little surprise as he was brought across the room. However, the moment he saw Miss Aspern he recognised her.

'Well, Miss Aspern, this is an unexpected pleasure. Who would have thought of seeing you here?'

'Why not? I told you that I was often in England, and that we were sure to run against each other.'

'I remember you said so; but my faith was not strong. I am, of course, most of my time away from England; and when at home I am not to be found in any of the gilded halls of fashion, which you frequent. But when did you come?'

'Only this morning. I arrived in the *Alaska*.'

'You have certainly lost no time, then, Miss Aspern. I saw her in the harbour unloading her mails, but had no notion that you were on board. Well, may I have the pleasure of a dance? After that I shall be delighted to introduce any number of partners to you.'

'We will talk a little first,' the girl said; 'when one once begins to dance there is an end of that. Which of those ships are you in? Mr Macnamara, with whom mamma and I are staying, is going to take us to see them to-morrow, and I shall expect you to do the honours and to explain to me why they are so ugly.'

'I shall be delighted to do the honours, Miss Aspern; but, as far as my own ship goes, one might as well invite a lady to a tea-party in a dolls' house. I command one of the torpedo-boats.'

'Oh yes. I saw them rushing in and out of the harbour. They look wicked, those boats do; but it must be delightful to sit on deck and feel them flying along.'

'Yes,' Winter said doubtfully, 'that is certainly pleasant; and I can assure you it wants something pleasant to make up for the drawbacks of existence upon them. If you can fancy yourself living in a dog's kennel, rolled and shaken, thrown up and bumped down, with a perpetual hum and vibration in your ears, you would quickly wish yourself on shore again. The motion is so tremendous that it upsets even old sailors, and

it is necessary to be always on the watch and to keep tight hold of something, or you are likely to be jerked across the cabin when below, and break an arm or a couple of ribs, or be sent overboard if you are on deck. But, such as it is, I shall be delighted to show you the craft, and afterwards to take you over some of the battle-ships.'

Then the conversation turned to Montreal, the mutual friends there, and the occasion upon which they had met; and three or four dances went by before they stood up. Then, after putting down his name for two dances, with her permission the young lieutenant brought up several of his friends, and her card was very soon filled up.

'I have several friends whom I want to introduce to you, Miss Aspern,' Mr Macnamara said, coming up to her afterwards.

'Too late, Mr Macnamara; my card is quite full. I suppose I ought to say that I am sorry, but I am not. I can dance with Irishmen any time I am out in the States, but these young sailors, in the glory of their uniform, are delightful. I don't mean Mr Winter, of course, because I have seen him before, and we are old friends, but the others. Your people are generally stiff, at any rate until the ice is broken; and then, you know, in London the young men I am introduced to all know that dad is rolling in money, and they regard me as an American heiress, and it is unpleasant altogether. Well, I mean to enjoy myself to-night.'

Miss Aspern did enjoy herself, and on her drive back to Mr Macnamara's declared that it was the most pleasant evening she had ever spent; while Winter's friends agreed that the American girl was first-rate fun, with no nonsense about her though she was got up so, and was pretty enough to give herself airs if she had liked. Winter had not thought it necessary to confide to them that she was a very wealthy heiress, for he thought that she would herself prefer that nothing should be said about it. It had been settled that Miss Aspern, with her mother, to whom she had introduced Winter, and Mr Macnamara, should come down to lunch on board Torpedo-boat 240. They were to come off in Mr Macnamara's steam-launch, for Winter could not be sure that he should be able to send the torpedo boat's dingy, and had warned Miss Aspern that it was more than possible that the craft would not be found when she came down.

'They keep us running about, you see. Up goes the signal, "Four torpedo-boats will go out and search the coast for suspicious craft," and it would never do for me to hoist the signal in return, "I am expecting two ladies to lunch, and can't go." So, if I am away, please visit the ironclads first; they are all open for inspection. By the time that you have done them I hope I

may be back. You may be sure that I shall not waste more time than I can help over the run, especially as we know perfectly well that there is nothing to be found, for hostilities do not commence for another ten days.'

Fortunately the exigencies of the service did not require the departure of No. 240 before the arrival of the party from Cork.

'Well, this is a tiny little thing, Mr Winter,' Miss Aspern exclaimed when she stepped on board. And, indeed, after the great ship that she had left the day before, the torpedo-boat looked insignificant. 'And to think that she is really meant for fighting, and that she could destroy one of those ugly monsters over there.'

'Yes, if she could get close to her, and if the ugly monster did not send her to the bottom long before she got near enough to let off one of her torpedoes. Now, with your permission, we will begin by having lunch, because we are under orders to go for a cruise at half-past two.'

'Cannot you take us with you, Mr Winter?' Miss Aspern asked.

'Yes, if you would like to go; but if so I think you had better keep below until we are fairly off. I don't think the Admiral would approve of seeing lady passengers sitting on deck when we are starting on what I suppose he considers service. Once fairly away, of course, you could come up, and then you could see the working of the engines. I would have asked two or three of my friends to meet you, Miss Aspern; but four is the extreme number that can pack into my cabin.

'By the way, before we go down, Mr Macnamara, will you order your launch to sheer off? If she remains alongside, the Admiral might suspect that we had passengers on board.'

The launch was ordered to steam in to the shore, and not to come out again until they saw the torpedo-boat return from her trip.

'Now for the cabin, Mrs Aspern; please be very careful how you go down. Will you and Miss Aspern go down first and seat yourselves at the farther end of the table? That will leave room for us to shift into our places.'

'Well, this is the tiniest place I ever took a meal in, Mr Winter. Why, even the cat-boats and the smallest yachts in the bay have better accommodation than your Government gives you.'

'It is quite large enough for one, I can assure you; the smaller the better when she is lively. I told you you would have to make up your mind to rough it if you came on board.'

'Oh, I don't call this roughing it,' she said, 'and you won't get any pity from me except on the score of want of room.'

The young lieutenant had exerted himself to do justice to the occasion; he had slept in Cork, and had there obtained all the materials for a dainty little lunch, with an abundance of choice flowers to beautify the little cabin. So much

did the party enjoy the meal that they were surprised when their host, looking at his watch, begged them to excuse him, as it was time to see about getting under way; and in a minute or two sounds were heard overhead, then there was a clanking of the chains, followed by a slight vibration, becoming more and more rapid until everything on the table quivered and shook. Five minutes later the lieutenant descended into the cabin.

'Now I can let you out of prison, Mrs Aspern; we are nearly a mile from the flag-ship already, and you can safely come up.'

Camp-stools were arranged on deck, and on these they seated themselves.

'This is splendid,' Miss Aspern exclaimed. 'How we do fly along!'

'We are not going much faster than you travelled across the Atlantic, Miss Aspern; but from your being so much nearer to the surface of the water the speed no doubt appears very much greater.'

'We seem to be going double as fast,' the girl said. 'Are you racing the other boats?'

'No. We are going full speed; that is all. We separate directly. We are to keep along the coast, one of the others goes east, and the other two out to sea, separating as they go; so, between us, we shall search a radius of thirty miles or so. I am glad we have the western station, for the coast is very fine in that direction. When you are disposed for a change you shall inspect the craft—that is, as far as you can inspect it, for you must content yourself with looking down the scuttle into the men's quarters, as you could not possibly get down there; while as to the engine-room, I should advise you to go no farther than the foot of the ladder, for there is not an inch of room to move about, and the heat is prodigious. Forward of that is the torpedo-room. On deck here you see we have machine-guns; they are intended, of course, for action against another torpedo or ship's boats. It would be a mere waste

of time to fire them at big craft, and, indeed, all hands would be below except those required to discharge the torpedoes; for, of course, we should be exposed to a heavy musketry and machine-gun fire.'

Mrs Aspern and Mr Macnamara both declared their preference for sitting quietly on deck; but Miss Aspern investigated all the arrangements of the little craft.

'It is wonderful, mamma,' she said when she returned to her seat; 'everything has got its place, and if it hadn't there would be no moving at all. The engine is the 'cutest little thing you ever saw, and it goes so fast you can hardly see it; and everything is so bright and clean that you would think the men had no time for anything but rubbing and polishing. When I get back I have quite made up my mind that I shall get dad to have a boat just like this built for me. I mean as to the ship and engines; of course I should have a great deal larger cabin than Mr Winter has, because then there would be no torpedo-room or ammunition-room, or anything of that sort. There would be plenty of room forward for the men and the cooking-place and all that sort of thing, and aft there will be a large cabin where there would be room for ten or twelve to sit down to lunch, and a little private cabin for me. It would do splendid for the Hudson and for the Sound, and for going out and seeing the yacht races.'

The trip over, the ironclads were visited, and their size, cleanliness, and order greatly admired.

'We shall be coming back in about a fortnight, Mr Winter,' Miss Aspern said as she stepped into the launch to go ashore. 'I do hope that we shall find you here; but if not, mind I have your promise that you will come down and see us if you are stationed on our side of the water; and anyhow, mamma will write to the address you have given us, and let you know where you can find us next time we come to England.'

(To be continued.)

THE HOME OF INDIA-RUBBER.

ACROSS THE HEAD-WATERS OF THE AMAZON.

By A MAN ON THE SPOT.



AMONG the consequences of the enormous increase in the use of india-rubber, which from being a little-known commodity has become one of the necessities of modern civilisation, has been the rapid exploration and development of the forest-covered regions drained by the Amazon and its affluents. From these tropical latitudes, where, during the driest season, brimming rivers skirt endless leagues of gum-forest, and where during the summer months the water enters everywhere,

and makes of thousands of square miles of tropical verdure lakes in which one may easily be lost and perish of want and fever, the india-rubber of the world is brought. From these surroundings of danger, of pestilence, of famine, great fortunes have been, and are being, gained.

The constant pressure of demand upon supply, besides doubling the price of the product, has driven the rubber-seekers farther and farther into the interior, and has resulted in all the forest readily accessible to the navigable streams being taken up under some form of concession

from the government exercising jurisdiction in the locality, or by the simple process of taking possession under the title conferred by the power of a repeating rifle. The working of these properties involves a life of great hardship for all those concerned. The workers are actually, though not nominally, slaves. They are usually brought under contract from the better-populated and healthier districts, receiving an advance of from £10 to £30 each, or from six months' to a year's wages; and, from the moment this advance is made to the end of a life which will be wretchedly short and full of misery, these unfortunate men can never hope to pay what they owe, and remain permanently in debt to their employers.

Having been transported by canoe or *batalon* to some far interior point, the rubber-gatherer is put down in the steaming forest, inundated during some months of each year, where his rations will be a little rice, dried meat, salt (a very little of the latter, which is often worth from one shilling and sixpence to two shillings a pound), coffee, sugar, and *cañasa* (the vilest form of liquor, made from the sugar-cane), and the products of the soil, such as bananas, &c., that he can grow or finds planted there by his predecessors. The item of liquor, although last on the list, is the most important. This class does not include any teetotalers and very few moderate drinkers among its members; drink, cards, and the lowest forms of vice are the only recreations of the rubber-gatherer's life, which in the case of an ordinary man may extend to five years, or with an exceptionally strong constitution to seven or even ten. In the early morning the gatherer swallows his cup of black coffee and his 'trags' of liquor, takes with him a number of earthenware or tin gill cups, a piece of clay, and a small hatchet, and starts out to visit the rubber-trees, which will number from one hundred to one hundred and fifty, in his *estrada* or section. He has previously cut through the forest a narrow path, and built himself a furnace for the treatment of the milk which he will collect. At the first tree he makes three V-shaped incisions with his hatchet as high as he can reach, and at equal distances around the tree, which to-morrow he will repeat a little lower down, until at the end of the season he will have reached the ground. From these incisions the milk immediately begins to flow, and he places beneath each one of his cups, making it adhere to the tree with the clay which he carries. This is his work until he has tapped all his trees; and by this time he will have worked back to his hut, and is ready for a breakfast of a little dried meat, mandioca flour, and liquor, of which the two former are probably covered with green-mould or are half-rotten from the steaming damp of the swamp in which he lives. He has now to collect his cups, which should be

nearly full of the milk which is the first stage of india-rubber, and to coagulate it in his furnace. This is constructed of mud, with an opening above, over which is hung a paddle with a broad blade smeared with clay. This blade is covered with the milk, and the furnace fed with a special palm wood, called in the upper districts the *motacu*, and lower down the *urucury*. The dense black smoke which envelops the paddle coagulates the milk, which is kept constantly renewed until the resultant mass weighs from ten to twenty pounds. It is now stripped from the blade like a glove from the hand, and we have the crude rubber of commerce, which, if carefully gathered and smoked, is of the finest class.

In addition to the privations and hardships incidental to a life so isolated, these men are compelled to work for several hours each day in a swamp in which they may sink from their ankles to over their knees, they must constantly pass rivers swarming with alligators, are exposed to agues, fevers, and that terrible disease known as *espundia*, surrounded by poisonous snakes and insects, pestered by clouds of mosquitoes, cut off from all healthy recreation, and, finally, die, often alone, in some miserable hut or in the deep recesses of the forest, where their very bodies will be abandoned to the tiger and the alligator.

As we penetrate farther into the continent we begin to leave behind us the immense steaming plain of the Amazon, and find districts on the great upper plains watered by the tributaries of that enormous river—themselves waterways of great size—where the inundations are slight or altogether cease, and where we no longer have the miasmatic air nor the fetid smell of rotting vegetation; but in proportion as the country becomes more habitable and healthier the india-rubber becomes scarcer and of a lower quality. For the rubber-tree needs for its greatest perfection those conditions which are most detrimental to human existence—intense heat and abundant moisture. In those upper plains the climate is entirely healthy; the thermometer ranges from 40° to 98°; the country is suitable to Europeans, is rich in all natural products, and has immediately behind it a sanatorium readily accessible—the eastern range of the Andes, thirteen thousand feet high. We find the regions not subject to inundations commencing at an altitude of about fifteen hundred feet, mostly covered with a forest of moderate size, and producing sugar, coffee, vanilla, mandioca, rice, maize, bananas, and other fruits; and here cattle-breeding on a large scale is being gradually introduced. The expense of rearing cattle is confined to paying a few men, usually Indians, who periodically round them up and slaughter the required number, 'jerking' the flesh in the sun, melting the fat and packing it into *gurrões*, to be sent to light the mines of the coast ranges, and drying the hides to be hereafter shipped to the coast.

The value of these products ranges from eight to twenty shillings per head of cattle, but the cost of production is almost nothing. Were capital to be introduced into these regions, the hides could be made into leather, the grease into candles, and uses found for the other products upon the spot; but as yet the country is entirely undeveloped, and will probably remain so while fortunes are to be made in rubber, even at the expense of life and health. From the valleys, which bring down the melted snows of the Andes to form the rivers, and finally to swell the great Amazon, comes the finest coffee in the world; almost every stream contains gold in its bed; and the vanilla, which grows here wild and is very easily cultivated, commands a ready sale at very high prices.

The india-rubber in these upper districts has never yet been worked, although now the price has risen so greatly as to make it probable that even this, which is of second quality and not abundant, would give good results. The communications are naturally very defective. Canoes hollowed out of a single tree and boats built on the banks navigate nearly all the known rivers; and there is also a little fleet of steamers which ply between the rapids of the lower rivers and the headwaters of navigation; while below the rapids steamers owned by English and other European companies make regular trips to the Atlantic. The western outlet is by crossing the eastern Cordilleras by mule-paths, badly made and very indifferently kept up. But a journey from the rubber districts to the Pacific is one of great interest and by routes very little known. From the principal interior towns to the head of navigation you travel by a steam-launch, probably built in Glasgow or Blackwall, and put together on the upper side of the rapids. As you gradually move westward the river becomes narrower and shallower, until at last you reach, after a voyage of two or three weeks, the highest point of navigation.

If it is clear weather you will now see far away in front of you, perhaps a hundred or a hundred and twenty miles off, the summits of the Cordilleras, probably capped with snow. Here you will exchange water for land, and in the little port which marks the end of the road you will begin to perceive that, though as yet on the Atlantic side of the mountains, you are now nearing the Pacific side of the continent. Rubber is no longer the only subject of conversation; the talk will be of coffee, sugar, hides, distilling, and of imports from the coast; and, after perhaps some months or years, you will again hear the tang-tang of the mules as the old bell-mare is led in with a long string of mules behind her laden with cargo. Your friend the steam-launch is soon loaded with this and similar cargo, gives a farewell whistle, and in a few moments has turned the corner, and has broken the only tie between you and the Atlantic. If you have

spent some years in the *gomzales* you will find the ride out a trying one. You have to climb thirteen thousand feet, and the road is not a turnpike. Sometimes you will need both your hands to thrust aside the branches, and, having forgotten to keep your toes well turned in, will catch your feet in a root, with much straining on the part of the mule and much agony on yours as the result. Or in some of the deep ditches into which the road is sometimes worn you will forget to raise your feet, and the mule will drag you along forcibly, scraping the banks on both sides, entirely unable to understand why you should want to stop. At first at night you will camp in the dry bed of some backwater of the river, where you may hear great *antas* crashing through the tall reeds on their way to drink, or the deep murmur, hardly to be called a growl, of the jaguar; then in the early morning a dip in the river, which is already becoming more of a torrent; after that a bowl of *lagua*, a mess composed of maize meal, dried meat, fat, salt, and water, flavoured with the universal *aji*, or red pepper—and so to march.

The farther you advance westward the forest becomes less luxuriant and the animals less formidable. On your river journey you will have seen the *marimono* monkey, a great black beast standing four feet and more high; then, later on, the *trapiche*, a smaller red monkey, uttering a peculiarly harsh cry, supposed to resemble the sound from a badly-oiled *trapiche*, or cane-crushing machine; then the ordinary *mons*, scant of hair and hideously ugly, the night-monkey, who sleeps all day and amuses himself and keeps his neighbours awake all night by a particularly doleful whistling; and, last, the 'ladies' monkey,' a little fellow, hardly larger than your hand, and very readily tamed. As the days pass and you have mounted some thousands of feet, the country seems to unroll itself behind you, and you begin to get some of the most wonderful views in the world; and if it is the winter-time you will begin to wish that you had several thick suits of clothes with you, that you might put them all on at once. At last, after a final climb of four or five thousand feet, which you find you are expected to do in five hours, you will leave behind you the forest, which has been your companion so long, and emerge upon the grassy sides of the eastern Cordilleras. And now, when the top is gained, let us hope that the day is clear and not too cold; for, looking back, you will see all the way you have so laboriously come, and in the far, far distance the dark level line of forest which marks the great plain in which you said farewell to the little steamer; while between you and it are numberless spurs, gorges, valleys, mountain torrents, and endless leagues of dark-green forest, forming a wonderful contrast to the scene before you. For there, looking westward, you see a

country of great altitude, wrinkled with hills, barren, treeless, waterless, covered with coarse grass, dreary and uninviting. The forest has ended some thousand feet below you, and is replaced here by the poorest of herbage, watered by the scantiest of rains. And when you pursue your journey, from that farthest peak upon the

western horizon you will see the same parched, waterless country, only now with less of herbage, gradually changing into a frightful desert, scorching hot during the day and bitterly cold at night, until at length the waters of the Pacific end the vista, and give you an opportunity to renew your acquaintance with steamers and civilisation.

THE MASTER AND THE BEES.

By ISABEL MAUDE HAMILL, Author of *A Bit of Blue China*, *The Golden Shoes*, &c.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.



IT was an old-fashioned, high-walled garden, in which grew all sorts of sweet-smelling, old-fashioned flowers—mignonette, stocks, and lad's-love predominating. At the far end were several beehives, whose inhabitants had chosen the most inconvenient time of the whole day—11.30 A.M.—for their owner to swarm. They heeded nothing that he was a schoolmaster, and that at the very moment in which they were hanging in thick brown clusters on the branch of a neighbouring tree he was deep in the mysteries of *Cæsar's Gallic War*, surrounded by a group of lads whose eyes, sad to say, looked with more longing through the open windows at the gaily-coloured butterflies flitting hither and thither than at the Latin books before them.

Suddenly the master looked out eagerly, his quick ear having caught the faint sound of buzzing in the air. He strained his eyes in the direction from which it came, and saw a large, dark mass moving slowly away over the garden-wall.

Now, bees were one of his two hobbies; the other was butterflies; and to lose a swarm was more than he could contemplate with equanimity. But what could he do? If it were said in the little town that the Grammar School master neglected the boys to look after his bees it might get to the governors' ears—and then!

What a dilemma to be placed in! For a moment he hesitated; then he decided that the bees must go, and with an inward groan, which perhaps accounted for the outward sharpness of his manner when he next spoke, he turned his eyes from the bees to books and boys.

'Such beauties, too!' he murmured.

'Yes, sir. I didn't quite catch what you said,' remarked a bright-eyed lad, the wag of the class.

'I did not speak. Go on with your work, Robertson; you are always looking about and listening when your eyes should be on your book.'

'Beg pardon, sir; but I really thought you spoke. And—I thought I heard the bees;' and Robertson winked at the next boy as he made this remark.

'You attend to your lessons, sir, and never

mind the bees,' replied the poor man, irritated to think that this sharp youngster dare make a joke at his expense.

Lessons were over; and, as the clock struck twelve, the boys rushed out of the schoolroom into the field attached to the head-master's house, which was used as a playground, and there let off their superabundant steam.

Edward Martyn rose, locked his desk as soon as the last boy had disappeared, and, putting on a straw hat, walked slowly towards the hives.

He was a tall, thin man, with the slight stoop which often betokens the student; and his feet and hands, though not large, had the appearance of being loosely jointed. His hair inclined to red, and his somewhat straggling beard partook of the same hue; but his face was that of a scholar and a thinker. He was, as are many intellectual, thoughtful men, retiring and shy, and a bachelor. He had been master of Burycum-Thorpe Grammar School upwards of four years, and during that time had gone very little into society; while the young ladies rather made fun of him and his hobbies—in fact, behind his back, they were so rude as to call him 'The Insect Man.'

The few who had taken the trouble to know Edward Martyn appreciated him greatly. He had a fund of information concerning the animal world which made him a delightful companion on an excursion; and many a happy ramble he and one or two kindred spirits indulged in on a holiday afternoon.

His housekeeper, a woman of fifty, had come with him to Bury, and woe be to any boy whom she heard making fun of their master, or indulging in jokes at his expense, as, alas! is the habit of schoolboys. Mrs Peggy Partington was the sort of person of whom people stood rather in awe. Shrewd in her dealings and sharp in manner, the tradesman who attempted to overcharge her came in for a lecture on his moral obliquities that made him wish heartily he had never tried to extract the twopence or threepence out of her; had the money expended been her own she could not have laid it out to better advantage. She thought there was no one in the

world like her master, and she had good reason for thinking so.

When under-master in another town he had lodged with her; she had then been a widow for upwards of seven years, and had found it a hard struggle to make ends meet. Her only daughter inherited the father's complaint—consumption; and when Edward Martyn first went to them he found things at a very low ebb. He it was who procured delicacies to tempt the invalid's appetite, who paid for her out of his slender allowance to go to a convalescent home, and who, when the end came, took the burden and responsibility of the funeral arrangements. Well might the mother think that there never could be another as good and kind as he; and when he asked her if she would like to give up her house and go to Bury-cum-Thorpe with him as his housekeeper, she wept tears of joy; the prospect seemed as a glimpse of the heavenly country.

Many would have been surprised had they heard the jokes that passed between the reserved, quiet head-master and his housekeeper; for Peggy's quaint speeches were a source of never-ending amusement to him.

As Edward Martyn stood contemplating the partially deserted hives, and pulling his beard abstractedly, he heard voices on the other side of the wall, and caught the sound of his own name uttered in a young—he was sure it was young—happy voice.

'Indeed,' it said, 'I never spoke to Mr Martyn in my life; and if he is poky, as you call him, he's far cleverer than any one in the town; and it's better to be clever and shy than showy and have nothing in you; and I'—

The voice died away in the distance; but the head-master of Bury-cum-Thorpe Grammar School stood as in a dream: bees, hives, swarms all forgotten; only the voice of a girl pleading his cause remembered. Who was she? Where did she live? What was she like? These questions passed rapidly through his mind, and for the first time he wished that the garden-wall had been low enough to see over.

'So they think I'm poky—do they! But *she* said I was clever; and—yes, I fear I am shy and awkward;' and he heaved a sigh.

The sound of the dinner-gong recalled him to himself, and he hastened down the garden to his lonely meal.

During the evening, whilst busy correcting exercises, a note came for him, as follows:

'STYCAMORE COTTAGE, CHESTNUT LANE,
'BURY-CUM-THORPE.

'DEAR SIR,—A swarm of bees has taken possession of our pear-tree; and my father, knowing that you keep them, wonders if you have lost any. If so, will you be good enough to come and take them, as we are not adepts at "bee-handling"?—Yours truly,

'DOROTHY ADLINGTON.'

He jumped up, exclaiming, 'My swarm! No doubt about it.' And, taking with him his head-net and face-cover, a hive, and one or two other necessary articles for capturing bees, he set off.

He knew Mr Adlington slightly, having met him on committees, and had always regarded him as one of the most intellectual and cultured men of the town. He had retired from business—that of an engineer—some years ago, on account of failing eyesight, and now lived on a modest little income, devoting himself to literary and scientific pursuits. His wife had died soon after the birth of their only child, and he had never married again. It would have been difficult to find a more devoted couple than him and his daughter Dorothy, whom he had imbued with a like enthusiasm for knowledge as himself.

The cottage in which they lived was a long, low, white one, covered with honeysuckle and jasmine; and the rambling old garden contained a wealth of roses which would have delighted the heart of an exhibitor. Two large sycamore-trees stood well back, affording a cool shelter on the hottest day.

As Mr Martyn drew near the house he began to wish he had secured his bees and was safely away. Just as his hand was on the door-bell he heard a voice exclaim triumphantly:

'They *are* Mr Martyn's, father; here he is!' and a vision of white-and-blue appeared from a hidden seat in the garden, followed by Mr Adlington.

'Good-evening, Mr Martyn. Allow me to introduce my daughter Dorothy to you.'

The head-master bowed confusedly to the girl, who extended her hand in a pretty, frank fashion. He would have given much then not to have felt shy or awkward.

'Then the bees are yours, Mr Martyn?'

'I hope so. I lost a beautiful swarm this morning between eleven and twelve.'

'Just when you were fast in school with those tiresome boys,' said Dorothy, laughingly. 'How vexed you must have been!'

'I own candidly my temper was not of the sweetest as I watched them flying over my garden wall,' he answered, smiling too; 'but I am in luck's way if I get them after all.'

'What fun to see them taken!'

'It depends upon their behaviour whether it is fun, my dear,' said her father.

A low buzzing sound and a few stray bees reminded them that they were nearing the proximity of the swarm; and Mr Martyn's long experience warned him that they were evidently angry. Seeing this, he advised Miss Adlington and her father to move to a safe distance.

A ladder having been procured, the master stepped quietly up, and, after much coaxing and persuasion, secured his swarm, but not without several nasty stings on hands and neck.

Miss Adlington, on seeing these, insisted on his going into the house, in order that the stings might be extracted and a little ammonia applied.

For the first time in his life since he was a boy, Edward Martyn found himself submitting willingly to the ministrations of a woman; and that woman—a girl whose blue eyes, shaded by long lashes, and hair that fell in natural waves on her broad brow, combined with her soft and gentle touch—had made the shy, stiff head-master of Bury-cum-Thorpe Grammar School wish—feel—oh! he hardly knew what, a something new and strange.

After the application of the remedy he lingered on in a sort of awkward way, as though wanting an excuse to stay.

Dorothy, with her quick perception, soon put him at ease; and before many minutes had elapsed her father and he were busily discussing the latest scientific problem over a cup of coffee and a cigar.

When he returned home, at 11.30, Mrs Peggy looked at him in mild surprise. She had never known him out so late since they came to Bury-cum-Thorpe.

'Yes, sir,' she replied, in answer to some remark he made about being rather late—'yes, sir, I was getting a bit nervous-like, you being so reg'lar in your habits. I was afraid something had happened you.'

'Oh no! only something pleasant. I have secured my lost bees.'

'That's a good thing. It's to be hoped the creatures 'll have more sense next time than swarm in the middle of school-time.'

'Oh, I don't mind. I'm rather glad they did;' and as he said this he looked at the red marks on his hands, and felt again the touch of soft white fingers.

'Rather glad they did!' Had she heard aright? He must be a bit sleepy and tired, and hardly knew what he was saying.

On the contrary, he had never been so wide awake in his life; and had his housekeeper seen him, an hour later, lay in his drawer a sweet-scented white rose, which he had picked up as it fell from Dorothy Adlington's waist, she would have pronounced him neither sleepy nor tired, but 'gone a bit in his 'ead, through overwork an' the worry of them tiresome boys, as is enough to turn anybody's brain.'

B A M B O R O U G H.

By SARAH WILSON.



SIR THOMAS MALORY tells us in his *Morte d'Arthur* (printed by Caxton) that there were two opinions in his day as to the identity of the Garde Joyeuse of Sir Lancelot du Lake, for whereas some men said it was Bamborough, others said it was Alnwick; and in later times Berwick-upon-Tweed has also been deemed likely to have been the storied stronghold. For various geographical and topographical reasons, it has now come to be conceded they were correct who said it was Bamborough. Quite recently, in an examination of an ancient cemetery about three hundred yards south of Bamborough Castle, marked Danish on the Ordnance map, an older one was found below it, at a depth of several feet, having interments within a circle of boulder-stones made in the ancient British manner—the same as that in which Bronwen the Fair was buried on the banks of the Alaw. This proof of ancient British occupation gives us leave to believe that there was an ancient British stronghold on the rock where the castle now stands, to which Sir Lancelot may have brought King Arthur's queen when he rescued her from the burning at Carlisle; and that it may have been to the plain below its walls that the king brought his warriors when he followed in pursuit of the fugitives. We may picture to ourselves the beauty of Guinevere, the

curious needlecraft on her robes, the grace and strength of her steel, the king's broken heart, the repentance of Sir Lancelot, and the grimness of accusing Sir Mordred. There is the same North Sea, now as then swaying, billowing, surging, incoming and outgoing, sometimes blue and flecked with white as with seagulls' wings, sometimes greenish-gray with crowns of creamy foam scattered all over it, and oftener lead-colour and in wild commotion; there is the group of black islands close by that we call the Farne Islands; there are the sandhills along the shore with their light sprinkling of hard grasses; the low-lying shelving rocks that jut out into the waters here and there; and the distant hazy crags and hills—now as then. Only, nearly eight centuries ago the great basaltic steep was capped with a new, strong castle, which still looks down and out upon the older features of its surroundings.

Before this Norman fortress was built there was another on the same grand site that was the residence of the Anglian kings in the days of the Heptarchy. One of these monarchs, Ida, named it Bebbanburgh in honour of his queen, Bebba. Another, Oswald, sent to Scotland for a missionary to convert his subjects to Christianity. A third, Ceolwulf, resigned his crown to retire to the monastery founded on the island of Lindisfarne by this missionary Aidan. The Danes, too, occupied Bamborough for a time. We have

special memory of Sigtryg, who married the sister of Athelstan and afterwards discarded her, a change in his affections which led to the ultimate annexation of Northumbria as well as Bamborough to Athelstan's dominions.

The Norman castle we now see was described by Hoveden in the twelfth century as containing not more than two or three acres of ground; and on the Ordnance map of our own times it is corroboratively set down as but little over three acres in extent. There is a tall square central keep, as in the case of the Tower of London, with a deep well in it, and a space around it enclosed by a high and strong wall, along which are various towers and ranges of apartments. After many incidents of fortune in the course of centuries—King David of Scotland besieged it in 1138, and Archibald Douglas two centuries later—and having been the temporary residence of Queens Philippa and Margaret of Anjou successively, and been bombarded by the Earl of Warwick in 1464, the ancient structure came into the hands of Bishop Crewe, who in 1722, by will, converted it into a charitable institution, where shipwrecked mariners, poor people, children, and invalids all received help of the different kinds they required. Within the last few years it has been purchased by Lord Armstrong, who is now making roads and walks around it, as well as rearrangements within the walls. In Hoveden's day there was but one hollow road into it, which fact, together with its altitude on the steep rock, doubtless helped to maintain its impregnability. As the new works are in course of progress it can only be said of them that there is no one who knows what end they will have; but it may be mentioned that every care appears to be taken to preserve the honour and interest of the majestic stronghold. Documentary evidence has been preserved which informs us that two Welsh chieftains were kept prisoners in this fortress for more than six years. They had taken possession of some of the castles of Edward the First in Wales, and when captured were placed in the Tower of London, and thence transferred to Bamborough, whence they were taken back to London in 1296 in a dying condition. As late as 1547, in describing the expedition of the Duke of Somerset to Scotland, William Patten mentions the strength and inaccessibility of the castle, and adds that he had heard it was called in Arthur's days Joyous Garde.

The village is spread out on the inland side of the castle, at some little distance from it. In the centre is a long plantation or grove; on either side is a row of one-storied cottages interspersed with larger houses and two or three inns; at the farther end is the pale-gray church standing in a large churchyard. Over the two lines of houses so far apart, with the castle on the high rock at one end of them, the ancient cruciform church at the other, and the grove in the centre, there

abides a charm of association with the memory of two maidens, Dorothy Forster and Grace Darling. There is no railway station nearer than Lucker, no harbour nearer than North Sunderland; therefore there are no disturbing or effacing influences, and the remembrance of the leading incidents in their lives remains in the village like continuing sunshine. The garden of the square stone house in which Dorothy Forster lived adjoins the churchyard. Every one lingers at the gate to note the stone porch, the low threshold, the square windows, and double side-gables of the house. Every one likes to think of her passing in and out of the doorway with her heart as full of courage and daring whilst she matured her plan for the liberation of her brother, as was Grace Darling's on the night of the great storm and shipwreck with which her equally-regarded name is associated. Below the church in a dim crypt is the burying-place of the Forster family, which everybody should see; and in the church still hangs a piece or two of armour once worn by a member of the same race. In the south transept of the church is the first stone effigy of Grace Darling, or Grace Horsley Darling, to give her name in full. The sea-winds played so much havoc in the way of disintegrating the sandstone of which this effigy is wrought, as it lay under its canopy on the monument in the churchyard, that it has been thought well to replace it there with a facsimile of more enduring hardness, and this one has been brought into the church for preservation. Out in the churchyard, surrounded by an iron railing, is the public monument to the memory of the lighthouse-keeper's daughter. The new effigy is made from a hard stone selected by Lord Armstrong from the hills on his Crag-side estate. The heroine reposes at full length on a mattress with an oar by her side, her head raised on a cushion, and her hands closed in prayer. About five years ago the winds again wrecked this memorial, which has now been placed in repair once more. The heroine is buried near her father, among other kindred, under the grasses, a few paces away. The cottage in which she was born is close at hand.

There are ancient British camps in the neighbourhood at Chester Hill, Easington, and Spindlestone, all of which are thought to have been subsequently used by Roman legions. Spindlestone, which commands fine views of Holy Island, Kyloe Crag, and the Cheviot Hills, has, in addition, a legend, put into verse in 1320, to the effect that the daughter of one of the kings of Bamborough, having been transformed by her stepmother into a laidley worm, or dragon, lived in a cavern here, and roamed the country by night. Her brother heard of the cruel enchantment, built a ship with masts of rowan-wood, and sailed to her deliverance. He landed with his followers on Budle Sands, and

kissed his sister thrice; whereupon she resumed her natural form, and the stepmother became a toad, and retired to the bottom of a well in one of the towers of the castle. There is a Roman way, as well as a pilgrims' road; and there are fragments of a monastery of preaching friars, and various other objects of minor interest; but the attraction of the Farne Islands dotting the sea eastwards exceeds them all.

They attracted St Cuthbert more than twelve hundred years ago, for he took up his abode upon the one nearest to the shore; and in the intervening centuries there have been many attempts to bring them within the range of usefulness to mankind. There was a strong and stark peel-tower built in old times upon the one St Cuthbert had thus distinguished, which is but little more than a mile out at sea from Bamborough; and a chapel was also built upon it in some long-past day, in connection probably with a small priory which the Durham ecclesiastical authorities established in it, both of which erections have been repaired from time to time and are still standing; and in these later days lighthouses have been built upon two of the islands about three miles apart, known as the Near Light and the Far Light. Those who count the islands differ in their opinion of their number on account of high tides completely covering many of the smaller ones, and very low tides exposing a few more than are generally visible. Twenty-eight are set down in the Ordnance Survey. There is sufficient grass growing on some of them to warrant the shipment of a cow or 'beast' to them occasionally. A sail out to them is an event long to be remembered. It is a pleasure to see Grace Darling's little sanctuary as it is passed by in ascending the winding stair of the lighthouse on the Longstone to attain the glass-covered chamber on the summit, from which the brilliant light shines forth that is so much to all at sea within its influence, and to note the admirable cleanliness and neatness that prevail in all the arrangements. On attempting to land on the slippery rocks of some of the other islands one is almost deterred by the cries and flappings of wings of myriads of sea-birds, for they are the breeding-places of cormorants, eider-ducks, puffins, guillemots, and gulls of every description. Some years ago the islands were let like a farm for the sake of the kelp, wild-fowl, feathers, and the few seals that were found upon them, at the small rental of £16 per annum; but now they are cared for by an association, and no one is granted permission to visit them till he has signed an undertaking not to remove any of the eggs that are to be seen on all sides, or otherwise molest the feathered inhabitants. There are sometimes eighteen eggs in the nest of an eider duck; recently a heron was observed to build a nest four feet high on the island called Wide-opens; and the watchers of the association take note, among other things, of two pairs of roseate terns that

neither increase in number nor leave the islands altogether.

There was a great castle on the coast a few miles to the north of Bamborough, at Berwick-on-Tweed (the railway station now stands on its site); and another at Dunstanborough, a few miles to the south of it. This, though in frayed ruins, is still of considerable consequence, for the great gatehouse, that was eventually made into a keep, with its two round towers pierced with arrow-slits below and double-lights in the next story and single-lights still higher, its cavernous archway, stone vaulted and grooved for a portcullis, and five carved corbels that carried some projecting defence above, is yet remaining. The curtain-wall enclosed about ten acres. The south side of it had four towers, one of which is still known as the Margaret Tower in remembrance of the deeds done in the Wars of the Roses, when the castle changed ownership five times with the varying fortunes of the rival parties. Another tall tower with walls six feet thick still keeps guard over the remains and over the great deep chasm in the basaltic rock in which the sea boils up and rumbles portentously, called the Rumbling Churn. But there is historical mention of a third castle of which no traces have hitherto been discovered. This is the fortress built by William Rufus near Bamborough, when he found he could not reduce that stronghold. It is spoken of as Malvoisin, as one of those evil neighbours that Norman warfare devised for a means of vanquishing foes who would not yield to less extreme measures. Philologists have made the interesting suggestion that perhaps the name of this structure is preserved in the adjacent township of Mousen.

And so it has come to pass that Bamborough is encrusted with traditions that the storms of more than a thousand years have not swept away. In addition to the glamour arising from Queen Guinevere's residence in it, some claim for it the romance of having been the resting-place of the 'gay-beseen' lady, the fair Isoud, when Sir Tristram conducted her from her home. These rumours may be only the imaginings of those troubadours and trouvères who could tell likewise of the mysterious hand rising out of the unknown mere to grasp King Arthur's sword, and of other mystic details of his passing. The Anglo-Saxon transactions are, however, of more tangible authenticity. The succession of kings and bishops and the chief events in their lives are recorded sometimes by contemporary writers, and at others by historians at no great interval of time from their day. We need no grain of salt in the matter of Aidan's preaching and persuading, of St Cuthbert's ascetic meditations on the Farne Islands for nine years, of the woeful ending of King Oswald's encounter with the pagan Penda, or of the careful conservation of his head and arm by the monks of Lindisfarne in the same reliquary that held the remains of St Cuthbert; nor need we hesitate to accept the

accounts of the various sieges the castle withstood, from the old, old time when it was only timbered, till it was given up to Athelstan in 924. We may receive without question the statement that the wife of Robert de Mowbray, the third Earl of Northumberland, held the castle against William Rufus till her husband was brought before its walls with the threat that his eyes should be put out unless she surrendered; that it was Henry the Second who built the keep we now see about 1164; that Edward the Third's queen, Philippa, was in residence in it in 1333, and Margaret of Anjou in 1462; and that the Earl of Warwick laid siege to it in 1464 with the terrible menace that if the besieged did not deliver up the 'Jewel' whole and unbroken with ordnance it should cost the head of the chieftain, Sir Ralph Grey, as well as the head of a lesser personage for every gun-shot that was fired. Then it was that the stones of the walls flew into the sea as the cannonade went

on, and one of the guns, named Dysion (they seem to have been named in those days) sent destruction into Sir Ralph's chamber, till at last the castle was won and the brave defender taken and executed at Doncaster. Its later history is well known. It is understood it did not recover from this catastrophe, and Sir John Forster, the constable in the reign of Elizabeth, allowed it to fall into complete ruin. It was then purchased by Bishop Crewe; and subsequently restored by one of his trustees, Archdeacon Sharp, in 1758. The castle sits as on a throne, and the bravery of the two maidens, Dorothy Forster and Grace Darling, that glorifies the quiet village, seems but the due outcome of the courage of the unrecorded generations that so often defended it.

Whether the new railway now in course of construction at North Sunderland will affect this alluring environment of romance and history remains to be proved.

THE MURUTS OF NORTH BORNEO.



HERE are many scientific problems awaiting solution in the great island of Borneo, not the least among them being the origin and history of the races inhabiting the country, from the war-loving, head-hunting Sea-

Dyak down to that mysterious race the Ukits, who are said to be houseless and clothesless, who neither hunt nor till the ground, but follow the trail of the wild-pig and live on the roots which they grub out of the ground, robbing the very swine of the fruit of their researches. It is not the object of this present writer to attempt the solution of the question, but rather to add to the general stock of knowledge by describing what he knows of the Muruts of North Borneo, after a residence of two years among them.

The Muruts inhabit the basin of the Padas River—the chief tributary of which is the Pagalan—rising probably in Kinabalu, the highest mountain in Borneo (attaining to the respectable height of some thirteen thousand feet), and flowing south until it joins the main stream at Sapong. The basin of the Pagalan consists of a great valley, of which the average width is ten miles, while it is probably a hundred miles long. Two ranges of hills, rising in places to the height of four thousand feet, and covered to the very summit with dense vegetation, enclose this plain. The Pagalan being unnavigable even for the smallest *prahu*, this huge plain is at present cut off from the coast; the only communication being by means of native tracks, and all goods having to be transported on men's backs. Langland grass—coarse, and reaching to the height of a man's shoulders—covers the plain, which, together with the neighbouring jungle, shelters and feeds game of various kinds: the

tombado or wild-ox, several varieties of deer, the wild-pig, the honey-bear, the jungle-fowl, four or five kinds of pigeon; and, finally, snipe, golden-plover, and duck in their season. The soil is of excellent quality, as is shown by the small patches on which rice is cultivated by the Muruts, where the minimum of labour and the crudest of appliances and skill return a bounteous harvest. Tobacco is grown, and flourishes even with native ideas, which simply consist of putting the seed in the ground; while there is every indication, from the small amount of Arabian coffee planted, that much success would attend its cultivation on a large scale. Of European products, lettuce, tomatoes, and kidney-beans have been grown with little trouble. The temperature of this tableland, which is between one thousand and two thousand feet above the sea-level, is very different from that of Labuan or Sandakan, on the coast. The early morning and the evening are cold—often too cold for one resident any length of time in the tropics to sit out on the veranda—while the heat of mid-day is often tempered by a cool breeze. The rainfall is not excessive, and is well distributed over the various months of the year. Finally, the country is healthy for any European who is able to live in the tropics. The British North Borneo Company possesses here a tract of land of the greatest value, which will undoubtedly draw to itself the attention of planters as soon as they open it up by making a good, quick line of communication with the coast at its nearest point.

The Muruts are a race small in stature, light-brown in complexion (when one arrives at the skin with which Nature endowed them), with jet-black hair; in many cases the nose is flat and the stomach protuberant. From the fact that there

appear to be few old men and women among them, we may conclude that they are short-lived; nor is this to be wondered at when we consider their mode of life. In the first place, they pluck out their eyelashes, a frequent cause of inflammation of the eye and of subsequent blindness; and they grind down their teeth to the gums, thus preventing proper mastication. Their food consists chiefly of rice, to which they add as dainties coarse salt, salt-fish, chilli-pepper, pumpkins, the heart of the coco-nut palm, of the sago palm, and of other trees, and vegetables culled in the jungle. There is practically no attempt made to grow vegetables, in spite of the luxuriant produce they give with little trouble. On festive occasions, such as funerals, the Muruts kill a goat, a pig, or a buffalo, and eat the flesh cooked in the blood. They almost invariably drink the warm liquor in which their rice or meat is cooked. It is sad to relate that they never lose an opportunity of eating animals that have died a natural death, and often when they are in an advanced stage of decomposition; in fact, one of their greatest luxuries is fish or buffalo-meat kept in a bamboo until the stench of it is unbearable to Europeans. When hard pressed for food they eat the tapioca-root and raw sago. Of intoxicating liquors they make three kinds from rice: one fairly harmless, thick with pounded rice, called *lelutow*; another, the common drink of the Murut, *tapei*; a third, a kind of refined *tapei*, a clear, heady liquor, blessed with the name *tinagei*. A drinking-party of Muruts is a sight never to be forgotten. The house reeking with filth and *tapei*; the rows of blackened human heads grinning down on the drinkers; the huge jars, each surrounded with a small crowd of drunken or expectant Muruts; the relaxed forms of men and women lying stupefied on the floor, amidst all the filth; the children, excited by liquor, clanging the gongs in monotonous rhythm—all contribute to the horror of a scene degrading to mankind. Yet there is a rude etiquette even here. *Tapei* is drunk from the large jars in which it is made. A leaf pierced with holes is placed over the mouth of the jar. Through this leaf a slender bamboo pipe passes, reaching nearly to the bottom of the jar. The perforated leaf is filled with water, which takes the place of the liquid sucked up the bamboo by the drinker. The etiquette of drinking is as follows: The owner of the jar of *tapei* asks the most important man present to drink, an invitation which is cordially accepted. The host then fills the leaf with water, takes a little suck to see that the tube is working properly, and then sits down to entertain his guest while he drinks. It is his duty to see that his guest does not pull up the tube, as the strongest liquor is at the bottom of the jar; and the height of politeness is to firmly press down the tube if the guest tries to escape drunkenness by avoiding the strong liquor below. A small basin is placed above the

jar, in which are cut lemons, salt, salt-fish, chilli-pepper, and other things calculated to excite thirst. When the guest has finished his drink he signifies the same by putting his finger on the leaf, and showing the tip of it to his host. If the finger is dry, the host tests the leaf himself, poking his fingers into the crevices to try and find a little moisture. Should he discover enough to wet the tip of his finger, the guest must continue drinking. On completely emptying the leaf of water, the guest must in turn fill up the leaf for his host, must guard the tube jealously, and must see that he drinks until the leaf is dry. There are often some twenty to thirty jars broached on such an occasion, and some hundred to two hundred people are present. The drinking-bout usually lasts three days.

The general characteristic of the Murut is lethargy, physical and mental. It is with the greatest difficulty that he can be persuaded to do any work, and that work will be done in the most slovenly and slipshod fashion. His wife seeks his food, cooks it, and sets it before him. He is obliged to help in making the rice-field; but, in this case even, he takes care that his wife and children do more than their fair share of the work. Cowardice is one of his failings, even to the extent of taking the heads of women and children, and then boasting of the exploit. Occasionally the Murut hunts or fishes; but in both cases his success is indifferent, owing to his laziness and want of skill. The wickerwork traps that he sets in running streams for fish show some invention, and are of rather intricate construction. Until the advent of the European officer, it was the custom to set spring-traps for game, shooting a spear with such force as to kill a deer. The position of these traps was known to all the inhabitants of the village near where they were set; but strangers were often killed by them. Fortunately they are now forbidden by law, and a heavy fine is incurred by anybody setting them; but one who is fond of sport has still to be wary, as it is hard to kill the custom. The commonest way of killing the deer now is by fixing stout nets at one end of a wood, and beating the wood by men and dogs in the direction of the nets. The *coup de grâce* is given with the hunting-spear. The blowpipe with its poisoned arrows is also used by the Murut; but it is a clumsy weapon at the best, as the game does not die at once when hit, but is sometimes as long as half-an-hour in succumbing, and consequently in most cases easily escapes its hunter.

At one time the valley of the Pagalan must have been thickly inhabited, for wherever one goes one sees the evidences of former cultivation; but the population is now sparse, owing probably to two causes—disease and head-hunting. Of the former we speak shortly hereafter; of the latter we can only say that, before the British North Borneo Company sent an officer to administer the

district, no one was safe either in his home, his rice-field, or on a journey. To this day, though there is peace in the land, no Murut thinks of going as far as his field without taking his weapons with him. Of these, the defensive include a coat and helmet of deer or buffalo hide, and a square shield of the same material; the offensive, the spear, long and short, the blowpipe, and the parang, a short, heavy, cutting weapon, whose handle and scabbard are ornamented with tufts of human hair. In fighting, the two opponents squat on their haunches behind their shields, peeping occasionally round the corner to watch the tactics of the foe. Should one or the other uncover himself, he would be immediately fired at with the blowpipe. Every opportunity is taken to approach the enemy. In days gone by a fight of this kind frequently lasted till night-time, as each advanced or retired with the utmost caution. If a man were killed the victors made a great feast, buffaloes were slaughtered, and the village to a man was drunk for the next three days; the dead man was cut up by his foes, every one of his bones being treasured, carefully dried and smoked, and finally hung up in the chief's house. It was customary to file the teeth of a man when he got his first head; but as the government has made heads scarce, the teeth are now filed on any great drinking occasion, especially on one held in connection with the heads they already possess. People who are killed in an *amok* are cut up in the same way as those who lose their life in a fight. Villages are often protected by placing in the ground among the grass and brushwood sharpened bamboos. These primitive caltrops are very effective. People who die a natural death are generally doubled up and fitted into a jar, which in former days was sealed up, and sometimes kept in the dwelling-room for a year before being buried in graves under the house or quite close to it. These graves are ornamented in a rough fashion, the only attempt at art that a Murut makes; the finials of the square earthen grave being frequently moulded into the shape of a man's head, with a pipe in his mouth; a palm-leaf (*atap*) roofed hut is built over the grave, the gables being adorned with wooden projections resembling a pair of buffalo horns; the woodwork is painted with wavy lines of red and black, wooden representations of birds and men are placed on the posts of the fence surrounding the grave, while the whole is bedecked with flags of varied hues. On the grave itself are placed a bowl of water, two or three sticks of sugar-cane, and a few vegetables, apparently in the hope that the ghost will find food, and so be content in his new quarters, and will not disturb the living by appearing in his old home.

It is difficult to get at the belief of the Muruts with regard to their dead; but it is certain that they recognise a body and a soul, and have an

idea that the body dies and is utterly destroyed, but that the soul (or *ambi-ro-o*, as they call it) may reappear in the form of a ghost. These ghosts are accounted active agents in causing illness and unlucky dreams; and the medical treatment of the Murut doctors consists in making every effort to dislodge them from the patient. An animal is slaughtered, and the sick man is bedaubed with the blood, gongs are violently beaten, sudden shouts are raised, and the bulbous roots of a plant which emits a particularly foul and suffocating smell are burnt, in the hope of driving away the ghost. In answer to inquiries concerning the Murut view of the future state of the departed, some have declared that the *ambi-ro-o* live on the top of Kinabalu, a mountain seen from all parts of their country. The word *pinagaringgan* is used for the good spirit, or the place in which the good spirit dwells; while *kinapoonan* designates the evil spirit or his home. This fact shows the lethargy of the mind of the Murut; he does not take the trouble to distinguish between the person and the abode of the spirit; and when pushed for an answer to such questions, he replies that he does not know, that he has not been there to see, and he seems quite content with his ignorance. In taking an oath he calls on *pinagaringgan* to witness, and prays for destruction and the foulest ill-treatment to be meted out to himself, and especially to his female relatives, murrain on his buffaloes, and blight on his rice-crops, should he break his plighted troth. To make this oath binding blood must be shed; a fowl, goat, cow, or buffalo being killed, according to the importance of the occasion, of which the blood is poured upon a stone, the stone being afterwards solemnly buried in the earth, while both parties to the oath punctuate each sentence with a blow struck by a *parang* on a piece of wood. It may be remarked that even at the moment of taking an oath, an event which a Murut looks upon as supremely important, the two parties swearing vie with each other in calling down the vilest treatment imaginable upon their mothers, wives, and children should they be false to their plight, and each filthy remark is received with loud laughter and evident appreciation by the assembled natives.

The diseases of the Muruts are chiefly such as follow dirty habits. Skin diseases and diseases of the eye are common; while malarial fever and dysentery are not infrequent. Some twenty years ago an epidemic of smallpox carried off a great part of the population. The natives were terrified; many fled to the jungle, but their dread foe followed them even there, and at last they resorted to the plan of immediately putting to death any one infected with the disease. So great was the impression made that even lately, when a vaccination officer was sent up, the natives came in crowds to submit to an operation of which they knew nothing, but which they readily

believed, on the white man's word, would be efficacious in preventing their suffering from such an epidemic again.

The Muruts are nominally polygamists; but in practice each man has but one wife, the exceptions being few and mostly confined to the chiefs. The price of a wife is regulated by the price of her mother; one hundred Mexican dollars or its equivalent in buffaloes or jars being commonly paid to the father. It may be mentioned, for the sake of the uninitiated, that in Borneo various kinds of large earthenware jars, standing two and three feet high, and in many cases of great antiquity, are highly prized. To the inhabitants of Borneo they are what pictures or *objets d'art* are to us.

This race of people has several kinds of musical instruments, both wind and stringed. Of the former, the two most curious are a nose-flute, resembling our flute in all points, but which is played by breathing into it through the nostrils instead of with the mouth, the notes produced being very soft and pleasant; and the mouth-organ, made of the hard shell of a pumpkin-like

vegetable, into which are let bamboos pierced with holes at various heights, to act as organ-pipes. Of the stringed instruments, one is a rough kind of guitar, while another, made of bamboo, is cylindrical in shape, and the strings, which are supported by bridges, are strips of bamboo raised from the body of the instrument.

Lastly, the language of the Muruts has a copious vocabulary, while its inflections are bewildering, everybody seeming to the novice to inflect as he or she pleases. As might be expected, it is almost entirely wanting in words expressing abstract thought, such terms as 'love' and 'reverence' being unknown, the nearest equivalents being 'want' and 'fear' respectively. Owing to the want of intercommunication in the past, nearly every village has its own dialect. Missionaries are now at work among them, and it is to be hoped that one of the good results of their presence will be the preservation of this language, which is almost sure to disappear before Malay, a beautiful tongue spoken even at this present time by many Muruts.

LOUIS NAPOLEON AT BOULOGNE—1840.

By ONE WHO WAS THERE.



HE recent manifesto of a new claimant for the empire of the Bonapartes brings vividly before me an interesting recollection of my early youth.

It was in the August of 1840, when Prince Louis Napoleon (later on, for eighteen years, the Emperor Napoleon III.) made his premature and ill-advised landing at Wimereux, a village some few miles from Boulogne-sur-Mer. Viewed in the light of after-events, the Prince's attempt was not altogether so foolhardy and desperate as it appeared at the moment; but it certainly did turn out to be a very unfortunate affair indeed.

We were passing the summer holidays at Boulogne, at a corner house on the Place d'Armes, in the old Haute Ville, surrounded by its venerable and picturesque ramparts. At a very early hour on the morning of the 6th of August we were surprised by a visit from a French friend, who, with great excitement, made the startling announcement, '*On vient de battre la Générale.*' With our somewhat limited knowledge of the French language we naturally imagined that some general officer and his troops had been defeated; but, on a further explanation, it appeared that *la Générale* was the mustering call to arms for the National Guard, of which every French citizen is a member. And, sure enough, a body of soldiers, with drummers beating their inspiring charge, were at the very moment parading the streets.

'Oh! then and there was hurrying to and fro.' Workmen left their tasks, tradesmen emerged from their shops, eagerly equipping themselves in the regulation uniform; and one and all hastened to the appointed place of rendezvous.

Prince Louis Napoleon, accompanied by General Montholon, and with about fifty followers, had, it appeared, landed at an early hour that morning at the village of Wimereux, and had at once marched to the Column of the Grande Armée on the heights of Boulogne, where he had authoritatively summoned the soldiers in the neighbouring barracks to join his standard. This the soldiers had prudently and decidedly refused to do; and, after some parleying and skirmishing, the Prince and his followers, recognising the utter hopelessness of their position, had made their way to the seashore in order to re-embark. This was, however, prevented by the zeal of the then royalist Boulognese, and the Prince was taken prisoner on the sands of the seaside.

On hearing of these exciting events, three of us youngsters, disregarding the anxious entreaties of our French governess in charge (who was somewhat in the perplexing position of the prudent hen with the adventurous ducklings), started off and made our way down to the Port, to see for ourselves what was happening. Boulogne being a very favourite bathing-resort, and the Port being a long, tedious walk on a hot summer morning, a number of miniature omnibuses plied between the corner of the Rue de l'Écu and the

Établissement des Bains at the farther extremity of the Port, to convey intending bathers from the town to the regular bathing-machines that awaited them. There were several rival companies (or *concurrences des bains*), each provided with its own omnibus. It was one of these vehicles, belonging to Messieurs Sauvage et Caboche, that had been hastily selected as a conveyance for the captive Prince, a square little omnibus, surrounded with tarpaulin curtains looped back on either side. In this improvised state carriage, surrounded by armed soldiers, and escorted by half the population of the town, the future emperor was conveyed a prisoner along the Port and the Rue de l'Écu, up the Grande Rue to the Château entrenched behind the ramparts of the Haute Ville. We daring young folks arrived upon the Port just in time to take part in the motley procession. Our sympathies, I may explain, were entirely on the side of the captive Prince; so much so that my brother, with the reckless daring of an English schoolboy, shouted out, in the very middle of the Grande Rue (perhaps the only voice amid that vast concourse that ventured to raise the cry upon that occasion), '*Vive l'Empereur!*' He was at once set upon by an indignant French youth, who clutched him by the throat, addressing him by the opprobrious epithet of '*Cochon Anglais!*' With some difficulty we succeeded in tearing them apart before any mischief had been done, and the small affray passed unnoticed in the confusion of the hurrying crowd.

When at last the place of destination was reached, the pressure of the eager multitude became intolerable. As usual in a crowd—especially in France—the fair element was not wanting; and I well remember our amusement at hearing some over-pushed Frenchman, forgetting his own individual curiosity and the proverbial gallantry of his countrymen, exclaim with great indignation against the women in his vicinity, '*Les femmes sont bien curieuses dans ce pays-ci!*' As the bathing-carriage was about to pass within the archway leading to the Château, we caught a glimpse (through an opening between the curtains of the carriage) of the calm, pale face and dark, thoughtful eyes of the captive Prince as he glanced towards the prison before him. The carriage entered in, and the ponderous gates were closed; the soldiers mounted guard, and the crowd slowly dispersed. For some days the Prince was detained in the Château; then one night we were excited to observe, from the windows of our house, a troop of horsemen waiting in the Place d'Armes; and the next news announced that Prince Napoleon had been conveyed to the prison at Ham, where he remained closely confined for the space of five years—years that were not wasted, but passed in earnest study and reflection, from which he reaped the benefit in his future career.

Immediately after the departure of the prisoner Prince, the loyalty of the Boulognese was duly

rewarded by a visit from the king, Louis Philippe, and his family. Great enthusiasm prevailed; the whole town was a scene of triumph and festivity. Once again the Grande Rue was thronged to witness another, but very different, procession. Instead of the closely-guarded captive in the bathing-carriage, the king, accompanied by his gallant sons, rode on horseback, surrounded by a military escort and crowds of cheering spectators, while the royal princesses followed in open carriages, dispensing smiles and bows to all around. It was altogether a very triumphant and gorgeous affair, which literally fulfilled the description in the old song:

The king of France, with twenty thousand men,
Marched up the hill, and then marched down again.

Alas for the futility of human hopes and the constancy of popular favour! Eight years after these triumphal proceedings the king, Louis Philippe, under the *alias* of Mr Smith, was escaping from Paris, to end his days in exile; and four years later the Prisoner of Ham was reigning at the Tuileries as the Emperor Napoleon III. Eighteen years afterwards came the disaster of Sedan and the collapse of the Second Empire. What further development the future may have in store time alone can tell.

A SEASCAPE.

OVER the waters' face a darkness falls,
Out on the trackless race where sea-bird calls,
Rolling with reckless grace, labours and hauls
A black-hulled ship.

Dark are her spars and sails. A wind on high,
Through rigging whistling, wails, and, sighing by,
Whispers strange goblin tales with long-drawn sigh
And trembling lip.

From glistening rail to truck, each rope and shroud
Rakes dim against the ruck of bankèd cloud;
A burst of sunlight struck o'er waves dark-browed
Rainbows the scud.

Athwart the plunging bows the breakers sweep,
The heaving swell endows with life her leap—
With gurgling rush she ploughs her scuppers deep
Beneath the flood.

Sullen in western sky, wind-racked and gray,
The sun sinks down to die and fades a day;
The black-hulled ship drives by on lonesome way
Into the night.

Afar on every side on urgent rein
The white sea-horses ride with tossing mane,
Fast creeps the eventide o'er watery plain
And pales the light.

J. J. S.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



STALKING WILD GOATS.

THERE is a sport to be enjoyed in some few remote parts of Scotland which yields to none that can be found in the kingdom in its possibilities of adventure and its picturesque-ness. Stalking wild goats

requires the same hunting craft as deerstalking, and the ground to be traversed before a satisfactory chance of a shot can be obtained is quite as difficult and admits as many thrilling episodes as the mountain heights on which the ibex and the chamois hold their court. So highly did wild-goat shooting appeal to Colquhoun, the well-known author of *The Moor and the Loch*, that he seriously suggested the introduction in suitable places of a stock of wild goats, which he thought would, after a few years, offer a sport quite equal to the chase of the red deer. It has been 'my great good fortune to be allowed to stalk some of the presently existing wild goats, and it may be worth while to record some of my impressions.

On the Atlantic side of one of the largest of the Hebrides great cliffs rear themselves from the sea to a height of nigh nine hundred feet, and at their base are gigantic masses of debris from Nature's workshop, piled in rude confusion. Vegetation is there of the wildest. The iron belt of black reefs, washed by the tide, is rich in groves of seaweed, which float partially submerged. Wind-twisted bushes and patches of dense brake cling to the rocks, and thrust their twining roots into crevice and cleft. On the bare scaurs tufts of heather have settled themselves in purple beauty, emigrants from the uplands far above; and in one or two sheltered spots there are even some small thickets of hardy trees. Seen from a distance seaward, the great expanse of cliffs stretching away for miles appears to present a flat and unbroken face; but when winds and waves permit a landing to be made the whole coast-line shows infinitely varied features—some in sunshine, some in shade—precipice, cavern, gorge, valley, silvery pool,

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and roaring torrent. It is on this primeval portion of the island that the goats dwell in the midst of a wilderness where the powers of Nature reign supreme, untrammelled by any of the evidences of man's arts.

The herds are really wild, and come of a wild ancestry. For uncounted generations they have maintained themselves in perfect freedom, and have not sullied their blood by any mixture of a domesticated race. It is possible that, in the distant past, they may have come from a stock which lived among the dwellings of man; but they have now occupied their rocky fastnesses for so long that they may take rank as true *feræ naturæ*.

If a campaign against these wild goats is to be undertaken, the attack cannot be commenced from the landward side. It would be almost impossible to descend the beetling cliff; and the enterprise, if attempted, would require an undue length of time, besides the assistance of ropes and all the paraphernalia of alpine climbing. So a sea-passage must be made; and it is not on every day of the year that a boat can brave the rollers of the Atlantic or approach the surf-beaten reefs, so that a landing can be effected. I was fortunate, however; and, though the day was cloudy with occasional showers, and light wreaths of mist floated round the lofty crests of the various Bens that look down upon the sea-loch, there was not much sea running, and we pushed off from the primitive little pier with every hope of a not too eventful voyage. Our crew consisted of the stalker, a couple of boatmen, and myself; and, though I knew something of sport in various lands, I was now content to conduct myself as a neophyte, and to obey the orders of the stalker, who was master of the situation. A few strokes with the oars cleared our little craft from the shore, the mast was stepped, and the brown lugsail run up. There was a sudden heave as the boat heeled over and plunged into an advancing wave, covering us with a shower of spray. A careful hand was kept on the

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sheet, and a watchful eye looked for the sudden squall which might be expected to whistle down each glen that broke the mass of surrounding mountains. More than once the sheet was perforce let go, and we evaded the power of the keen blast that cut the spindrift from the crested waves. Sea-birds swooped and hovered round us, guillemots dived at our bows, and groups of oyster-catchers rose from the rocky islets that we passed, piping their shrill cry: 'Keep clear! keep clear!'

At last we approached the mouth of the long sea-loch and rounded the black headland. The open Atlantic seas swept down large and threatening; but the breeze was steady, and our little boat rode over them easily. We put our helm up, and pushed on within half a mile of the great cliffs that frowned above the island shore. We had the haunts of the wild goats before us, and in that wide panorama we had to single out our game before we could consider how to attack it. Glasses were uncased, and we carefully scanned the lower cliffs and piles of rock, to detect, if possible, the sought-for herd; and this was no easy matter, for, as is the case with all wild animals, the colour of the goats blends almost indistinguishably with that of their natural surroundings. If they were in the most exposed situation, and remained perfectly steady, it would require a very trained eye and a very powerful stalking-glass to note their presence; but the slightest motion attracts attention and betrays them, so for the moment we confined ourselves to seeking for some moving object. Suddenly I caught a glimpse of some living thing passing from the shelter of one great boulder to that of another. 'What is that, Dougal?' I asked, rather proud in thinking myself the first to see game. But I was promptly snubbed. 'That iss three deer. I haf seen them for some time. They wass lying near that bit wood.' They proved to be a young stag and a couple of hinds that had strayed from the deer-forest, possibly in search of some seaware. As they came more clearly into view, moving towards the airy track that would lead them to the distant pass, very tiny they looked in the midst of their stupendous environment. We stood closer in to the rocks, and peered anxiously into every recess as it opened to our view. At last the stalker said, 'There they are,' and pointed to a mass of gray boulders. At first I could just distinguish a slate-coloured object barely showing itself, which might or might not be an animal's head; but the stalker had made no mistake, for, as the boat slid forward other objects came into sight, and we could identify a small herd—nannies, kids, and one or two long-horned, patriarchally-bearded billies.

How fitly these noble-looking children of the mist took their place in the wild landscape! Picturesque and dignified, they were little like

the poor animals that we associate with the name of goat, living out their peaceful lives in some frowsy farmyard or drawing a toy carriage at a watering-place. In their proud freedom they seemed more akin to the alpine chamois or the ibex of the Neilgherries. We turned our boat's prow away from the shore, and stood out to sea, so that, while we held a council of war upon our future proceedings, we might not alarm the herd and scatter them in flight. It was evident that, if a successful stalk was to be accomplished, we must work from the leeward of the game, and that there was no easy stroll before us if we were to come within rifle-range; so we pushed on far enough to lull suspicion in the watchful vedettes that had marked us sailing by, and then, hidden by a high and rocky point, sought for a convenient landing-place. Well, there are different views of convenience; and if any reader imagines that we found a natural harbour, or even were able to beach our boat on a sloping bed of sand, he or she has never seen the wild Hebrides. After long search, the best that offered was a little cleft in the black reef, and our bows were shoved into it. A tuft of seaweed was grappled with a boat-hook, and those who were for shore had to jump on to a slippery rock while it was for a moment left clear by the heaving waves. The feat was accomplished with a scramble, and the stalker and I found ourselves making our way from crag to crag, while the tide washed and churned beneath us and around.

'We will go up the hill a bit, and get between them and the high pass, in case they are turning that way,' said the stalker. *Hookum hai* ('It is an order'), as we say in India; and the ascent was commenced. I have done some stalking at home and abroad, but never have I met any toil more trying to wind and limb than that climb. First the piles of fallen rocks, reaching high over the shore, had to be surmounted, on which a boot studded with nails took no satisfactory foothold. How I longed for the soles made of woven grass, worn in Indian mountain-climbing, which take a firm grip of any surface, however smooth and treacherous, and defy any chance of slipping. Then we plunged into a thicket and wormed our upward way through intertwined and tough branches, whose sturdy resistance recalled the undergrowth of a tropical forest. Then across an open scaur, dislodging at every footstep stones and masses of earth, which went hurtling away down into depths below, and clinging to every chance tuft of heather or bent-grass that struggled for a bare existence on the bald and wind-swept face. How long our climb lasted cannot be estimated. It seemed as if we had been moving for hours, when, to my profound thankfulness, the stalker thought that we had mounted high enough, and that we had gained such a point of vantage that we might turn downwards towards the herd, sure that, if they were alarmed by anything, or

took it into their heads to move, we should be in the track that they must follow, and would have a chance of intercepting them.

Our movements so far, if toilsome, had at least been conducted on our legs; but now all human dignity was to be abandoned, and we had to grovel forward as best we might on hands and knees, and even occasionally sink upon that vulgar portion of our persons politely called the waist. Before we made our second start a careful survey of our general direction was taken, and the possibilities of eddying gusts coming round corners, which might give our wind to the goats, were discounted by some deviations from a direct advance, and the rifle was carefully loaded. Our course was full of more incident than there is space to describe. I was prepared to bump my shins, to abrade my hands, and to rub the buttons off my garments; and this, of course, I did in full measure; but it was disconcerting indeed when the stalker put up a warning hand and pointed to a venomous viper wriggling to one side of our path. The Hebridean viper's bite is not fatal, but it causes very sufficient and prolonged personal inconvenience, and is by no means to be made light of. I could not help remembering and rather shuddering at the fact that where there is one there are likely to be two or three more, and that it behoved us to 'gang warily' while we were in such dangerous haunts.

Ha! what is that very strong odour that penetrates my nostrils? The wild goat has a very well-defined bouquet of his own, and there is no overlooking the spot where he has been lately grazing. It was evident that we were hard upon our game, and the stalker's advance was made with redoubled caution. For some anxious moments my view of the world was limited to a study of the nails in his brogues, and I grieved that the artistic design which they formed in his soles was generally so completely lost to the world. We crawled round our last boulder. Dougal gave a little motion with his hand, and began to slip the rifle from its case. I saw that the critical moment had arrived, lifted my head, and looked. There was the herd, some feeding, some gambolling and butting each other in a friendly way, all in fancied security.

There is always a deep pleasure to any one who has even a bowing acquaintance with natural history in prying into the family-life of wild animals, and seeing what they do and how they live when their *vie intime* is undisturbed. I sympathise with a well-known and good American sportsman who has performed more exploits with the rifle than most men now living. His greatest joy now is in the stalk itself, and in pitting his intelligence against that of a wild animal, so that he can approach it near enough to study at his leisure all the minutiae of its habits. He carries no more deadly weapon than a camera, and his

trophy of the chase is a photograph of the game. He has all the pleasure that the most exciting sportsman can give, and when it is over he can enjoy a triumph unstained with blood. I have not, however, yet attained to such a philosophical pre-eminence, and I eagerly clutched the rifle that was put into my hands. Did a stalker on such an occasion ever fail to say 'Tak' time'? The idea is firmly impressed on every stalker's mind that the sportsman under his charge is so excited that he will hurry unduly over his shot; and, indeed, it is justified in most cases. After the whispered caution, he indicated a venerable gray billy with magnificent backward-sweeping horns, to whom the rest of the herd seemed to pay unquestioned deference. 'That will be the master-goat. Wait till he turns more this way.' The rifle was laid on a tussock of heather and directed on the bearded patriarch. Slowly he went on nibbling at some tender herbage that he had found, and gradually turned his broadside to me. Crack! The bullet sped, and the poor old billy gave a faint cry as he was mortally stricken. There was a *sauve qui peut* of all his tribe; all betook themselves to panic flight, bounding from rock to rock, and disappearing in the recesses of the wilderness. But their patriarchal ruler's time had come. Feebly he tried to stagger after them, and there was little difficulty in running forward and giving him the *coup de grâce*. Never again would he tread the fastnesses so long his home. Another, taking his place, would become the master-goat, and his harem would pass to another lord.

The obsequies of a goat are best observed from the windward side. Dignified and picturesque as he is in life and at a distance, he is very full-flavoured at close quarters. The head of my billy looks down upon me as I write this; but, though it has gone through many processes at the hands of the taxidermist, it was long before it ceased to shed into the hall where it hangs an odour more noticeable than pleasant. How the stalker was sufficiently callous to perform the *gralloch* was a matter of wonder; still more, that he was able to contemplate with pleasure the eating of certain mysterious parts of the body, which he extracted with care, and laid aside as delicacies for home consumption.

A sandwich, a drink, a smoke. Our boat has followed us round the coast, and is now lying rocking in a little cove hard by the great cavern where the old Jacobite lord lay concealed for months after the '45. Truly the king's officers and soldiers must have had no easy duty in searching for him. The *Sidier Roy* of those days, in their old stiff equipment, were in no case for boat-work in stormy seas and patrolling such a rough coast.

I have told something about stalking wild goats. I can wish for my readers no better fortune than to enjoy such good sport.

TORPEDO-BOAT 240.

CHAPTER II.



HE mimic war had begun, and for five days the rival fleets had been engaged in active hostilities. A portion of the invading squadron, consisting of two first-class iron-clads, three second-class, a fast cruiser, and three torpedo-boats, had broken out from the port in which they were blockaded and escaped into the mouth of the Channel, where they hoped to be joined by the rest of the fleet. The weather there had been boisterous, and still looked very unsettled; there was a brisk wind blowing, and although the sea was not heavy enough seriously to incommode the large craft, the torpedo-boats were making very bad weather of it. They were, indeed, almost buried in the seas, and were rolling and wallowing so deeply that it was well-nigh impossible to maintain a footing upon their decks.

'Well, I have had enough of torpedo work, Mr Groves,' Lieutenant Winter said to the chief engineer as they stood together on the deck of No. 240, each holding firmly to one of the fittings in order to maintain his footing. 'For smooth water they are fine little craft, but they are no more fit to keep the sea in such weather as this than they are to fly. The motion is awful. I have been ill half-a-dozen times, for the first time since I joined as a midshipman. Two of the men have got badly hurt by being dashed against the bed-places, and the whole crew are completely knocked up with straining and fatigue. As to sleep, it is out of the question, unless you want to get your brains knocked out against the opposite side of the cabin.'

'My hands are dead knocked up,' the engineer said; 'stoking in such weather as this is no joke. Luckily we have not to keep up any great head of steam.'

The lieutenant nodded. 'There is not much sea on, however, for a craft of any size. If a cruiser were to come upon a fleet of torpedo-boats in a rough sea she would be able to capture the lot of them.'

'They are not fit for the sea,' the engineer growled. 'I would not as soon be afloat in a bandbox. I would rather take a job for life in a collier than have three months at sea in one of them.'

'The flag-ship is signalling, sir,' the quartermaster, who was at the helm, said.

The lieutenant watched the little black balls going up the mast-head. 'It is our signal,' he said as they broke out into flags; and then ran below.

'Torpedo-boats make for Queenstown,' he said as he returned; 'that is a comfort.'

He took the answering pennant from the sig-

nalling locker and hoisted it himself. 'Lay her head north, quartermaster. I will give you the bearings in a minute;' and he again ran down to consult the chart. 'North-west by north,' he said, when he returned.

'How far do you make it, sir?'

'About sixty-five knots. I wish we had got the order three hours ago; we should have been in by daylight then. You may as well give us a little more steam. We might try twelve knots; if we find that runs her under too much we can slow down a knot or two; but we will hold on if we can at that. I don't like the look of the sky, and I suppose the Admiral doesn't either, or he would not have sent us off; for I know that this was specially intended as a trial whether torpedoes could keep company with the fleet in anything like moderate weather.'

No. 240 was the smallest of the three boats. For a time they kept together, but she made worse weather than the others, and gradually dropped behind. The senior officer hoisted the signal, 'Shall we wait for you?' and Winter replied, 'No, you had better go on; we will steam easily.'

'That is better,' he said to himself as he saw them steadily drawing away. 'It is of no use trying to force her through this; she goes smoothly enough if she is not driven.' He shouted down the tube to the engineer, 'Slow her down a little more; try her at nine knots.'

The change was clearly an advantage. She no longer buried her sharp bows in each wave; and although she quivered and shook as they struck her, her movement was lighter and easier than before. The wind was getting up, and the waves were longer and more regular; but this was an advantage to the boat, as it gave her more time to rise and fall upon them.

'She will do very well if we do not get worse than this before we get in,' the lieutenant said to himself; 'but I shall be very pleased when we see the harbour lights. I wonder what Miss Aspern would say to this; it is rather a contrast to our run three weeks ago.—You had better see to the lights,' he said aloud to the quartermaster, who had now been relieved at the helm. 'We are pretty well in the track of ships coming down the Channel, and the sun must have set now. Another three hours and we shall be in Queenstown.'

'We shan't be sorry for that, sir. This ain't the sort of craft to be knocking about in at night off the Irish coast in nasty weather. There ain't no comfort to be had in them: if you are down below you are pretty nigh smothered; if you are up here you are wet through every

minute with the spray, and think yourself lucky if it ain't green water sweeping along the deck.'

'Tell the cook to send me up a cup of cocoa, quartermaster. The men had better have a cup all round. If the sea gets up any more the cook won't be able to make it, and we shall have a roughish time before we get in.'

'I doubt if he can make it now, sir; she flings herself about so that there is no keeping the kettle upon the stove.'

'Well, if he can't, serve out a tot of grog all round, quartermaster.'

In five minutes the quartermaster returned with a mug of cocoa. 'The cook has made shift to make this, sir,' he said, with a twinkle in his eye; 'but he says as he could only boil a drop in the bottom of the kettle, so I suppose I had better serve out the grog?'

'I thought it would come to that, quartermaster,' the lieutenant said, smiling. 'But the cocoa would have been much better for the men.'

'Well, sir, it would generally; but most of them are so sick that they could not drink cocoa. Why, sir, I was sick myself just now, and I ain't never been sick before since my first voyage.'

'I have been ill myself, quartermaster, so I am not surprised at that. Well, let them have the grog, and tell the lookout to keep his eyes open for lights. It is rather thick, and vessels will be tearing down-Channel before this wind.'

Half-an-hour later there was a sudden crash, followed by two or three short bangs, then dead silence. The engine stopped.

'What is it?' Winter shouted down to the engine-room.

'I don't know yet, sir. I think her propeller has struck floating wood and got knocked off, and the jar has broken something in the engine.'

'Quartermaster, we must get a bit of sail up and keep her before the wind.'

It was not often that a torpedo-boat hoisted sail, which, indeed, was only carried for emergencies like the present.

'Look sharp about it, lads,' Winter said, 'before she has lost her steerage-way. If we get broad-side on there will be no standing on the deck.'

In a short time sail was got on the foremast, and the boat was headed dead before the wind. Then the lieutenant went down into the engine-room.

'Anything serious, Mr Groves?'

'Yes, sir; one of the cylinder covers is split badly, and I fancy the crank is twisted.'

'Is there any repairing it?'

'There is no making a job of it until we get into port. I will try to stop up the crack, but with such a pressure of steam as we work with I doubt whether anything will stand.'

'Well, do the best you can,' the lieutenant said, 'or we shall be blown right into the Atlantic.

I daren't try to make Queenstown, for tide as well as wind would be on her beam; and if we missed the port, as we should be pretty sure to do, nothing could save us.'

As soon as the lieutenant went on deck again he called the quartermaster.

'Get down aft, quartermaster, and see if she is making water.'

The sailor returned almost immediately.

'Yes, sir, she is leaking fast. It is pretty near up to the floor now.'

'Well, man the pumps at once, and then get a tarpaulin, and get it fixed over the stern. I expect when the propeller came off it touched the side, and the skin is no thicker than brown paper. Keep cool and steady, men,' he went on cheerily to them as they rigged the pump; 'we shall soon have the engine at work, and that will help you.'

Leaving the quartermaster to get the sail over the stern, the lieutenant went down into the engine-room.

'Either the propeller or the end of the shaft has made a hole in her skin, Mr Groves. You must disconnect the engine from the shaft, and set it to work the pump. You won't want pressure for that, and would help us if you could manage ever so little.'

'All right, sir; I will do the best I can. I am taking the cylinder cover off, and am going to put canvas underneath it, and then screw it down again with whitelead. It would not stand any pressure; but if we work with ten or twelve pounds of steam, it might do for the pumps.'

'Well, be as quick as you can, Mr Groves, for every minute is of consequence.'

Going on deck again, he went aft and saw to the sail being lashed securely under her bottom.

'Now we will go down aft, quartermaster, with some blankets and canvas, and see if we can get at the place and stop it inside.'

The water was already six inches over the floor-board when they descended. After some work they got to the stern-post, and found the water pouring in through a jagged hole a foot in length. It was close to the stern-post, and was difficult to get at. However, blankets and sails were jammed in, and kept in their place by some pieces of spars, sawn up and wedged against the bulkhead at the end of the compartment. When this was done the lieutenant went again to the engine-room.

'We cannot stop it altogether, Mr Groves, but it is not coming in so fast now.'

'I shall be ready in another few minutes,' the engineer said. 'I think it will work the pumps then if the crank is all right.'

'Have you any water below here?'

'No, sir; I have just taken up a plate to see.'

'That is satisfactory. It shows the bulkhead of the engine-room holds all right;' and the lieutenant again went on deck.

'Get the white light down, quartermaster; we rank as a sailing-ship now.'

The minutes went on, and Winter listened impatiently for the revolving of the engine. In a quarter of an hour the engineer came up.

'I am sorry to say that it won't work, sir. The packing has blown out without her moving. It is that crank that does it.'

'Well, you must try again, Mr Groves,' the lieutenant said quietly. 'You had better see if you can't get the crank right first.—How is the water, quartermaster?' he asked as the engineer went down.

'Gaining, sir; not very fast, but it is two inches deeper than it was when you came up. She is down a lot by the stern.'

'See that the boat is ready for launching, quartermaster. Get a compass, bag of biscuits, and a keg of water on board; and you can put two or three bottles of rum in. I hope it won't come to that, but it is better to be prepared. Let the men put some of their things into their kit-bags; not too much, you know. We don't want more weight on board than we can help; but they may as well take their best things. We can heave them over if the sea gets too heavy. Send Brown to me.'

'Brown,' he went on as the man who worked as his servant came up, 'go below and pack my small portmanteau. Just put in my full-dress uniform and anything else it will hold. Put the signal-books in, and the log-book. Fasten the sextant-case and chronometer outside, so that they can all be carried together.'

Another two hours passed; the utmost efforts of the engineer had been unavailing to start the engine; the stern was below the water, and the bow stood up high in the air. Every wave as it followed ran up the deck.

'Get ready to launch the boat, quartermaster,' the lieutenant said; and calling down the tube, he summoned the engineer and stokers on deck.

'I am going to take to the boat, Mr Groves. With this weight of water in her stern, she may break her back any moment and go down like a stone.'

The boat was swung out, and the men began to take their places in her, when the quartermaster said, 'There is a steamer's light, sir, coming up behind us.'

'Thank God for that!' the lieutenant said earnestly. 'Send up a signal-rocket and burn a blue light. Put two or three blue lights into the boat.'

The rocket soared up, and the blue light burned brightly.

'Now, quartermaster, let two men lower the boat; we will get in when she is in the water. That is right. Now, fend her off carefully. Jump in, lads. There is a blue light on board the steamer, so she sees us.'

Groves and the lieutenant followed, and took their seats in the boat.

'Get out your oars, lads. Now, quartermaster, fire another blue light. That is right. She is not a mile astern; we shall be on board in another ten minutes. Row steadily, men; we have only got to keep her head to the sea, and the steamer will bear down to us and pick us up.'

They had rowed for five minutes when the stroke-oar said, 'She has gone, sir; I think I saw the light of the side-lights a minute ago, and now it has disappeared.'

'Thank God we are out of her!' Winter said reverently. 'I was sure she could not stand that strain long. Another blue light, quartermaster; the steamer is not a quarter of a mile away now.'

The steamer was still burning blue lights, and cheers came up from the sailors and passengers on board as the boat approached her side. A minute later a rope was thrown to her, and a ladder was lowered.

'Now watch your time, lads, and mind how you spring, one at a time—that is the way.'

It needed care, for the steamer was rolling heavily now that she had lost her way. All gained the ladder in safety, Winter being the last to leave the boat, which was then allowed to drop astern, to tow there for the present. The captain was standing at the top of the gangway when the lieutenant came up.

'I congratulate you, sir, on having saved all your hands.'

'I think,' Winter said, smiling, 'that it is to you those words should be addressed. Things were looking very bad when we saw your lights astern. The sea is not heavy yet for an open boat in good trim; but we were closely packed, and the wind is getting up. The lookout would have been a poor one if you had not fortunately come along.'

'One of the torpedo-boats, the men told me!'

'Yes; No. 240. We struck a piece of floating wreckage, which carried away the propeller and knocked a hole through the skin; the shock disabled the engine, so that it could not work the pumps.'

'Well, you will be glad to get into dry clothes. Mr Witherington, our purser, has a cabin ready for you; fortunately the couple for whom it was reserved did not come on board. Your men have taken the portmanteau down there.'

Following the purser, the lieutenant made his way through the passengers, who were clustering round.

'Why, you have brought the large portmanteau, Brown. I told you the small one.'

'Well, sir, I thought it was a pity to leave pretty nigh everything behind; and as I was able to put the sextant and chronometer in here, it did not take up more room, and I got it stowed away in the stern sheets snug enough.'

'Well, now we are here, I am glad you did, Brown, as I expect we shall have to cross the Atlantic and back, and it is certainly a comfort having one's own clothes. Now you had better

hurry off, Brown, and find your own kit. I will come forward as soon as I have got into dry things, and see that the men get everything they want.'

As the lieutenant was dressing, the steward brought him a basin of hot soup, and the sight of this reminded him that he had had nothing since breakfast. As soon as he was dressed he went into the saloon. As he entered, one of the lady passengers rose and came towards him with outstretched hands.

'Miss Aspern!' he exclaimed in surprise.

'That is so, Mr Winter. I thought it was you when the boat came up, and I saw your face by the blue light. You see, they said it was a torpedo-boat when they saw your signal burning on board, and of course that added to my interest in the affair. But here is mamma wanting to speak to you.'

'We are very glad to see you, Mr Winter. Clemence was quite excited when the captain said it was one of the torpedo-boats. She said directly she felt sure that it was yours.'

'I am afraid that that is not a compliment to my seamanship, Miss Aspern.'

'It does not seem like it, certainly,' the girl replied. 'What I thought was, that we seemed fated to run against you. You see, we met at Montreal, and we met again at Cork, and so it seemed likely that we might meet again.'

'In other words, Miss Aspern,' the lieutenant

said laughingly, 'it struck you that I was the sort of man that was always turning up like a bad penny; but you must please excuse me now. I must go and look after my men, and see if they are comfortable.'

That duty was speedily performed. The men were all engaged in a hearty supper forward, Groves was established in the engineers' mess, and the lieutenant was not long in finding his way back to the saloon.

'I have not inquired yet as to the name of the ship, Miss Aspern. I need not ask where she is going after seeing you on board.'

'Her name is the *Manitoba*; and if you mean, of course, that she is going to New York, you are wrong; she is bound for Quebec.'

'Quebec?' he repeated in surprise. 'Why are you going round that way, Miss Aspern?'

'Well, the idea struck me that I should like to look in at Lucy Meadows again at Montreal; and as mamma didn't mind which way we went, here we are, you see.'

'Well, I regard it as a wonderful piece of luck, Miss Aspern—on my part, of course. I am very sorry to lose my boat, but fortunately I cannot be blamed for that. Anyhow, if she was to be lost, it could not have happened at a more convenient time and place.'

'Now you must tell us all about it, Mr Winter. I am all anxiety to know how that dear little boat came to be wrecked.'

THE INDUSTRIES OF IRELAND.

BELLEEK.

By MARY GORGES.



THE village of Belleek—the site of Ireland's only china factory—is on the banks of the river Erne, near the borders of Donegal and Fermanagh, and on the skirts of the Donegal highlands. Formerly it was one of the most poverty-stricken places in Ireland; now it is clean, thriving, and has excellent hotel accommodation—a change not owing to the many attractions which draw tourists to its neighbourhood, but to the industry established nearly forty years since—the creation, as it literally is, of the genius and industry of one man, Mr R. W. Armstrong.

Belleek bears witness to the fact that 'the true benefactors of Ireland are the manufacturers,' and that Ireland has no such friend 'as he who stimulates her children to develop at the same time their own great inherent powers and the neglected resources of their country.'

As often happens, the discovery of the riches contained in the soil was made by accident. I take a very clear and full account of this from a

paper contributed to the *Art Journal* about fifteen years after the establishment of the porcelain manufactory, to which it led: 'On the estate of John Caldwell Bloomfield of Castle Caldwell—of which Belleek forms a portion—it was observed that the cabin of a tenant was adorned by an unusually brilliant coat of whitewash. On being questioned, the peasant explained that he had lighted on an old lime-pit, or a supply of "naturally burned lime." This seemed so strange that Mr Bloomfield had the spot examined, and, in consequence of what he found, had borings made in different parts of his estate, which ere long disclosed the existence of a wide stratum of fine white earth. On chemical examination at Dublin this earth proved to be a species of kaolin—a feldspathic clay similar to that which forms the "bones" or interior infusible portion of Chinese porcelain. Other materials were necessary in order to establish a manufacture of pottery from this china-clay, but it proved that the description of feldspathic earth, which is fusible, and which in China, under the name of *pet-un-zz*, forms the

"flesh" or flux of the porcelain, was also to be found on Mr Bloomfield's estate, together with many other valuable minerals.'

These feldspars were submitted to Mr Armstrong, then architect and civil engineer by profession, and residing in London. He repeatedly visited Castle Caldwell, noting with keen eye not only the large quantities of feldspar and other mineral products, but the all but illimitable water-power available, where the Erne concentrates its force and empties itself in tremendous volume over the then picturesque Falls of Belleek. He had a number of trials made from the clay, feldspar, white quartz, &c. at the Royal Porcelain Works, Worcester, where Mr W. H. Kerr, one of the proprietors of these works, and an Irishman, interested himself heartily in having the Irish material tested and tried in every possible way. So satisfactory were the results that, having procured the co-operation of the local landlords, Mr Armstrong formulated a feasible scheme for the establishment of an Irish pottery, and laid it before Mr D. M'Birney, a wealthy Dublin merchant, well known for his energy and enterprise. He took the matter up warmly, ultimately embarking with Mr Armstrong in the practical trial of producing 'first-class ceramic goods in Ireland, made by Irish labour on Irish soil;' an enterprise which at once took root and flourished, and was carried on with singular success, until the death of Mr M'Birney in 1882, followed unfortunately only one year afterwards by that of Mr Armstrong, who was the resident partner and sole director of the works.

It was Mr M'Birney's money that had made the venture possible, while to Mr Armstrong's rare artistic ability and cultivated taste is due the very high standard of excellence which has made Belleek ware famous the wide world over. It may be judged, therefore, how overwhelming was the loss sustained by this still young industry, in which the hearts of its founders were bound up. Great fears, indeed, were entertained as to the possibility of continuing it; but happily, after some fluctuations, it weathered the storm, passing into the hands of its present proprietors, who are carrying it on successfully. The present manager, a native of the locality, is a worthy pupil of the late Mr Armstrong, and his great ability as a designer and modeller guarantees the same purity of taste in form and colour.

But to go back to 'beginnings'—that time of interest, uncertainty, and excitement, whether in the history of an individual or an enterprise. At the outset all the skilled labour was of necessity imported from Staffordshire; but very soon the natives of the district, who began as apprentices, became experts in the various processes of the manufacture, and now for many years the fame of Belleek has been solely made and maintained by native genius and industry.

At the International Exhibition in Dublin in

1865 the sight of this new description of ceramic ware, produced from Irish clays and feldspars by the skill of Irish hands and the exercise of Irish taste, took the general public by surprise—a surprise equalled by the admiration expressed for the porcelain exhibited, the purity and beauty of the material, the ivory tint of its lustrous glaze, and the modelling of its graceful proportions. But nothing excited so much enthusiasm as the groups in porcelain of sporting and other dogs, which delighted equally the keen sportsman and the skilled art judge. I have heard each of these speak of the spirit and beauty, the absolute truth to nature in attitude and expression, the exquisite modelling, of those dogs. The marine shell porcelains came from the same designer, a Mr Dunbar, who, though an amateur, worked with his own hands in the pottery, and to him in those early years it owed much.

A writer in the *Art Journal* says: 'The chief peculiarities of Belleek ornamental ware are its lightness of body, its rich, delicate, cream-like or ivory tint, and the glittering iridescence of its glaze. Although the principal productions hitherto have been formed of this white ware, local clays have been found which yield jet, red, and cane-coloured wares, and fac-similes of sea-shells and of branches of coral are shown by some of the agents which might well be supposed to be natural. The iridescent effect produced is somewhat similar to the ruby lustre of Gubbio majolica, that famous Italian enamelled ware of which an unrivalled collection is to be seen at the South Kensington Museum.'

Some of the illustrations which are given in the *Art Journal* convey a very clear idea of the great beauty of form and originality of design which was attained. Four of these illustrations are of pieces from a tea and dessert service ordered respectively by the Queen and the Prince of Wales, and mention is also made of a breakfast and dessert service as being then in progress for Her Majesty. To this I may add that quite recently the Queen was supplied with a breakfast-set costing fifty pounds.

The sea has suggested many of the designs for Belleek ware, as was natural from the proximity of the wild coast of Donegal. But the designer has the merit of being the first artist to use the sub-kingdom of the Radiata for his types. The animals of this great natural group are for the most part characterised 'by a star-shaped or wheel-shaped symmetry. From the globular shape of the commonest sea-urchin, through the flattened and depressed form of others of the family, the transition is regular and gradual to the well-known five-fingered star-fish, and to those wonderfully branched and foliated forms which shatter themselves into a thousand fragments when they are brought up by the dredge from deep water and exposed for a moment to the air. Under the name of *frutti di*

mare these sea-eggs, covered as they are by innumerable pink and white spines, form a favourite portion of the diet of the southern Italians. When the spines by which the creature moves are stripped off, the projections and depressions of the testa, or shell, are often marked by great beauty of pattern; and it would hardly have been possible to bring into the service of plastic art a more appropriate group of natural models.' In more conventional designs, such as the mermaid, the nereid, the dolphin, and the sea-horse, a great excellence has been attained, and the happiest effect is produced by the contrast between the dead, Parian-like surface of the unglazed china and the sparkling iridescence of the ivory-glazed ground. This effect was very striking in the dessert-service made for the Prince of Wales. Three mermaids in Parian ware support the shell-formed base of the ice-pail, around which a group of Tritons and dolphins are sporting in the water. A wreath of coral surrounds the rim of the vase. The cover is, as it were, the boiling, surging sea, from which three sea-horses have partially risen, while in the centre a Triton riding on a dolphin forms the handle. Another piece of this service is a tazza-vase, considered 'one of the most faultless specimens that Irish taste has produced.' It stands on a pedestal, round which hangs a wreath of flowers dependent from rams' heads. 'The form is purely classic, the design as delicate as it is possible to wish anything to be, and the soft, creamy, unglazed white of the Parian ware—as this kind of biscuit is called—is equal, if not superior, to the finest specimens of any similar porcelain.'

The Belleek wares have found their way into the United States, Canada, India, and Australia. But any one wishing to judge at home of the present-day products can satisfy themselves, as I did, by a visit to the establishment of Mr Perceval Jones, Westmoreland Street, Dublin, that the former high standard of art is maintained, and that skill and taste continue to reign supreme in the manufacture of our one Irish porcelain. The new 'Neptune ware' is beautiful. I saw exhibited here the daintiest little afternoon tea-service in this—the tray shaped like a shell, with a rough surface to represent coral; the cups, cream-jug, and tea-pot formed likewise of glistening shells, the lid of the latter one shell; while the most delicate yet vivid green, the green of the budding grass, or rather of a certain filmy seaweed when, as it lies just under the water, it catches the glittering sunbeams, is wreathed like coral stems, so as to form both a rim and handles. The lovely contrast with pure and lustrous white may be imagined. The price of this tea-service was two pounds seven shillings and sixpence, which seemed to me moderate, remembering sums paid in former years for afternoon tea-services not to be compared to this in beauty of design or workmanship. There were many other specimens of Belleek china on view at this establishment:

baskets in open or trellis work, vases, flower-stands, jugs, little buckets and pails, some in marine design, some with shamrock-wreaths, and handles deftly moulded as coral or shamrock stems, to carry out the idea in each. The 'Irish pot' was very much in evidence, and exceedingly quaint and 'fetching' it looked in Parian. I saw pots and jugs which presented no appearance of cheapness, yet marked as low as one shilling.

My experience of Belleek ware on that day was not to end here. I was spending the afternoon with a friend, and noticed on the mantelpiece two most beautiful models of sporting dogs in this very Parian. It seems they had been bequeathed to the husband of my hostess, and were of great value. She had not heard their previous history, but it was easy to recognise them as some of the famous work designed and modelled by Mr Dunbar, and so admired at the Dublin Exhibition of 1865.

The glory of Belleek, and its speciality, is this exquisite Parian or ivory china, on which the stamp of approval has been set by many nations. It is to be found in all the cities and large towns in England, Ireland, and Scotland; also in Paris, and in the chief cities of America. Indeed, the trade with America is large and constantly increasing. Besides this fancy china, which includes dinner, breakfast, and tea services, and toilet sets, commoner wares are produced for household and for sanitary purposes. All requisites for kitchen, pantry, and dairy use are included in this household ware, while the sanitary is well known and recommended by the most eminent sanitary engineers in the United Kingdom. Many tons of this ware go to Paris annually.

The works, which are both substantial and extensive, present a fine architectural appearance, and are fitted up with all modern machinery and requisites for a first-class pottery. The decorative department is one of the most important and interesting, and so comprehensive as to include every known and approved means for the embellishment of ceramics. In the airy, well-lighted rooms the workmen may be seen busily engaged at the various branches, gilding, ground-laying, tinting, lustring, painting, &c. Over two hundred hands are employed at these works. Dinner-sets range in price from two pounds five shillings to sixteen pounds; breakfast-sets from two pounds ten shillings to fifteen guineas; toilet-sets from five shillings to two pounds ten shillings; and, as all are highly decorated, the prices seem only in fair and moderate proportion to the time and labour bestowed upon them. In illustration of this, take an ordinary Belleek dinner-plate, having a pretty floral pattern printed under glaze and finished in gold and colours. First of all the pattern must be carefully thought out in every detail and drawn on the plate, the better to judge of its effect. To be good it must be quite original and in strict

accordance with well-defined principles of design. When approved of it is handed over to the engraver, who engraves it on a sheet of copper, from which can be produced a countless number of fac-simile copies of the original design. When finished the copperplate passes on to the printer, who spreads a thin layer of soft colour, mixed with a peculiar kind of oil, all over its surface. Then, taking a large palette-knife, he cleans the colours off, save what is caught in the indentations made by the engraver's tool, and, laying a sheet of thin porous printing-paper over it, he passes it through a heavy press. This causes the colour that lay in the engraving to adhere to the paper, which is now removed and handed to the 'transferer,' who places it carefully, colour side downward, on the biscuit dinner-plate, and rubs it lightly with a flannel pad, after which it is immersed in water, when the paper is easily withdrawn, leaving the colours behind to form the pattern. The next stage is to the enamellers, where a portion of the design is filled with red, blue, yellow, and

other rich colours. The plate has yet to be glazed. As the colour is mixed with oil and the glaze is prepared with water, the necessity arises of firing the piece in the 'hardening-on' kiln, which has the effect of burning out the oil without detaching the colour. From the 'hardening-on' kiln it passes to the dipping-house, where it is dipped in the liquid which forms the glaze, and thence through the 'glost' oven. When the plate is enhanced by gilding, it requires an additional firing in the enamel-kiln, as gold will not stand the extreme heat of the 'glost' oven. After firing, it requires burnishing to make it shine in full brilliancy. Belleek turns out very high-class decoration in lovely shades of pink, mauve, blue, green, &c. To attain a still greater degree of perfection hand-painting is resorted to, and pretty designs are produced of birds, flowers, &c., and of local scenery, which is most admired. Recently one of the leading Indian Rajahs ordered a dinner-set decorated with local scenery and hand-painted, which cost fifty pounds.

THE MASTER AND THE BEES.

PART II.

THE honey really is beautiful this year, sir,' remarked Mrs Peggy, some weeks after the foregoing events, as she was putting a dish of it on the table for her master's simple tea; for Edward Martyn was old-fashioned in his habits, and stuck to the old-fashioned five o'clock tea, with the white cloth on the table, on which home-made tea-cakes, and home-made jams, and honey were set, but nothing of a more satisfying nature.

'Yes, I think it is the nicest we have had, Peggy. We could get a prize if we cared to exhibit.'

'The combs really is lovely, sir. I must show you a splendid piece I've got, and the honey draining from it grand.'

Suiting the action to the word, she fetched from her pantry stores a huge block of pure-white comb on one of those large, deep china dishes so much in vogue in our grandmothers' day.

'There!' she exclaimed triumphantly, setting it on the table; 'if that ain't a piece as any bee-fancier might be proud on, my name ain't Peggy Partington.'

'It's a pleasure to look at, and I really do feel proud of it, Peggy; and you may be equally so, for it is owing to your care and attention that the bees have flourished so well,' he replied, smiling.

Now, as he sat enjoying his honey, the thought came into his mind how much he would like Miss Adlington to taste it; and there and then

he determined to take her a jar and ask her acceptance of it. But the crucial point was how to get it conveyed to its destination without Peggy knowing. Somehow—he could hardly have said why—he did not care for her sharp eyes to see him carrying honey to Sycamore Cottage.

Late that night, when his housekeeper was sound asleep, the master crept stealthily, like a guilty schoolboy, into the pantry and counted the honey-jars.

'Nine!' he exclaimed. 'Ah! that's better than an even number. I can take one and rearrange them, I fancy, so that Peggy won't discover the theft.' And he did.

The next evening found him wending his way to Chestnut Lane, with a jar of honey securely tied up in two thicknesses of brown paper in the pocket of his tail-coat.

He felt more than usually awkward when he entered the pretty sitting-room in which Dorothy was seated by the open window at some fancy-work; but his nervousness increased tenfold after he sat down, for, on putting his hand behind him, to his horror he felt the honey trickling out of his pocket on to the chair. The perspiration stood in large drops upon his forehead, and he made several ineffectual attempts to rise, but felt as though he were glued to the chair. At length, making a desperate effort, he said hesitatingly:

'I've b-brought you some honey from my bees, and'—

'How kind of you!' interrupted Dorothy, anxious to put him at ease. 'I have often thought about

your naughty bees that gave you so much trouble, and wondered how they have behaved since. It was so tiresome for you.'

'I am very g-glad they swarmed here, or I should not have known you.'

'Then I am grateful to the bees too,' she replied, smiling; 'for I am glad to know you. But where is my honey? On the hall-table?'

'N-no; it's in my pocket, and I'm afraid'—

'Oh!' she exclaimed in a dismayed tone, 'it will be running away, and spoiling your pocket and coat. Oh, dear! dear!' This as she saw the honey like a snail-trail on the chair, from which he had risen in much trepidation.

'I really am so sorry,' he said, taking the sticky jar from his pocket.

'Oh, never mind,' she replied cheerfully. 'There are worse things at sea. A damp cloth will soon put the chair right. But I am afraid your coat is in a bit of a mess;' and, despite her efforts to keep grave, she could not help laughing when she saw how woe-begone he looked.

He smiled too, but somewhat ruefully.

'I'm an awkward, blundering fellow. You'll wish me and the honey far enough, making such a mess.'

'Now, please, don't mind, Mr Martyn; there is no harm done. Here, Lizzie'—this to the neat, trim maid who had entered in obedience to her summons—'will you take this jar of honey Mr Martyn has kindly brought us, and bring a damp cloth to wipe off the stickiness? We have managed to spill a little somehow.'

After the coat-pocket had been well rubbed by Lizzie, and the wet towel applied here and there to the coat, Dorothy suggested that they should go into the garden to look at a rose-bush which was one mass of bloom, and one of her father's special favourites.

Here they found Mr Adlington engaged watering, picking off dead leaves, and tidying up generally.

Long after dusk they lingered in the still evening air, as though loath to break the spell that the golden red sunset had left upon them.

As before, Mr Martyn stayed to the dainty little supper; and when his eyes desisted the ill-fated honey-jar he exchanged amused glances with Dorothy.

As he walked home that night through the silent streets of the little town, Edward Martyn knew that he loved Dorothy Adlington—loved her with the strong first love of a man who has all his life gone hungry and hardly realised it until the Land of Goshen was in sight. And now the silent stars told her name, the rustling leaves whispered 'Dorothy,' and the birds when they sang warbled 'Dor-r-r-r-o-o-th-y,' 'Dor-r-r-r-o-o-th-y,' over and over again, and his own heart trembled with a secret interwoven with joy and fear.

In those days a change came over the master.

The boys felt it, but could not have defined it; but somehow, when Jackson felt 'awfully down about his exam.,' he found himself telling the master how disappointed his people would be if he did not pass, and sympathy and help being tendered him from 'Carrots;' and when Jimmy Beans lost his chance of the second-form prize, it was the master who, finding him weeping in a corner, comforted and cheered him by kindly words of encouragement; and Robinson said 'Carrots was a brick, as he took no end of trouble with that cad Evans, to show him how wrongly he had acted.'

Yes. Love—the glorifier, the beautifier, the transformer—had come into his life; and because of this he wanted to make every one around him brighter and happier. Even though he should never enter the gates of Eden, he knew that he was a better and truer man for knowing and loving Dorothy Adlington.

During that spring and following summer he found many excuses for coming to Sycamore Cottage; plants, roots, flowers, even bees and honey, were pressed into the service; and Mr Adlington, fond as he was of his garden, had never had it so gay.

One day, the talk turning on the varied colouring of butterflies, he ventured to ask father and daughter if they would spend an evening with him, and then he would show them his collection.

'I know it is worth looking at, for the curator at the museum in B—— said it was the finest private collection he'd seen,' he added, with pardonable pride.

They thanked him, and said how pleased they would be to come; so one evening Dorothy, in her blue-and-white gown, which her father said 'matched her eyes,' set out with him to the schoolhouse.

She was delighted at the thought of seeing its oak doors and carved oak mantelpieces, as she had often heard them spoken of with veneration by lovers of the antique.

Mrs Peggy had put on the best damask tablecloth and brought out the blue-and-white china which had belonged to the master's grandmother, and placed in the centre the deep dish with a beautiful piece of honey in the comb; but it was his hand that gave the finishing touches to the table by placing here and there old-fashioned vases filled with blue-and-white flowers.

When Dorothy entered the oak-panelled room she thought she had never seen anything so quaint and old, and yet so pretty and dainty, in her life.

Of course she presided, and looked charming. He wondered if she remembered that it was in that 'frock' he had first seen her; he hoped she did.

The evening passed all too quickly; and the master, having interested, intelligent listeners, showed himself to the best advantage.

Mr Adlington was amazed at the splendid collection, not only of butterflies, but of all sorts of insects, that he had to exhibit to them, and expressed the hope that he might often come and explore the wealth the cases contained at his leisure.

In the dusk they walked down to the beehives; and, whilst Mr Adlington was busy contemplating something at the other end of the garden, Edward Martyn said:

'I take off my hat to my bees every day and whisper to them.'

'Do you?' replied Dorothy, laughing. 'What do you say?'

'I say, "Thank you, O Bees! Bees! for swarming at Sycamore Cottage."'

Dorothy coloured slightly, but replied laughingly:

'How pretty and poetical of you!'

He looked at her, and what he would have said remained unspoken, for at that moment Mr Adlington's voice called out:

'Dorothy! Dorothy! come and look at this beautiful variegated leaf. I never saw one so delicately veined.'

As Edward Martyn helped the girl on with her pretty light wrap at the close of the evening, he wondered if he would ever have the exquisite bliss of folding her in his arms and saying, 'My wife.' He prayed God that he might.

And Dorothy? After kissing her father good-night, instead of getting into bed she sat, with her lovely hair falling about her shoulders, thinking, and Edward Martyn occupied by far the larger portion of her thoughts.

Did Mr Adlington suspect that his 'little girl's' heart had been stolen by the grave, shy scholar? If he did he never said so; but he smiled to himself when he found flowers and honey so plentiful that year.

The autumn following that summer lingered long; and in October, with its red, russet, and yellow leaves and changing tints, came the crowning glory of an Indian summer.

It was on one of those days redolent with the scents of autumn that the master went to London, none knew why or where; but the stroke of two found him in Wimpole Street, inside the consulting-room of one of the leading physicians of the day.

He was a brave man where physical pain was concerned; still, he dreaded the verdict that the great doctor would pronounce, not because of what he might have to suffer, but—*because he loved.*

'As you ask me to tell you the exact truth,' the physician said, not unkindly, 'I must say that your symptoms are very grave. The heart is considerably dilated; still, with care—great care, you know—you may live many years.'

Edward Martyn listened as one in a dream.

'What is your profession or business?'

'I am a schoolmaster.'

'Ah! Ahem! Well, as long as you can teach without exciting yourself you are all right.'

'Thank you,' he said as he rose to go. 'I suppose the pain will always be present?'

'Not necessarily; this prescription may do much for you. Still, I repeat, you must be very careful.'

Out again in the brilliant autumn sunshine, amidst the happy chattering groups of men and maidens, boys and girls, he wondered what burden each one carried under a careless exterior, for it seemed to him then as though every one must lie in the shadow.

On he walked, heedless of time, till he found himself crushing beneath his feet the yellow, golden leaves fallen from the trees in Hyde Park; then he realised how far he had come and how late the hour. He retraced his steps quickly, then stopped suddenly in his hurried walk, saying, 'I forgot; I must not hurry,' and called a hansom.

He reached home at the time he had stated, and Peggy had supper awaiting him; but she ventured to remonstrate when she came to take away the things and noticed that he had scarcely touched the food that she had prepared with so much care.

'Really, sir, I do think as you did ought to see a doctor. You've been quite off your food lately.'

He smiled faintly. 'How little she knew! And how her warm, honest heart would grieve when she did know!' he thought.

'It is a shame, Peggy, that such good cooking should be unappreciated; but I am not just up to the mark. When the holidays come, and I get a good rest, I shall feel better. It only wants a few weeks.'

'A few weeks!' snapped Peggy. 'What you want, sir, if I may make so bold, is rest now, not to wait for the holidays. Them boys 'ud wear out an archangel, let alone a human.'

At this the master laughed heartily in spite of himself, telling Peggy he was sorry that she entertained so poor an opinion of his promising pupils.

Three or four weeks passed—weeks of conflict and indecision, and weeks in which he purposely avoided Dorothy. Day after day and hour after hour he asked himself the question, Would it be right to ask her to become his wife under the circumstances of his delicate health? And at length he decided it would not; but only God and himself knew what that decision cost him.

'I will tell her I love her, and why I cannot ask her to be my wife; for I should like the little girl to know, though she can never be mine, that she has won all I ever had and ever shall have to give: the love of a poky—yes, that was what they called me—old bookworm. Oh! but it's hard, my God! What awful limitations this life has!' Thus he thought.

Again he stood by the bee-hives, decaying leaves and signs of approaching winter around ; and yet over all there lingered the last faint touches of the dying autumn.

The town was keeping holiday in honour of some local event, and Mrs Peggy had gone to see the display of bunting, &c., leaving tea ready in the oak-panelled room ; but the master did not feel like holidaying. As he paced the gravel path backwards and forwards his thoughts went back to that day in spring when he heard the girlish voice saying, 'He's far cleverer than any one in the town. It's better to be clever and shy than'— And he knew now that his then unknown champion was Dorothy Adlington. Had he not learnt by heart every tone of her voice and— Why, there it was sounding in his ears this very moment, as, the garden-door being gently opened, he heard :

'Mr Martyn ! Mr Martyn ! are you there ?' and a laughing face appeared round the corner.

He came forward ; and, in her sweet, unconventional way, Dorothy extended her hand, saying :

'I rapped several times ; then I rang ; and, getting no answer, I thought I'd try the garden as a last resource. So I came into the lane, and peeped in, and saw you. Father has sent you a message. He has not been out for several days ; he has had a nasty cold, and I have been doctoring him, and he is a little tired of poultices and gruel, and wonders if you will take pity on him and have a game at chess—will you ?'

He looked at her with a sort of pained look in his eyes, and she knew in an instant that he was not well, not himself. Her face changed, and she said gently :

'Aren't you well, Mr Martyn ? I am so sorry.'

He moved a step nearer and answered :

'I am not very well ; but, Dor—Miss Adlington, will you listen to me for a few minutes—let us stand by the bee-hives—while I tell you what perhaps you may care little to hear ?'

The hot blood suffused her cheeks, and as she looked at him something in her shy eyes told him that there might have been hope for him ; but she answered not a word. For a moment there was absolute silence, unless for the floating of a leaf here and there, which the soft south wind carried away from the trees.

'I went to London a few weeks ago,' he continued, 'to consult one of the first physicians about myself ; and—the verdict is bad. My heart is seriously affected, and—I can never hope to marry ; but, oh, Dorothy !'—here he touched her hand—'had I been strong and well I had hoped one day to gain your love ; but my dream is over. Only, my darling ! my darling !'—here he took her unresisting hands, and looked into her face with a great, tender love—'I wanted you to know that I loved you from the first night I saw you—nay, even before ; and here by the bees, which have shared my joy, I tell you, my little girl,

that you are my first and only love. Even though it is nothing to you, I felt it was right that you should know it.'

'But it is something to me,' she answered in a low, tremulous voice.

'Dorothy !' he exclaimed, 'is it possible that you care for me ?' and, throwing aside all the restraint he had imposed upon himself, he clasped her in his arms.

'Only for once, just once, my little girl. Never again ; only this once.'

For a moment or two neither spoke, and then Dorothy said softly :

'Tell me all the doctor said.'

So, pacing slowly up and down in front of the hives, out of which a stray bee crept now and again, he told her all : how he had loved her ; how he had longed to tell her so, and dared not, thinking she would never care for an old 'poky' fellow like him ; and yet he had hoped. Then came the crushing blow—the doctor's verdict.

'I had not felt well for some time,' he said, 'but put it down to ordinary causes—overwork, &c. But latterly the pain at my heart had become so severe at times that I knew there must be something wrong ; but I never dreamt I was suffering from anything serious. So, now, darling, if I have done wrong in speaking to you of my love, forgive me ; but I could not bear the thought that you should think I had paid you attention and meant nothing by it. Again I say, forgive me.'

'There is nothing to forgive,' replied Dorothy sadly. 'I would far rather know that you loved me. I think it an honour to be loved by you.'

'Oh Dorothy !'

Again there was silence, in which the busy hum of the little town came floating towards them, accompanied by the discordant sounds of various sorts of music. Edward Martyn thought that he should ever retain those sounds in his brain, and a similar thought was in Dorothy's mind. At length he said wistfully :

'The doctor said the medicine might do much for me ; perhaps'—

'Oh ! you will get strong and well if you take great care and do as he told you. People often live the longest who have to be careful,' she said, smiling at him.

'And then, would you be my wife, Dorothy ?'

He read the answer in her face, though she did not reply in words.

'But, my darling, it does not seem fair to ask you to wait. You must be perfectly free, so that if'—

'If any one else asks me I can say yes,' she interrupted, laughingly. 'Then you don't really mind very much.'

The laugh was infectious, and a great hope sprang up in him at that moment that he would get better.

They talked on oblivious of time, until Dorothy, hearing the church clock strike, exclaimed :

'Father will think I am lost.'

'May I come in this evening, then?'

'Father asked you,' she replied demurely.

He took her hand and drew her towards him, and saying, 'May I?' kissed her reverently.

'I am glad it was by the bees that I told you of my love. I wonder if they know all they have done for me. I owe them much.'

'I, too, am in their debt,' she said, smilingly, as she closed the garden-door behind her.

It was thus the master told his love.

In a sunny garden, facing the south, a man and woman stood gazing at the fair scene that stretched out before them. They had been silent for some minutes, lost in happy memories; then he turned towards her, and taking her hand, said :

'Dorothy, you've never regretted it?'

The look she gave him satisfied him, though she spoke no word; and again there was the silence born of perfect understanding.

Suddenly a dark speck loomed on the horizon, and she exclaimed :

'There they are, Edward!'

'What? Where? The bees?' he answered excitedly. 'So they are. Now we must manage to take them somehow.'

'Oh, we shall manage them all right. They are coming in our direction. I have become an adept at swarm-taking since the days at Burycum-Thorpe.'

The master took off his hat as the dark mass came nearer, and made obeisance to them, saying as he did so:

'Every day I thank you, O Bees! Bees! and to-night I thank you again.'

ANTIQUE GOBLETS AND DRINKING-VESSELS.



MUCH of the best work of the craftsmen of former times was expended on the ornamentation of the gold and silver goblets and drinking-vessels of various kinds, regarded by our ancestors as among their most precious possessions. These old 'mazers' and tankards, moreover, with their humbler relatives in brown stoneware, have many an association with various phases of social life which have passed away; and the sense of an allusion in literature may often be missed without some knowledge of the curious names and shapes with which they have been endowed.

In Anglo-Saxon days, when long and deep potations were frequent, the drinking cup or horn was held in high estimation, and the old poem in *Beowulf* tells us that among the treasures of the ancient barrow guarded over by the monster Grendel is 'the solid cup, the costly drinking-vessel.' The skull of a fallen foe was not infrequently employed for this purpose. Drinking-cups are often found in Anglo-Saxon tombs, some discovered in the barrows of Kent being of glass, and made on the 'tumbler' principle, so that their contents should be emptied at one draught.

One of the earliest vessels which have come down to us is the celebrated Horn of Ulphus, made of an elephant's tusk, and dating from a period shortly before the Conquest. This horn—now in York Cathedral—is supposed to have been placed on the altar by Ulph, the son of Thorald, the lord of much land in East Yorkshire, in token that he bestowed certain lands on the church of St Peter. Another version of the story is, that this worthy Dane, when his sons were disputing as to the succession to his estate, cut short the dispute by repairing to York Minster, and there

draining the horn before the high-altar as a pledge and evidence of the gift of all his lands and revenues to the Church.

Among curious examples of drinking-vessels are the Peg Tankards, one of which, made of oak, with the figures of the twelve apostles round the sides, was found in the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey. King Edgar, it is said at the instigation of Dunstan, put down many ale-houses, and ordained that pegs should be fastened in the drinking-horns at intervals, in order that whosoever drank beyond certain of these marks at a single draught should be liable to punishment. These peg tankards were divided into eight draughts by means of the pegs, and usually contained two quarts. The edict, however, does not appear to have had the intended effect, for in 1102 we find Anselm decreeing that no priest should 'go to drinking-bouts nor drink to pegs.'

One of the earliest examples of the Mazer (called after a Norse name of the 'maple') is that preserved at Herboldown Hospital, near Canterbury, which dates from the reign of Edward I. This maple-wood bowl stands on a low foot, and measures about eight inches in diameter at the upper edge. It is mounted in silver-gilt, and at the bottom contains a silver-gilt medallion representing Guy of Warwick transfixing a dragon with his lance, while a lion seems about to attack. This cup, which holds six pints of wine, was used at the yearly feast in memory of St Nicholas. Another mazer of the time of Richard II. is of highly polished wood, and has on its silver-gilt rim the following engraved exhortation :

In the name of the Trinitie,
Fille the kup, and drink to me.

Mazers were sometimes lined with silver and

adorned with carving, after the fashion of the one alluded to by the poet Spenser in the lines :

Then lo, Perigot ! the pledge which I plight,
A mazer ywrought of the maple ware,
Wherein is enchaused many a fair sight
Of bears and tigers that maken fierce war.

Frequently the mazer was without feet, and can hardly be distinguished from an alms-dish.

Passing from these ancient vessels—mostly the property of some ecclesiastical foundation—to the more secular Goblet, we find many examples of the high importance which was attached to it in the wills and bequests of early times. The standing cup in which it was customary to receive the wine from the butler's hand, after it had been duly tested or 'assayed,' was at times termed a 'Hanap,' from which the word 'hamper' is supposed to be derived. Various materials were employed in the construction of the more costly vessels, such as gold, silver, the egg of the ostrich, the shell of the coco-nut, and curiously mottled woods.

Cups had frequently distinguishing names and titles ; thus, Richard, Earl of Arundel, in 1392 bequeaths to his wife Philippa her own cup, called 'Bealchier,' while another nobleman of a rather earlier date has a cup of gold with an acorn, called 'Benessone,' and another which went by the name of 'Wassail.'

In the middle of the fifteenth century we find the Prior of Durham mentioning one of his drinking-vessels as 'Beda,' and another as 'Abell.' The standing cup and cover which was sometimes placed on the table, and at others was handed to the lord when he chose to drink, is called a hanaper in Lord Latimer's will in the year 1381—'le grant hanaper d'argent endoeré appellé Saint George.'

The constant fear of poison in which the richer classes stood in former times is often illustrated in the manufacture of drinking-vessels. It was believed that cups made of the horn of the narwhal had the power of detecting poison. Frequent use was made of turquoises, amethysts, crystals, and other precious stones in ornamenting goblets, with some such idea beyond the ostensible purpose of decoration. Queen Elizabeth's silver-gilt cup, standing on three knobs, has its cover, sides, and knobs covered with amethysts of various tints, the interstices being filled with small turquoises.

Precious stones were believed to be endued with many mystical qualities. The turquoise was supposed to have the power of strengthening the eyes, and was also of use in detecting the presence of poison, by becoming of a paler hue. The opal, however, in the goblet of Pope Alexander VI. did not avail him in escaping the fate traditionally assigned to him. In a similar fashion, crystals of various kinds were believed to become clouded. Thus the so-called Poison Cup belonging to Clare College, Cambridge, has a crystal mounted in the centre of the lid. In a translation of Petrarch's *Phisicke against Fortune* (published about 1579) we have a dialogue of 'cuppes made of precious

stones,' in which one of the characters—'Joy' by name—is made to say, 'I am desyrous to drynke in cups of precious stones ;' to which 'Reason' replies, 'Perhaps there is some other cause of so fervent desire : for it is not the glistening only that allureth thee, but some hydden virtue, for who is able to declare all the operations and virtues of precious stones?' And he adds, 'There have been some that have beleevved that by virtue of this stone [the amethyst] promysing them sobrietie they might boldly quaffe without fear of drunkennesse.'

The Duke of Anjou possessed thirty-nine gold and silver goblets in the fourteenth century ; and Charles V. of France had fully as many, and among them one of jasper. Crystal ones were in use, and a sapphire surmounted the cover of a goblet belonging to the queen of Philippe le Bel. While the French King John was a captive in England, we find him paying to a certain John Corbière, a goldsmith of London, three hundred and nine moutons d'or for a goblet weighing nearly six marks, from which he drank until the English kings graciously sent him his own as a present. The memento given by Pope Clement to the unfortunate Charles VI. took the form of a goblet of rock-crystal mounted in gold.

A gilt cup in the shape of a lamp figured in the trousseau of Mary of Burgundy, Countess of Cleves, at the commencement of the fifteenth century ; and we have notice of another made like a candlestick. Cups of the Elizabethan age were occasionally fashioned as gourds or melons, with feet formed as their twisted stems and tendrils. At times they were made to represent birds, as the 'Cockayne' Cup belonging to the Skinners' Company, presented by the widow of a gentleman named Peacock.

One of the finest examples of the goldsmith's art in Stuart times is the Royal Oak Grace Cup, presented to the Barber Surgeons' Company by Charles II. It is over sixteen inches high, and formed as an oak-tree, the trunk and branches supporting the bowl, while the royal crown serves as a cover.

During the sixteenth and following century the quaint Wager or Surprise Cups were in fashion. A familiar example of these takes the form of a woman holding a smaller cup over her head, with arms upstretched, the object of the drinker being to drain the contents of the larger cup without spilling the liquid in the smaller one. Another vessel used for betting purposes was the *Goblet-à-moulin*, or windmill goblet, provided with a small whistle, which, on being blown, set in motion the sails of the mill ; and before they had stopped working, the cup was to be drained.

Grotesque forms were often given to drinking-vessels. Such are the graybeards or Bellarmines, with their rotund bodies, narrow necks, and Silenus-like masks in front, made of a grayish-coloured stoneware, covered by a mottled brown glaze. Cardinal Bellarmine's countenance would appear to have been quite unlike these effigies ; they seem to have been made in Holland when

religious disputes were fierce, and may have been intended by one party to bring ridicule on the other. Another explanation is provided in the story of an Oxford student who, one day returning with a jug of ale under his cloak, on being questioned by a university official, replied that he had merely been to borrow the works of Bellarmine! These grotesque vessels are frequently referred to by writers of the time of Elizabeth and the earlier Stuarts.

Representations of misshapen human beings are to be found among the drinking-vessels of antiquity; and of a similar character is the Toby Pitcher, or image mug, produced in the Staffordshire and other potteries. Another curious bowl, of large dimensions, was styled a 'Jeroboam,' and was generally wrought of metal. The high-stemmed wine-glass of the seventeenth century was sometimes called a 'Tall-boy.'

Of leathern vessels, the most famous was the 'Black Jack,' so called because it resembled a jack or coat of mail or leather. Akin to this, though more capacious, was the 'Bombard,' deriving its name from the huge piece of ordnance so called. References to both of these are frequently to be met with in the literature of the seventeenth century. Thus Grumio, in the *Taming of the Shrew*, says to Curtis, 'Be the jacks fair within, the jills fair without.' And again, in the first part of *Henry IV.*, Prince Hal describes Falstaff as that 'swoln parcel of dropsies, that hugh bumbard of sack;' and in the *Tempest* a black cloud is likened to a 'foul bumbard that would shed his liquor.' In the *Philocthonista* of Heywood the dramatist we read that 'small jacks wee have in many ale-houses of the citie and suburbs tipt with silver, besides the great black jacks and bombards at the court, which, when the Frenchmen first saw, they reported at their returne into their country that the Englishmen used to drink out of their bootes.' Bishop Hall in his *Satires* speaks of 'charging whole boots full to their friends' welfare;' and, indeed, it is on record that actual boots have been employed as drinking-vessels. Marshal Bassompierre, who was sent on an embassy to Switzerland in 1625, drank his friend's health in one of his military boots before returning, ordinary cups being too small for the occasion. Once, too, it was considered a mark of gallantry to toast a fair lady from her shoe. In the song of 'Sir John Barleycorn'—an allegory of the grain of barley, which the farmer, the maltster, the miller, and the brewer are bent on destroying—we read that

Some of them fought in a black-jack,
Some of them in a can;
But the chiefest in a black-pot,
Like a worthy alderman.

The rim of the black-jack was often of silver, and occasionally gilt and decorated with little bells. A test of sobriety, therefore, came to be to drink from one of these vessels or jingle-boxes without producing a tinkling.

The word tankard as applied to drinking-vessels occurs for the first time in the later half of the sixteenth century, and later on we find many examples of tall tankards of ornate design. The most common and familiar article in the cottage of former days was the jug or pitcher of earthenware, often with a set of doggerel rhymes around its rim. One such mug of the peculiar putty-like colour so frequently imitated since bears an inscription telling us that—

This is Thomas Coxe's cup.
Come, my friends, and drink it up.
Good news is come'n, the bells do ring,
And here's a health to Prussia's king.

Another large mug of the famous Fulham brown stoneware is of the year 1740, and is inscribed with the legend, 'Walter Vaughan of Hereford. His mugg, must not be brock!' The beautiful glaze and polish which is a feature of the best pottery of the kind is due to the presence of salt in vapour in the kiln. The earliest notices of stoneware jars in this country occur in the first half of the sixteenth century, and we hear of many with silver covers and neck-mounts at that period, the jugs themselves being probably imported from Cologne. These old drinking-vessels are now very rare and fetch high prices, three stone jugs from the Staniforth collection being sold in 1889 for over three hundred and fifty pounds; while a good specimen of the year 1560, though of small size, realised seventy-one pounds in 1890.

YOUTH AND AGE.

NEW VERSION.

WITH anxious eyes and rigid arms,
With failing breath and odd grimaces,
I rob the cycle of its charms
In quiet places.

But, like a swift and sudden gust,
My grandson, with a smile seraphic,
Goes past me in a cloud of dust
To find the traffic.

He's just a shrimp a girl could toes;
His legs the size of Roman candles,
He wears them mostly thrown across
His battered handles.

At every hill where I dismount
He coasts—or, stay! I think it's 'cruises.'
One day I tried in vain to count
The youngster's bruises.

Ah me! but I am riding down
The Hill that leads into the Distance,
While he is rising to the crown
Of dear Existence.

A word while yet the pace is slow,
From one, my boy, who seldom meddles:
In tempting hills you do not know
Retain your pedals.

R. H. BEGBIE.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



O I L.

By JULIAN CROSEY.



KNOW that the oil-fields have been described over and over again. I have myself read, years ago, in an old *Harper's*, an article on 'A Lampful of Oil,' which probably said all that the encyclopædias say; and

beyond a cursory visit to one or two oil-fields in the States and Ontario, and the gossip of old hands on the spot, I know nothing about oil. Nevertheless, and in spite of this, I am moved to make my own remarks on the industry, from the conceit that a novelist must necessarily have a novel point of view. Moreover, I am writing in Canada; and oil, trite old topic as it is, is beginning to be breathed of mysteriously as one of the new secret treasures of the frozen north. The north coast of Canada is destined to at least as much development as the north coast of Siberia. The world moves, wiping off the old areas and eras of discovery.

My first experience of oil was in China, where at one time it was my business to prepare returns of its importation into that country. Russian oil was then coming into the Eastern market; and it advanced by leaps and bounds, the competition lowering the price of American. Oil thus became the anti-friction advance-guard of civilisation in China. Its insinuating properties glided through the prejudice of centuries. It spread with a steady, rapid, imperceptible stealth into remote parts of that empire, carrying with it the practice and allurements of foreign trade. Lamp-oil and matches are probably the most widely used barbarian innovations in China.

In China, too, I first came into contact with oil-ships. Oil alone preserved a little longer the deep-sea sailor and the noble sailing-ship. Oil is a bulky cargo, and its market is certain and fairly steady in the East. It thus paid better to send it from New York and Philadelphia round Cape Horn, rather than overland by expensive freight train to San Francisco; and to make that long voyage it was necessary to do it cheaply.

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Steamers burn coal, and half their capacity is taken up with engines. Sailing-ships were therefore employed; and so a new impulse was given to shipbuilding, the largest four-masted ships in the world being turned out to carry oil, and fresh employment found for the sailor whose occupation was gone, unless he abandoned the 'sea' and shipped aboard a 'steamboat.'

Another very important economic growth, which, I believe, owes its origin to oil, is the 'combine;' I refer to the Standard Oil Trust (Rockefeller), which, if I am not mistaken, is the father as well as the leader of the huge modern monopoly organisations. Nothing but oil could have produced such an amalgamation, although wheat follows easily; and presently, I presume, we shall see all the tobacco in the world, from Cuba and Manila, as well as from Virginia and Carolina, handled by a single trust, which must surely this time call itself openly the Government. But neither wheat nor tobacco can ever be reduced to one market grade, such as the raw petroleum of Pennsylvania is. The origin of the great combine is common history, although I have not read or heard a definite acknowledgment that this economic system grew directly from physical needs. All the oil was virtually found *en masse* in a more or less level and united district, in the valley of the Alleghany River, between Bradford Field and Pittsburg. As prices went down, the need of economic working, transport, and storage was felt. It began, I believe, with an extended system of pumping worked by a single engine. In 1876 the United Pipe Lines Company was formed. Eight years later pumps, pipes, and tanks were amalgamated in the one company. The oil is now run direct to the ports of shipment by underground pipes, one hundred miles and seventy miles respectively, to Cleveland and Buffalo, on the shores of Lake Erie, for Western and Canadian consumption; and three lines each, from two hundred to three hundred miles long, to the ports of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore, for export abroad. There

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SEPT 16, 1899.

was a talk of running a pipe under the Niagara to supply Canada; but whether it exists or not I have not inquired. I believe there were difficulties in the way of collecting duties.

My next experience of oil was in London, Eng. It is very painful to a Cockney to have to add 'Eng.' after the name of his Metropolis; and I move that the name of London, Ont., should be changed, as well as London, N.Z., &c. There should be but one London in the world, especially now we have imperial penny postage. Well, oil in London, Eng., does not admit of original remarks. Its price last year was sixpence, sevenpence, and tenpence a gallon; and the oils at sevenpence and tenpence were drawn from the same tank by two different pipes. It is a boon to the bachelor, both for light, heat, and cooking. But when I came to Canada, much poorer than I was in England, with six months of short days and cold winter before me, what was my dismay to find that the same oil, American refined, cost one shilling and threepence a gallon—that is to say, more than double the London price! And what is the reason of this absurdity, next door to the oil-country, and in a land where nearly every one is poor, and every one in need of large quantities of oil? Simply the old story of protection—the protection of 'home industries.' For, as an alternative to the dear American oil, you are offered Canadian oil, and that still at tenpence a gallon. Canadian oil I am therefore obliged to use, and my vexation does not diminish. With a very little provocation Canadian oil stinks and smokes, rendering the humble and useful half-crown oil-stove a 'deadly terror' in a small room. Full of indignation, I kicked over my stove and burnt my house down, and rushed off to discover where this abominable oil was produced, and, if possible, to torpedo the whole field. Now, therefore, my article comes up to date, and gets ahead of the encyclopædia. But I regret to confess that there is little novelty in the latest find.

The active Canadian oil-field is situated in the south-west extremity of the Ontario peninsula, near the American border at Detroit. It is also near London, Ont. Its centre is the town of Petrolia, and it is called, I believe, Sarnia Oil. It looks, I must confess, a big and thriving business; and with the present tariff protection, and until there is more competition from other native fields, it cannot fail to thrive—the climate, as I have said, demanding oil. The matter has brought home to me the inwardness of that still-vexed *Bermoothes*, the free-trade question. It is the same as agriculture in England. An important but quite local national industry thrives, while the people suffer considerably. Supposing that the oil consumed in England were produced in England, 'where would the Government be' if the price went up from sixpence to tenpence?

Petrolia has a population of about six thousand persons, four thousand of whom are probably

men working on oil. The Lambton district oil-field is thirty-five miles long by four wide. It contains over nine thousand wells, over each of which is a tripod derrick some thirty feet high. The appearance of the district is that of an enormous hop-field. The smell of sulphur, acids, and oil is felt while yet a long way off, and the rattle and screech of the unceasing 'jerkers' is painful to a delicate ear. These 'jerkers' are the pumps, a hundred wells being pumped by one engine by means of long connecting-rods. There are two or three hundred engines, the largest being, I believe, a hundred horse-power. The capital invested—most of it, like one's ancestors, underground—is currently estimated at some millions of pounds sterling; but, while it is undoubtedly a big, genuine industry, I am always willing to take salt with Canadian financial statements. The pioneers of Petrolia are, I believe, Messrs Fairbank and Fraser, M.P.'s who, I hope, have made a proper competence from their patriotic industry. They frankly confess, I hear, that the removal of the protective tariff would at once swamp Petrolia.

Oil always carries with it a host of satellite industries, and is therefore a splendid developing agency for a young country. Barrels, pipes, boilers, tanks, machinery, drills, carts, are necessary utensils, and their manufacture summons an industrious population. Hungry in pursuit of this population come other satellites, whose moral utility is so highly estimated in Canada that he would surely be an ill-natured sceptic who should insinuate anything to the contrary. Petrolia, accordingly, duly boasts a Methodist church, a Baptist church, a Presbyterian church, a Roman Catholic church, an Episcopal church, and a Salvation Army, and cordially supports their ardent representatives.

In farming, in the production of food-products, it is pleasant to see each family working its own farm; but the production of an article like lamp-oil is similar to the supply of water or gas. Now, at Petrolia the wells are divided up among some hundreds of small holders, who rent pumping-power and sell the crude oil to a number of rival refineries, who again tank independently. Under such a system the delicate processes of refinement and the utilisation of the precious wastes cannot be done to perfection at the lowest cost. The subdivision of ownership is seen by the eye in a minor form which is positively cheerful, homely, and amusing. You see labourers pumping away at little wells in their own back-gardens, as your city clerk rakes his flower-bed of a Sunday. Finally, the oil-beds of Lambton are poor, the majority of wells giving only half a barrel a day. I am not writing this article particularly to criticise Canadian oil. I am writing about oil, and Petrolia came in my way. I have an ardent enthusiasm about Canadian progress, and should be sorry to decry Canadian

industry. At the same time, public opinion is bottled up, and I assert that the oil is dear and short of perfect; and if, with protection, a better oil cannot be produced at a cheaper price, I say—abolish protection.

With that let us pass on. The most interesting thing about petroleum oil is its uses apart from the lamp. The best known of these uses was mentioned long ago by Marco Polo, who informs us that Batoum oil was used by the natives as a cure for dog-mange. Sixty or seventy years ago it was found by local American farmers to be a good embrocation for horses. For a long time Seneca oil was sold as a patent medicine for rheumatism. The common cheap oil, scented up a little, is still sold in patent bottles for the same purpose under a catching name. But every housewife by this time knows its useful properties, without buying it in bottles. Primarily, it is good for the hair—falling hair, scurvy hair, mangy hair. Dog-owners know its properties. A spoonful of oil in boiling water washes clothes; this the Chinese laundryman knows. It removes rust. It is good for sore throat and rheumatics. Internally, it cures or kills consumption. The French have recently discovered that it is a substitute for absinthe. I fancy manufacturers of 'Forty Rod' (whisky) credit it with spiritual properties. It lubricates. It makes wax vaseline, candles, chewing-gum. It gives anthracene, the basis of aniline dyes. And the greatest question of all awaiting solution is, Will it drive ships? As a matter of fact, it has driven Nobel's fleet on the Caspian for fifteen years.

Interesting, too, is the part it has played in religious superstitions. *Vide* encyclopædia. The only instances I remember are the common ones: Zoroaster and the fire-worshippers of Persia, and the pilgrimages still maintained by Hindus to the naphtha springs of Baku; the Seneca Indians, who applied torches to the gas and danced; the Athabasca Indians, who worship it best by cooking their pots over the gas-jets; capitalists and jobbers, who call it Mammon; and the poor man crouching over his half-crown stove.

As I write this I learn that oil has been put to a new use—that of 'metalling' dirt-roads. It is strange that its well-known cohesive property should only now be 'discovered;' we discovered it in China, as a coating for mud tennis-courts, years ago. The *Scientific American* states that Mr Rockefeller gave the engineer a tank of oil to experiment with.

Oil is like coal or water: you can never be quite sure where you will strike it, even on a well-defined bed. Drilling is therefore always going on, for a well soon runs dry, and there is always a chance of striking a gusher, or—in gold language—a pocket. There exists, of course, more than one rule-of-thumb, as well as scientific, theory for hitting it off, as there is for water. It may lie in streaks, belts, pools, or be evenly

distributed over a wide area. Here again divided ownership causes a great waste of capital, for in small holdings every man is anxious to tap a pool, which probably runs under his neighbour's acre, whereas under an amalgamated company wells can be sunk systematically when required. In the old days a man might comfortably ruin himself over a single well, the expense of boring costing about five hundred pounds, and the depth varying from fifteen hundred to two thousand five hundred feet; the time required for the operation was some weeks. Nowadays it takes about a week, and costs less, the operation of drilling having been brought to perfection, and being worked, of course, by steam-power. If the first layer of compressed sand is found dry, or has run dry, you call in the 'torpedo-fiend.' His charge is from five pounds to ten pounds. They use nowadays about thirty pints of liquid nitro-glycerine and a time-fuse. Formerly you lowered your dynamite in tin cans, and dropped a ten-pound brick on it, an undertaking which was no doubt exhilarating to the 'fiend,' especially when four hundred pints was used, equivalent to five thousand pounds of gunpowder. The explosion is felt, not heard. If you have struck a pool it gushes, and before the system of drains and tanks was perfected a gusher could flood the whole town; and you had only to drop a match in it to see as pretty a conflagration as the Fire of London. Hundreds of barrels have been filled from a gusher in a few hours, which compares favourably with half a barrel a day. In the early days of speculation, if I remember rightly, such a torpedo would produce as instantaneous an effect on the market as on the well.

But I think the most interesting thing about Nature's fuel-stores is fire after all. Well, when an oil-tank gets on fire I forget how long it burns; but it is something like a volcano, and you just have to let it rip. But dribbled into a lamp it would burn for centuries. You can calculate this by seeing that a pint will last for about twelve hours to write by, and an average storage tank holds, I believe, about three hundred thousand pints. That would burn, then, cheerfully for a thousand years, I reckon. Spread along the ground the flame runs in a wall about ten feet high for the width of the street, and gobbles things up as it goes. Spread over the water it warns ships, and those down-stream always weigh anchor without customs formalities. Spread over its own sandy beds it flickers along the hillside in an everlasting blue, gaseous will-of-the-wisp; whether rain puts it out and lightning relights it is open to question. In this condition it is called naphtha springs and worshipped. In other parts you bore a hole and a good steady gas-jet comes up on which you can cook; this is how Indians use it, and Chinese also. The great manufactures of Pittsburg have been run entirely by natural gas, which is bored for separately

and conveyed in pipes, like oil. This gas, however, is part of the oil; its presence is necessary to force the oil up the well-tubea. Manufacturers who use gas are naturally anxious about its staying powers. That there is a very great deal of it has been proved in more ways than one. One unlucky borer struck a gas-gusher which filled the whole valley, and to get rid of it an ingenious boy had the happy thought of throwing a lighted tar-ball into the smoke. Need I go on? The nuisance was wiped out at once—and so was the valley. Several gas-wells have gone on 'blowing off' or 'spouting' for years without any apparent diminution, and it is the hardest thing in the world to get a 'reduced premium' of fire or life insurance there. One enterprising agent started 'drumming for lives' in a village one day, and drove as thriving a trade as a cure-all seller standing on a cart at a fair; but something gushed and drowned him, and his contracts were repudiated.

For other instances of the staying powers of Nature's fuel we must turn to coal. (See 'Derelict Ships' in *Chambers's Journal*, Jan. 20, 1894.) The *Ada Iredale*, iron coal barque, got a fit of spontaneous combustion in October 1876, and was deserted. In June 1877 the derelict was towed into port still burning. In May 1878 it at last 'burnt out,' and the iron shell was refitted as a ship. As with a tank, you can do nothing but let it burn out. The *John T. Berry*, by-the-bye, was an oil-ship; I forgot I had this instance in my note-book. She began burning in January 1888, and capsized in June. On the Mackenzie River there is a bed of lignite which has been burning for over one hundred years, the miles of smoke and vapour being visible to-day as they were to the discoverer of the river. I remember reading recently that a Staffordshire coal-mine has only just burnt out after a similar century of ignition.

In conclusion, I will add a few of those

gigantic statistics about the Standard Oil Trust which 'speak for themselves;' certainly they are not to be spoken about. They are quite the latest figures and fairly authentic. The latest achievement has been the securing control of all the Canadian wells, and as a result the price of oil was increased 43 per cent. This trust is also interested in a combination of seed-crushing oil companies in Great Britain.

Mr John D. Rockefeller, the founder of the company in 1870 or thereabouts, is computed at the present day to be worth about fifty million pounds. His assets in the Standard are put down at thirty million dollars. The Standard Oil Trust no longer exists, but has been dissolved and reorganised as The Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, with a capital of one hundred and ten million dollars. Mr J. A. Rockefeller's younger brother, William, is president. The company employs twenty-five thousand men, whose weekly wages amount to seventy-five thousand pounds. It controls twenty-five thousand miles of pipe-lines, thirty thousand miles of railroad, two hundred steamers, seven thousand wagons, and three thousand tank-cars. It has forty thousand tanks, holding at any given moment over a thousand million gallons of oil. Over a million pounds sterling are spent every year in five-gallon export tins, and a like sum for locally-used barrels. This is an imposing *imperium in imperio*, and marks out Mr Rockefeller as a really great man. Unlike the Vanderbilts and Goulds, he has made his immense fortune—by far the greatest in the world—by himself alone. Mr Rockefeller's age is sixty, and he first engaged in oil in 1862. In 1870 he formed a local Standard. In 1880 the great society trust was organised. He is a tall, well-formed man, with a clipped moustache and a close-shut mouth, which has one characteristic. It tells his lifelong Napoleonic motto—'I undertake nothing in which I am not master.'

TORPEDO-BOAT 240.

CHAPTER III.

THE lieutenant had just finished the story of how Torpedo-boat 240 came to her end, when the captain came into the cabin. 'Mr Winter,' he said, 'your boat is still towing astern; the sea is getting up fast, and I should say she will soon be swamped. It is scarcely worth while stopping to get her on board; indeed, it would be a dangerous business to send men down into her to hook on the falls. I should think we might as well cast her adrift.'

'Certainly, captain; even if you could get her up she would not be worth taking across the Atlantic and back again; but before you do so

I will write a line saying that all hands have been picked up by you, and will put it in a box or a bottle and drop it down into her; then, if she happens to be picked up by any homeward-bound vessel, it will relieve people's minds at home.'

'That is a very good idea,' the captain said. 'I will tell the steward to give you a tin biscuit-box; he can leave it half-full of biscuits so as to give it weight, and prevent the wind catching it as you drop it into the boat.'

Five minutes later the boat was hauled up alongside, and the box with its message dropped into it; a log of wood was then fastened to the

painter so as to keep the boat's head to the sea, and the rope dropped overboard. Contrary to expectations, the wind died down in the morning, and bright weather followed. The captain had told Winter that if they should pass a homeward-bound ship he would put him and the crew on board, but that it was scarcely likely this would happen.

'You see,' he said, 'the homeward-bound and outward-bound ships follow different courses, so as to reduce the chances of collision; besides, we are already north of the New York liners; we changed our course last night as soon as we had fairly passed Cape Clear. Generally we go north of Ireland, but it makes very little difference, and there was a large batch of emigrants ready to embark at Queenstown.'

'It was a very fortunate occurrence for us that it was so,' the lieutenant said. 'Personally, I do not object to a run across the Atlantic, and shall not grieve if we do not get a chance of being transferred into a homeward-bound craft, though I should like to pass within signalling distance of one, so that we might send back news of our being saved.'

'Well, Miss Aspern,' the lieutenant asked as they walked up and down the deck after breakfast, 'do you still hold to your idea of having a private torpedo-boat on the Hudson?'

'Why, certainly; but I don't propose to go long voyages in her, Mr Winter, or to take the risk of running against floating timber. What a pleasant trip that was at Cork! What do you think—could I get such a boat built at home, or had I better have her out from England?'

'You would get one built out there, certainly, Miss Aspern; though I can't say whether you would get one quite so fast. You see, the making of these torpedo-boats is a speciality in the hands of two or three firms; either Thornycroft or Yarrow could turn out exactly what you want, guaranteed to run up to twenty or twenty-two knots an hour.'

'That would certainly be the best, Mr Winter. Of course I should not like anything to pass us; we hate being beaten in the States, you know. Could she be brought over on board a steamer?'

'Quite easily. If I were you I should have only the hull and engines from the English firm, and then you could have her fitted up according to your own fancy when you get her out. I know some of your American yachts are marvels in the way of decoration.'

And so passed day after day. Once or twice the smoke of a steamer was seen on the horizon; but none came within anything like signalling distance, and Winter was conscious of satisfaction that it was so.

'It would be much better for me if a steamer came along and took me back,' he said to himself. 'I am making a fool of myself here; it was all very well at Cork, where I thought it was not likely

I should ever see her again; but this is different. These sea voyages play the mischief with a man; and then she is wonderfully pretty and full of life, and those funny little bits of Yankee slang fetch one somehow. If I had met her at Plymouth, and she had been the daughter of a country parson or solicitor, or something of that sort, without a penny, and would have been willing to wait until I get my step, it would have been different; but I am not going to be fool enough to tell a girl whose father is worth millions, and who talks about spending eight or ten thousand pounds on a boat, as if she were buying a new bonnet, that I have been fool enough to fall in love with her. Not exactly. Well, there are only three or four more days of it, and I have had what she would call a good time, and it is well worth it even if I do feel bad later on.'

Two nights later Lieutenant Winter was leaning against the bulwarks smoking a cigar before turning in. They had just before dark sighted the low coast of Anticosti, upon whose dangerous shores innumerable vessels have been cast away; the next day they would be in the mouth of the St Lawrence, and another short day's steaming would take them up to Quebec. He was thinking that, after all, it would have been better if any other steamer than the *Manitoba* had picked them up. Suddenly he started. At a short distance he saw through the mist the outline and sails of a schooner, just on the vessel's beam. Another moment and there was a dull crash; he ran down below and knocked at the door of Mrs Aspern's state-cabin.

'Mrs Aspern, I think you and Miss Aspern had better put on your things again, and take two or three wraps, and come on deck; we have just been in collision with a small craft. I don't suppose there is much damage done; but there is nothing like getting ready, in case of anything having gone wrong.'

Then he ran up on deck again and hurried forward. The emigrants were pouring up in a state of wild panic, while the sailors were running out from the forecabin. 'Quartermaster,' he said as his own men appeared, 'keep the men together. I don't know that any damage is done; but if there is there will be a lot of trouble with these emigrants, so keep them together near the boats, and, if possible, keep the passengers from making a rush. I will be back again presently.'

He went to the side and looked over; there was no sign of the vessel that had so mysteriously appeared close at hand. She had doubtless dropped astern, while the way of the steamer had carried her on for some distance; but, looking down, he saw a great yawning hole in the ship's side; several of the plates had been stove right in, and a torrent of water was pouring in through the gap. He returned to his men, who were gathered in a group.

'Make your way aft, men; cut off the covers of the boats there, and swing them out ready for lowering; there is not a moment to be lost; the water is coming in like a sluice.'

The captain by this time was on the bridge, and shouting to the passengers to keep order, as there was no danger. Mr Winter bounded up the ladder to him.

'I have just been looking over the side, captain. There is a hole as big as a barn door. You won't float five minutes. I should advise you to get the boats down.'

'Are you quite sure there is no hope, Mr Winter?'

'Quite certain, sir.'

The captain leaned over the bridge and gave orders to two of the officers, who were trying to restore order, to lower the boats, and to make the sailors keep the passengers off, and let the women and children get in first. Short as was the time since the blow had been struck, the ship's head was already very perceptibly lower. Winter had again run down into the saloon, which was by this time full of terrified passengers.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' he said in a loud, clear voice that made itself heard above the confusion, 'I should advise you all to go on deck at once. The ship has received serious injury, and the crew are getting ready to lower the boats; pray enter them quietly—the ladies and children, of course, first; there will be plenty of time for you all to take your places if there is no crowding.'

There was a rush to the companion. At this moment Miss Aspern and her mother came out from the state-room.

'Is there really danger, Mr Winter?' the girl asked quietly.

'Yes, Miss Aspern; the ship won't float five minutes, perhaps not that; but the boats are being got out.'

They stood quiet for a minute or two, for the

companion was crowded with passengers struggling with each other in their eagerness to be first on deck. 'Now we can go up, Miss Aspern,' the lieutenant said at last. On reaching the deck they found that a number of the emigrants had rushed aft, and that there was a wild struggle going on round the boats. These were already crowded, the seamen being overpowered with numbers.

'Stand here a moment,' Winter said, and pushed his way through the crowd. 'You fools,' he shouted, 'do you all want to be drowned together? Don't you see you are preventing the men from doing their work? Ah! there you are, quartermaster; now lower the falls away. Johnson and Harris, stand by me and keep off these cowards.'

Fighting desperately, the three men for the moment kept back the throng till the boat disappeared from view. Then the lieutenant leaned over the bulwark.

'Lie by for a moment, quartermaster; you must make room for two more ladies anyhow.' He then turned round and shouted, 'Make for the other boats; this is full.'

He rushed back, caught up Mrs Aspern in his arms, and, bidding her daughter follow, again made his way to the side. The boat was floating a few yards away.

'Here, boatswain, a little nearer.' Two men who had got out oars backed water, and he dropped Mrs Aspern into the stern; then he turned to look for her daughter, but she was nowhere near, having been swept away by the crowd of passengers who were rushing towards the boats on the other side.

'Where are you, Miss Aspern?' he shouted.

'Here,' she said, struggling through the crowd. He caught hold of her hand, and then suddenly stopped as he felt the deck rising below his feet.

'It is too late,' he exclaimed; 'over the side is our only chance.'

TOMB-OPENING.

By G. L. APPERSON.



HERE seems to be a fatality,' says Hawthorne in *Our Old Home*, 'that disturbs people in their sepulchres when they have been over-careful to render them magnificent and impregnable—as witness the builders of the Pyramids, and Hadrian, Augustus, and the Scipios, and most other personages whose mausoleums have been conspicuous enough to attract the violator.' And not only have the great ones of the earth been disturbed in their last repose, but some of them—Pharaohs and Ptolemies—have been ignobly exposed to the

gaze of the vulgar, and purchased by the cash of the curious.

Nor have the last resting-places of humbler folk enjoyed immunity from disturbance. Many graves have been opened by accident, many more of deliberate purpose. The opening of ancient barrows and mounds, and the digging in caves and other old-world burial-places, have added largely to our knowledge of the life and customs of our far-distant forerunners. Literature owes a debt also to at least one such opening, for the quaintly rich and stately prose of Sir Thomas Browne's *Urn Burial* was inspired by the digging up of a

number of old Roman funeral urns in a field at North Walsingham, Norfolk.

As a rule the interest of such discoveries is purely archæological; but occasionally the long-buried relics of humanity, when thus dragged to light, have a strangely touching human significance. Some years ago Signor Rodolfo Lanciani described the discovery of a number of cinerary urns at Rome. Among them was one which contained the remains of a boy who had been page to the Emperor Tiberius. With the remains were the pathetic evidences of his childish tastes—fragments of a doll, a small chicken of terracotta, and other touching memorials of the boy's play-hours. In an ancient coffin unearthed by the same explorer, which contained the remains of a young bride who had been buried in her bridal dress and ornaments, were not only her earrings, necklace, and other jewellery, and various articles of her toilet, but also an 'exquisite little doll carved in oak.' Could anything more pathetic be imagined than the bringing to light of the doll, which some sixteen hundred years ago was placed by sorrowing friends beside the body of the dead child-bride?

The scientific interest connected with the opening of tombs, however, is a thing of very recent growth. The graves of the great and famous were opened in days gone by from motives of plunder or of curiosity, or sometimes simply with a view to the removal of the remains, for one reason or another, to some other place of rest. It was curiosity that made Alexander the Great open the tomb of Cyrus; and, to cover many centuries at a stride, it was curiosity which led to the opening, a few months ago, of the tombs of Rousseau and Voltaire in the Panthéon at Paris. With regard to these two prophets of the Revolution, there had long been a legend that at the restoration of the monarchy the remains of both Rousseau and Voltaire had been removed by night from the former church of St Gèneviève, placed in a sack, and thrown into a country ditch outside Paris. The opening of the reputed tombs in the Panthéon proved that this story was a delusion, for the remains of both philosophers were found and identified. It was known that the surgeon who made the *post-mortem* examination of Voltaire's body had sawn the skull through horizontally above the eyes, and the skull found in the Panthéon tomb was thus cut in two. Rousseau's skeleton was in good preservation, with the bones of the arms still crossed.

Tomb-opening sometimes leads to curious revelations. In 1165 Frederick Barbarossa caused the last resting-place of Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chapelle to be opened, and the dead emperor was found seated on a marble throne, with the imperial mantle about his shoulders. The Gospels were on his knees, and his sword by his side. The throne can still be seen at Aix-la-Chapelle; but

some of the other relics are now in Vienna. Another great emperor, Charles V. of Germany, has twice been disturbed in his burying-place. His original place of sepulture was a vault in front of the high altar in the church of the Escorial; but in 1654 his body and those of his descendants were removed to the Pantheon in Madrid. Sir William Stirling Maxwell has described the scene in his *Cloister Life of Charles V.* As the body of the emperor was placed in his marble sarcophagus, he says, 'the coverings were removed to enable Philip IV. to come face to face with his great ancestor. The corpse was found to be quite entire, and even some sprigs of sweet thyme folded in the winding-sheet retained, said the pious, all their vernal fragrance after the lapse of fourscore winters.' More than a century later the sarcophagus was opened to gratify the curiosity of Charles III. of Spain and his guest, William Beckford, the author of *Vathek*. The features were still unchanged, and the wild thyme was still fresh and sweet.

Occasionally actual desecration of the remains has accompanied the opening of tombs. When the body of St Teresa was restored to Alva by order of Pope Sixtus V. in 1586, it lay in state for some time before reinterment. A miraculous perfume is said to have emanated from the remains; and one noble spectator who managed to touch the saint's arm, and then feared to wash his hands lest the fragrance should depart, was delighted to find that no washing would affect it. One devotee took a finger of the corpse, and another a portion of skin. Later the saint was once more disturbed with a view to the remains being placed in a still more magnificent shrine; and again portions were removed as relics. The General of the Carmelites, who had come from Italy on purpose to be present, himself distributed these relics. One onlooker was made happy by a single finger-joint. 'The General himself,' says Froude, who has vividly described the ghastly scene, 'shocked the feelings or roused the envy of the bystanders by tearing out an entire rib. Then it was over, and all that remained of Teresa was left to the worms.'

In our own country not a few monarchs and men of note have been disturbed in their coffins. Nearly a century and a half ago the tomb of Edward I. was opened in Westminster Abbey, and Longshanks was measured and found to be six feet two inches in length. The body was wrapped in royal robes, studded with many pearls, with a crown of gilt metal on the head, and two sceptres of the same in his hands. The grave of an earlier Edward, the famous Confessor, in the same sacred building, has been opened thrice. The first occasion was in 1098, when Henry I., curious to know whether the Confessor's body remained incorrupt, had the tomb opened in the presence of Bishop Gundulf, who helped

himself to a hair drawn from the Saxon monarch's long white beard. Twice later, in 1163 and in 1269, the grave was opened for the purpose of removing the remains to a different position.

The body of another royal Edward, the fourth of the name, was viewed in 1789 by the curious eyes of Horace Walpole, who recorded that the waxen effigy of the king, then preserved according to ancient custom in the Abbey, was a satisfactory likeness. Horace carried off a lock of the monarch's auburn hair.

The coffin of a later and less fortunate king, Charles I., was discovered in a vault at Windsor in 1813, and was opened in the presence of George IV., then Prince-Regent; Sir Henry Hallford, the famous physician; and one or two others. Sir H. Hallford wrote a pamphlet describing the affair, which is probably familiar to many readers. The severed head, with the oval face and pointed beard as represented on the canvas of Vandyck, identified the remains beyond dispute. When the coffin was opened the left eye was full and open; but after a few seconds of exposure to the air it vanished. One or two small bones of the neck, left in Sir H. Hallford's hand when he replaced the head in the coffin, remained in the possession of his family until a few years ago, when they were given to the Prince of Wales, by whose directions they were taken back to the vault at Windsor and placed on the king's coffin, no further attempt being made to disturb the remains.

Among minor personages whose tombs have been opened may be named the Earl of Warwick, who was buried below the chapel he founded in the great church of St Mary's, Warwick. In this case the opening was due to accident. Long centuries after the earl's death the floor of the chapel fell through, and the stone coffin containing the remains was broken open. The body was thus suddenly exposed to view, and for a few minutes the bystanders gazed upon the long-buried earl, looking but slightly different from the appearance he had borne in life. The face was natural-looking, although the eyes were a little sunken. But exposure to atmo-

spheric influence swiftly did its work, and in a moment the features were dust, and nothing remained of the earl save his hair, which some of the ladies of Warwick are reported to have forthwith braided into rings and brooches for their own personal adornment.

The grave of Hampden was opened by his biographer, Lord Nugent, who wrote that 'the body was found in such a perfect state that the picture on the staircase of the house was known to be his from the likeness.' Doubts, however, arose later as to the correctness of this identification. The resting-place of the ancestor of the Earls of Bradford, the Lord-Keeper, Sir Orlando Bridgeman, in Teddington Church, was accidentally broken into by workmen in 1832, and the body was exposed to view. The then Lord Bradford was communicated with, and came down to Teddington to see the founder of his house. The body had been embalmed, and the face looked wonderfully fresh, with flowing hair and pointed beard. After this strange interview the coffin was closed and the vault bricked up.

In Tewkesbury Abbey quite a number of the old tombs have been opened, some in 1795, some in 1875. A fourteenth-century Lady Despenser, a twelfth-century Abbot Alan, and a Lady Isabel Beauchamp, who died in 1439, were among those upon whose remains the light of day was once more poured.

Many other instances might be cited, such as the transference of the remains of Robert Burns from the family grave to the mausoleum, and the disclosure of the last resting-place of Lady Dundee and Sir George Mackenzie, both of which instances have been already mentioned in this *Journal*. One of the most curious, perhaps, is the case of Ben Jonson. When his grave in Westminster Abbey was opened in 1849 it was found that the poet had been buried bolt upright, and the skull, with remains of red hair upon it, came tumbling down into the bottom of the grave! Well might Shakespeare invoke a dire curse upon him who should dare to violate the sanctity of his last resting-place—a curse which no one yet has ventured to draw down upon himself.

BILL GOLDIE: A PILGRIM.

By WILLIAM ATKINSON, Author of *Western Stories*.



WHEN Bill's father died the boy lost his best friend. Not that Bill's father was much of a man; he was not. He was morally and physically weak, while his wife was immorally and physically strong. But, to reiterate: while Tom Goldie was his own worst enemy, he was his boy's best friend.

The life of Tom Goldie as a boy was so very different to that of his own son that it is worth a passing reference. His father (and grandfather too) was vicar choral of the grand old minster church in the little cathedral city of St Bedes, in rural England, where the atmosphere surrounding everything and everybody was ancient and venerable, but pure and good. Here, following in the

footsteps of his forebears, Tom Goldie at the tender age of seven donned a chorister-boy's surplice, and thereafter twice a day, summer and winter, year in and year out, he assisted in singing the services of the Church of England. At nine, when most boys were studying the three R's, Tom Goldie studied nothing but music. He could scarcely spell out the simple words of the Psalms; but he could read difficult music at sight, and his voice, thanks to Nature and his father's training, was as attractive and as wonderful as the voice of a lark on a June morning. At fourteen Tom's voice broke (after the manner of boys' voices), and then perforce he was absent from the cathedral for many years, and went to wrestle with grammar, geography, and arithmetic until such time as he developed a tenor voice that was as marvellously rich as his soprano had been wonderfully pure. And so again for several years the Goldies, father and son, continued to sustain the fame of the great choir of the great minster. After a time Tom married a pretty but giddy girl, who rapidly developed into a foolish, chattering, shrewish woman. But Tom managed very well to stand the trouble that came with his wife. He had his music to fall back upon, and he was always sure of relief twice a day when his duties as chorister called him to the shelter of the high-backed oaken pews, where the light fell so softly and soothingly through the gorgeous colouring of the chancel windows, and where the rich and restful tones of the grand organ lingered lovingly. And Tom forgave his wife all her foolishness, her scolding, and her wastefulness when she bore him a child—little Bill.

Baby Bill was the only being who really forced Tom Goldie to give up a share (and a very large share) of that love which had heretofore been bestowed exclusively upon music.

And poor Tom Goldie needed something to love—something upon which he might lay a tight hold—for his troubles came upon him in a heap. When little Bill was four years old Tom's father died, and the dean and chapter of the cathedral decided that they would have to appoint Tom Goldie to be the vicar choral, in succession to his father and grandfather. But that honourable and comfortable position, with its snug salary and roomy old residence in the Close, was not to be Tom's; for the poor fellow became ill and failed to grow better, until at last the doctors told him that his cough meant consumption, and that he must go to the Riviera or to Colorado if he would prolong his life a few years. So, as he could not afford the luxury of a residence upon the shores of the Mediterranean, and judged that he might more easily make a living in the Far West, he packed his belongings, bade a sad farewell to peaceful St Bedes, and with the wife who tormented him more than his cough, but also with his beloved little Bill, journeyed to the notorious, crowded, and bustling mining town of Leadison, Colorado.

It goes without saying that Tom Goldie did not

pursue his vocation at Leadison, for not a single place of worship graced that Sodom of the West, and not so much as a Salvation Army bass drum or tambourine sought to remind men of the religion of their youth. But there were saloons in plenty, with annexes of all varieties—concert-rooms, dance-halls, gambling dens, and resorts where infamous women lured the miners to share their own fearful degradation.

For a time Tom's health seemed to improve, and as long as his voice held out he was the star attraction at the Alhambra, the best (save the mark!) of the poor concert-halls in Leadison. Then, when his voice again departed—this time for ever—and the cough returned, with a full determination of staying with him to the end, the poor fellow went down several notches at once to play the tin-pan piano at 'McCorquodale's Occidental Dancing Academy for *Ladies and Gentlemen!*'

All this time Tom was making a very precarious living, and things gradually went from bad to worse. His wife was not the woman to endeavour to brighten the outlook for her husband and boy, or even to face the future philosophically herself. As a girl she had been vain of her admittedly beautiful face, and also giddy and foolish; as a woman she had developed a bad temper as well as much laziness, and imagined herself thrown away upon Tom Goldie. Doubtless, had they all remained at St Bedes, and had Tom become vicar choral at the minster, Nellie Goldie would have been fairly well satisfied with the mild dignity of her husband's position in the church and the musical world.

He would have supported her well, and she would have been without excuse upon that score for swerving from the duties of married life. At Leadison she really had the excuse of poverty, and was surrounded by other strong temptations. Therefore, of this frail woman the less said the better. When, many years after, she was shot in a disreputable resort, few could have recognised beneath the rouge upon her face the features of the pretty Lincolnshire girl who married the first tenor of St Bedes.

And what of little Bill? He too found a vast difference between St Bedes and Leadison. He missed his little playmates and his grandparents. His tender childish heart yearned for the old home-life, with its simplicity and regularity that not even hinted of monotony to him. His memory dwelt frequently upon the towering gray minster which he had often entered with his father, only to sit alone and unseen, and to wonder if heaven itself held anything more beautiful to look upon than the wonderful stained-glass windows, or could give forth sounds more enchanting than the music of the great organ or of the hymns and anthems sung by the white-robed choristers. Poor little Bill! He could have got over all reminiscent heartaches with a few childish tears; but before

he was six years old the iron entered his very soul when he realised that the chief difference that had come into his life was the sad change in both of his parents. His mother looked upon him as an encumbrance, and the boy felt it intuitively. At first she merely neglected the little fellow. Soon she greeted him only with rough and unkind words. Later on she administered hard blows with increasing frequency, and at last she practically deserted the child.

To the matter-of-fact reader it may not seem a logical sequence that because the boy's mother changed for the worse his father should also degenerate. And yet, when you come to think of it, such a condition of affairs would be very natural; and in reality Tom Goldie (notwithstanding the years of daily precept read and expounded by the clergy of St Bedes to which he had listened—rather feebly, no doubt—twice a day for twenty years) lost his health, lost his wife, and 'lost his grip.' At Leadison his daily environment was bad; men and women gave him only cheap sympathy; and their charity, when it exceeded empty words, seldom bestowed upon the broken-down chorister more than a drink of kill-me-quick whisky. But of this, the miners' specific for drowning sorrow and hard luck, Tom Goldie imbibed far too much, and gradually developed into a sot.

He knew it. He hated himself; he hated the wretched life that he was leading; he hated his wife; but right on to the miserable end he loved his boy. Tom Goldie never failed to provide little Bill with food and clothing, and even purchased for him such toys as could be obtained at Leadison. Every night, after the piano at McCorquodale's became silent (generally because the 'ladies and gentlemen' were no longer in a condition to keep time with their feet), no matter if drunk or how drunk, Tom would creep up to sleep with the boy, whose appreciation of his father's faithfulness, in spite of whisky, outweighed his dislike for the fumes of vile liquor.

There was a hymn which had always been Tom Goldie's favourite in the old St Bedes days—days now almost blotted out for him—and because it had been Tom's choice hymn (which he had many a time, when his voice was equal to that of any cathedral singer in England, sung at the side of little Bill's cot) it had become the favourite of his child. Tom had forgotten, or had attempted to forget, all about hymns and the old peaceful life which they were apt to recall; he could not sing them, anyway, now that his tenor voice was supplanted by a distressing cough. But Bill did not forget; and during the long hours that he passed alone each day he furbished up his memory and practised that beautiful hymn about the Pilgrims of the Night. Then one evening, when Tom Goldie crept up to their room earlier than usual, and more nearly sober than he had been for many a day, Bill

sang their old-time favourite, and surprised the wretched, dying man, who sat and listened and wept.

There was another cause for Tom's tears besides the mere fact that the floodgates of memory were unlocked; it was then and there revealed to him that little Bill had inherited the wonderful musical voice and ability of all the Goldie boys for generations past, a voice which would be fully appreciated could the child only be got back to St Bedes or some other cathedral city.

So after the hymn was ended Goldie took his child upon his knee and told him, if aught happened, that he was to remember above all things that his home was at St Bedes in England, and that he was to be a chorister; and then they talked together about the wonderful music of the far-away old minster, and that night little Bill and his father both fell asleep to dream of St Bedes, with its resounding organ and white-robed choristers.

Two months later Tom Goldie died, and the cost of his funeral was defrayed by a collection taken up at the music halls and dance-houses of Leadison. There was a surplus of a few dollars, which was turned over to little Bill Goldie, now seven and a half years old; for in a Western mining town even a cut-throat or horse-thief would scorn to rob an orphan child.

Nellie Goldie was not at the funeral, and the boy did not seek her. His childish mind was fully made up. He was going to St Bedes. He did not know that more than two thousand miles of land and three thousand miles of water intervened; but he knew the distance was great. So he made his plans after inquiring as well as he knew how of a few kindly neighbours. A small handful of dimes and quarters he kept in his pocket for the purchase of food; all the larger coin that had been turned over to him he took to the railroad agent and asked for a ticket to New York. But the agent smiled grimly, and explained that his money would only buy a ticket as far east as Omaha; so Omaha, nearly a thousand miles from Leadison, was the end of little Bill's first stage on his long pilgrimage to St Bedes, and from Omaha the lad figured that he would have to walk to New York.

So across the prairies of Iowa he trudged, past the broad but sluggish Mississippi and into Illinois; faring well enough at the hands of the farmers, who never refused the little pilgrim a bite or a place to sleep. But when, after four months of tramping, with now and then a lift in a country wagon, Bill found himself in the great, noisy, hustling, overgrown city of Chicago, it was different. There seemed to be so many other poor and lonely boys in Chicago that the people had very little time for him; while the big police officers looked at him so severely that Bill felt sure they wanted to lock him up or chase him out of town.

It seemed to a small boy like Bill Goldie to take so long to pass through the city. The first day after he found himself among the houses and stores and upon the wooden side-walks he tramped on and on, and at night crept into a shed to sleep in an empty wagon. He thought surely that the second day would see him through Chicago—for Bill much preferred the corn-fields and grass land of the prairies to the big rows of houses; besides, there were no harsh-looking policemen on the country roads. But he plodded on, and at the close of the second tiresome day, instead of finding the open country, the city became more and more dense; the rows of houses changed to monster piles of 'sky-scrapers,' which caused Bill to twist his neck quite painfully when he attempted to count the number of stories they contained; the scattered and rather shabby shops and stores of the suburbs and outlying districts were now exchanged for solid streets of great plate-glass windows, finely decorated and, toward evening, brilliantly illuminated with electric light. The streets were choke-full of vehicles, and the ceaseless sounding gongs of the cable and trolley cars were confusing in the extreme to the little pilgrim. And right at every street corner stood a helmeted police officer with any number of brass buttons and—a club! Poor little Bill Goldie! He was so very lonely among all those throngs of hurrying people, and it seemed so strange to him that he should have to crowd his way through such a hurly-burly place as Chicago to reach so quiet and restful a destination as the ancient cathedral city in the English fen country. Several times he felt as if he would like to give up his toilsome journey to creep into some dark corner and go to sleep never to wake up. Then he would think of the dear old hymn that his father taught him, and Bill Goldie counted himself in with the pilgrims of the night for whom the angels were ever singing a welcome, as he hummed, over and over: 'Onward we go, for still we hear them singing.'

The music of his own voice sounding the notes of his old favourite braced him up a little, and presently he had the courage to ask an old woman, who sat on the curb-stone selling pencils and chewing-gum, how far it was to New York. And when she squeaked out that it was just about a thousand miles, as near as she could remember, Bill's courage fell once more, and it took quite a few moments of thought about St Bedes before the lad could think of that long distance with equanimity. And then he comforted himself by softly singing another stanza of his pilgrim song:

Far, far away, like bells at evening pealing,
The voice of Jesus sounds o'er land and sea;
And tired souls by thousands meekly stealing,
Kind Shepherd, turn their weary steps to Thee.

All at once the boy found himself in State Street, the showiest, noisiest street of the city,

and then a sudden impulse seized him, which he acted upon immediately. It was still early in a cool but clear fall evening; pedestrians were promenading the brilliant thoroughfare by thousands—many of them wending their way to the theatres and other places of amusement—the very best of them being bound for the great auditorium where a celebrated prima donna from Europe was to entertain them. Suddenly, at the corner of State and Jackson Streets, where the electric lights sparkle and gleam, and where the throng is thickest, the perfect, clear soprano tones of a child's voice ascended; and in less than one minute many hundreds of people stood massed about little Bill Goldie, as, bare-headed, he stood on the curbing and sang, as carefully and as clearly as if he had been in the chancel of St Bedes Cathedral, the 'Pilgrims of the Night.'

When he ended there was no applause, but there were a great many moist eyes, which signified that the child had moved natures that could not have been touched by celebrated artists or world-renowned orchestras; and Bill the pilgrim discovered, as men and women pressed towards him with coin and greenbacks, that there were many kind hearts among the hustling people of ever-busy Chicago. For when the little fellow counted the money thus bestowed he found upon inquiry that he had sufficient to purchase a ticket to New York, and just one dollar left over to pay for his slender meals.

But Bill never had the nerve to sing again on a public highway; the impulse only came to him once.

Two days later found our young traveller at the seaboard, his long overland journey ended; and now he haunted the New York docks in search of a steamer on which to ensconce himself as a stow-away. By this time Bill Goldie was almost eight years old, though the poor little chap felt much older. He could read fairly well, and as he wandered along the miles and miles of docks he deciphered the names of the great steamers and sailing-ships. There were the monster liners from Liverpool and London and Glasgow, which stood out of the water to such a great height as to convince the boy that it would be useless to attempt to crawl into those floating hotels without being observed. Many sailing-vessels, with their ropes and spars, seemed to offer special inducements for boarding them unperceived; but Bill knew that sails were slower than steam, so passed them by. Finally his inclinations narrowed down to two big freighters, which he learned were about ready to put to sea—the *Queen of the Mersey* of Liverpool, and the *Sarah Jane* of Hull. He asked a sailor-man to tell him which was nearer to St Bedes—Liverpool or Hull—and the man, being from Glasgow, said the only saints he 'kenned' were St Andrew and St Enoch; but, drawing a bow at a venture, thought Hull might be a 'wee bit' nearer.

So that night, having spent his last few cents for a paper bag of hard biscuits by way of victuals for the sea voyage, Bill, feeling like a culprit, sneaked aboard the *Sarah Jane* and stowed himself in the hold among thousands of sacks of flour and potatoes, and likewise thousands of rats.

The poor fellow had some idea of making himself known, and throwing himself upon the tender mercy of the captain and crew after the steamer got well under way; but when at daybreak he heard the clank of loosened chains and the shrieking and puffing of the tug which pushed the *Sarah Jane's* nose out of her dock, and above all the awful swearing of the mate and the boat-swain, Bill concluded that he would rather endure hunger and solitude and rats than come in contact with such rough and blasphemous men as seemed to be in charge of the *Sarah Jane*.

The old freighter plugged along at the rate only of seven or eight knots an hour, so that it was more than two weeks before she arrived at her destination; and during all that time the lad never left his hiding-place except three or four times, when, in sheer desperation, he crawled on deck in the dead of night to obtain a drink of water for his parched lips. His bag of dry biscuits he eked out by the aid of some of the raw potatoes; but after the first day or two his appetite failed and he did not feel particularly hungry. But the bad air, the confinement, the fear lest he might be discovered, and his general weariness and exhaustion gradually told upon him; and when the *Sarah Jane* headed into the English Channel, Bill had no desire for food of any kind—only for water. He was in the throes of a high fever, although he did not know it, and would probably have succumbed very speedily, only that, when in the darkness he crawled to the water-cask, he noticed lights along the shore (for they were near Falmouth), which gave the little fellow courage to hope on—even though he was ignorant as to whether it would take two hours or two days to reach Hull. As a matter of fact it was two days before Bill, now very weak indeed, heard the hustle and bustle of tying up to the dock, and then he braced himself by a great effort and crept ashore.

The poor fellow did not know that could he but cross the Humber to Grimsby he might save many miles of tramping; but his spirits had already risen; so, weak and weary though he was, he asked for the road to St Bedes, and set out upon his last stage—a walk of more than a hundred miles. He had to beg for all his meals now; but none refused the pale-faced, ragged, and evidently sick little wanderer, and many a Lincolnshire housewife invited him in to rest. With some of them he might have stayed indefinitely; but Bill Goldie had only one object in view: he must reach St Bedes, his old home—his only home, the one place on earth of which he knew where a

Goldie and a musical voice would be appreciated; if they would take him and make him a chorister in the well-remembered and well-beloved old minster, it was all that Bill would ask of God or man.

So on he plodded, until one damp November morning, when towards noon, the sun having cleared away the fog, he saw a short distance ahead the gray towers of St Bedes Cathedral!

The boy's heart gave a bound, and a strange light in his great eyes illumined with a holy joy of sublime satisfaction the haggard little face.

There before him, almost within reach, was the goal towards which his footsteps had been bent and upon which his mind had been set for six long months. To reach it he had jolted over Western railroads and tramped across a thousand miles of prairie, had been jostled through the streets of Chicago, and had endured cruel confinement in the hold of an ocean steamer. His limbs ached and his feet were sore, but his pain and weariness were quite forgotten as he now pressed forward to reach before nightfall the shelter of those venerable walls.

At four o'clock that afternoon Bill Goldie dragged himself into the minster and seated himself in one of the old oaken pews, where in days gone by he had often waited for his father. Although it was the hour for evensong the great church was only dimly lighted, for but very few people attended the weekday services. Shortly the beautiful tones of the organ softly sounded forth until they filled every nook and corner of the minster; then from the vestry-room emerged the chorister boys and men of St Bedes singing sweetly—oh, joy for Bill Goldie!—the 'Pilgrims of the Night.' And as they sang the hymn with which the tired little traveller had charmed the side-walk audience in Chicago, the boy was overcome with a sense of restful happiness, and passed into a half-unconscious doze, lulled by the words which arose from the choir and filled the cathedral to its groined roof:

Rest comes at length, though life be long and dreary,

The day must dawn, and darksome night be past;

All journeys end in welcome to the weary,

And heaven, the heart's true home, will come at last.

Angels, sing on! your faithful watches keeping;

Sing us sweet fragments of the songs above,

Till morning's joy shall end the night of weeping,

And life's long shadows break in cloudless love.

The lad was fast asleep when they locked the minster for the night; and in the early morning, when the old verger and his wife came in to do the daily dusting, they found the little boy still slumbering. For Bill Goldie had passed from the minster that his childish heart had loved so well to the land where 'they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.'

THE ATLANTIC PASSAGE TO-DAY.

BY AN OLD TRAMP.



MY first voyage to America was made in the little—even then old-fashioned, and now discarded—*Marathon*, and it was the only really tempestuous experience I ever had on the ocean, though I have sailed the Indian Ocean and crossed the Atlantic by all the leading lines which have been running vessels from Liverpool, Southampton, and Glasgow since the 22d of December 1874, when I took passage in the steerage of the *Marathon* for Boston.

When I sailed by the sailor-like, broad-beamed *Marathon*, the Cunard vessels provided no second-class accommodation, and the steerage was of the ordinary rough description written up—or, rather, down—time and again by a succession of discontented travellers. I bought my bed and bedding and table equipage of tin on the wharf. My mattress, with its attached pillow, was made of cork and shavings, and I was told encouragingly by the vendor that it would serve excellently as a life-preserver in case of necessity—a recommendation that availed but little in the night-watches, when a sack of Bermuda potatoes would have served the purpose of a bed quite as well. Our food, coarse but plentiful of its kind, was literally thrown at us three times a day by the steerage stewards, who regarded us as beings of an inferior order to themselves. All the way we had to struggle against terrible headwinds and heavy, rolling white-capped seas; and for two whole days the ship laboured so heavily and shipped so many seas that we steerage passengers were battened down under hatches in the cold and darkness of our dismal den, where, as ever and anon our ship listed heavily, we could hear the tremendous thump overhead as a sea weighing tons fell on the deck; this would be accompanied by a deafening noise of smashing crockery aft of us, mingled with the wild, hissing swish of the seething waters as they rushed past our closed port-holes, and the roaring of the blast in the rigging, the shrill call of the boatswain's whistle, piping all hands to trim some sail or secure the floating wreckage on the swamped deck. For that was the era of sails as well as of sailors on board a big steamship; and we, who were barque-rigged, were well provided with both.

There are few sailors on board a liner nowadays; they are not required, except as quarter-masters or steersmen. The *Germanic* and *Britannic* of the White Star Line, as well as the vessels of the Glasgow line, carry some canvas on their spars for steadying purposes; but all these ships belong to a *passé* stage in the evolution of the ocean steamship. And on the very biggest of the

Atlantic boats—and they are the biggest afloat: the *Campania* and *Lucania*, not to mention the lately launched *Oceania*, being each 12,950 tons—there are not fifty sailors aboard.

Before a ship starts her crew is mustered. All in a row they stand, that the owners may see what manner of men they are; and in that long rank of two to four hundred men and boys the thoroughbred sailors require looking for. In these transition days the crew of a passenger vessel consists mainly of so-called 'idlers'—idlers who are in constant work; and though all employed on board earn their livelihood on the sea, not a fifth of them are regarded as seamen or draw a quarter of the wages. Half the crew are employed in the engine-room or its belongings; the other half are in the saloons and on the deck; and the stewards alone are to the sailors as three to one. The sailors, including the officers, have rarely begun life on a steamboat. They have nearly all served their time on sailing-vessels; and on the principal lines a very large number of the crew have been taught in the Royal Navy, and left it when at the close of their twelve years their country had thought it wise to let them go adrift in order that they may spread among the masses a few notions of discipline and efficiency; and there is no doubt that they do this, and that the more there are of them the better for both services. For in these days an able seaman in the navy has to know as much as a lieutenant did fifty years ago. He is the best-trained sailor afloat, and is, as a rule, to the rank and file what a skilled mechanic is to his labourer.

There are few more interesting scenes than the departure of one of the larger passenger boats from the docks at Southampton or Liverpool on Wednesday or Saturday. You have often heard of it, perhaps; but go and see it just as a boat is getting under way, as a bystander with no personal interest in any one aboard—you will appreciate it all the more, and you will not have to wait so long. Up goes the gangway, and there she floats, a world in miniature, kept in place only by gravitation. She is loaded down to her limit, and her decks fore and aft are alive with passengers, first class, second, and third. There is little movement, but plenty of excitement on the ship and on the shore; both crowds are ready to laugh or cry at the least incident. Shouts there are, mostly congratulatory; some of sadness, some otherwise; a good deal of human nature, and not a little humour of the gallery sort. Notice how order begins to reign as soon as the last rope is dropped and how the ship, after the snorting little tug has swung her off

from the wharf, seems to straighten herself up for her march past the line of shipping in the harbour. In the first hundred yards you will have left off watching her passengers to pick out her officers at their posts—the first officer in the bow, the second aft, the captain on the bridge, with the pilot close at hand. For a minute or so, while the screw gives a churn, churn deep down, there is a fight between steam and stream; but steam wins, and slowly, very slowly at first, and under her own steam, the ship begins to move. Good-bye! good-bye! The last link has been broken. Faster glides the ship, surely but imperceptibly increasing speed as she moves out, while innumerable fluttering handkerchiefs are waving farewell and a blessing from ship and shore.

Formerly you had to find your way to the port of departure as best you could; now you begin your passage in London. The Midland and North-Western were the first to foster this kind of traffic with the Liverpool boats; but now the Great Eastern and South-Western are more largely concerned in it—especially the latter, which has seven or eight special boat-trains out of Waterloo every week—with the object, of course, of showing that for all practical purposes Southampton is as near London as the Albert or Tilbury Docks.

In these days of competition the passenger is not easily or inexpensively caught. The advertisements, avowed and otherwise, thought necessary to attract his attention cost a small fortune; and agents are spread widely over the land, often out of all proportion to the population around. And when the passenger is safe on board his ways must be made smooth for him, and he must be treated tenderly and considerately—even as a steerage passenger—or his friends 'try the other line.' Most of the large lines have the credit of introducing some innovation that has increased either the facilities of navigation or the comfort of the passengers. The Inman Line was noted in its day for its comfortable intermediate (now called second cabin) accommodation. The White Star Line was the first to abolish the cumbersome bowsprit, in the interests of speedy dockings; it took the lead also in placing the saloon amidships, where the motion of the vessel and the vibration of the screw—or now rather twin screws—is least felt. But it was the American Line which, with the usual Yankee enterprise, first brought in two improvements the want of which had long been felt. They began to run their special trains to the very gangway of the incoming or outgoing boat, compelling the Cunard and White Star lines in a short time to follow suit, or 'get left;' and they made such alterations in their steerage that the old bad system has already become matter of ancient history on all the lines, which now furnish their third-class passengers gratis with all necessities for the voyage, as

well as with better accommodation and general treatment.

The Cunard Line has the finest second cabin accommodation of all. In fact, the now second cabin on the three big lines is but a modified and less luxurious saloon, whereas on some of the smaller lines it is but a superior steerage costing six pounds, the steerage being five; while on the big liners the steerage costs five pounds ten shillings and the second cabin from eight pounds eight shillings upwards. I sailed in the second cabin of the *Campania*, in the summer of 1893, to New York, when that boat was crowded with Europeans on their way to the Chicago Exposition, and I could not see how in anything that regarded comfort, or even luxury, the saloon passengers could be better treated than we were—always excepting the exclusiveness so dear to some people, but which to the cosmopolitan traveller is a bar to the enjoyment of the voyage rather than an advantage.

But in the matter of steerage improvement, though desirable alterations, especially in regard to separate and well-furnished bunks, were introduced some years ago by the White Star Line on the *Teutonic* and *Majestic*, and more recently still on the 'half-breed' steamer *Cymric* (which has no second cabin) by the addition of a comfortable smoking-room for the steerage passengers—hitherto relegated to the deck for the enjoyment of the weed—the two new boats of the American line, the *St Paul* and the *St Louis*, which first took the water in 1895, easily 'take the cake,' to use the nigger slang phrase.

Of course when these boats, the *St Louis* and *St Paul*—the *Paris* and *New York* being the two Inman liners of that name, curtailed of the old company badge 'City'—are crowded with emigrants, many compartments of a rougher sort have to be opened to receive them; but the steerage proper, or steerage cabin, which is large enough to accommodate all the passengers coming from the American side, is a solid fact that will bear investigation. A finely carved walnut-wood bannister guards a companion-way whose steps are ribbed with shining brass bands; comfortably bedded state-rooms for two, four, and six persons, each room completely isolated from its neighbour on each side, and provided with clothes-pegs, a seat, and an electric light; plenty of light and comfortable sitting accommodation in the main or dining cabin, round which these cosy little bunks are arranged, and screened off from view at the occupant's pleasure by a neat bar-and-ring curtain; a well-furnished table with white tablecloth and bright dinner-service on it, and stewards who know better than to treat too superciliously any of the passengers sailing under *that* flag—these are some of the features of the steerage of the American liners *St Louis* and *St Paul*, on both of which I had experience of it.

Whenever it is possible the British and

American elements in the steerage are segregated from the other nationalities, except perhaps the German, who, being more akin than the others to his Anglo-Saxon fellow-passengers, and seeming to have a miraculous gift of speedily learning their language, easily falls into their ways. With the Italians, who are increasing year by year in numbers and in influence in America, the case is different; the Scandinavians, on first going out at least, are very clannish, and keep their own company; while the Finns, a rough and loud-talking but exceedingly good-natured folk, are so much addicted to munching the raw herrings with which the companies liberally supply them, at all hours of the day and night, that a passenger who misses a berth in the main steerage, and is thus driven to herd with them, is likely to have a sufficiently unpleasant time of it. But all those nationalities are desirable emigrants in Uncle Sam's eyes, as also is, of course, the Irishman who, knowing his way about, sticks fondly to New York or one of the other large cities, and becomes a policeman or a politician, or both in one. The Norwegians and Finns, and many of the English and Germans, make their way to the great West, where they, with the ever-westward moving down-east Yankee, form the bone and sinew of the farming population of the Republic.

It is demanded of every emigrant, unless a friend or relation claims him (or her) on landing at Castle Garden, where often as many as three thousand emigrants in a week are sorted and forwarded to their various destinations, that he show himself to be possessed of at least six pounds; but this provision is often winked at by the discriminating officer in favour of any able-bodied English-speaker. If, however, a young man without the requisite six pounds pass-money to show on landing wishes to make sure of not being rejected, all he has to do is to engage a second cabin passage in one of the Glasgow boats, which costs only ten shillings more than the steerage on the English lines, and then he can step ashore at New York without any questions asked, for the second cabiner is not counted among the emigrants, even though he may be one. Despite this money qualification, the tide of emigration has not been lessened; and the American Government, often at its wits' end, every now and again moves helplessly to impose some new restriction, such as the ability to read and speak the English language. These poor oppressed wretches of the Nearer East manage to scrape the six pounds together somehow, perhaps starving themselves for years to do so. I have seen a Polish Jew, with hardly a rag to his back, and a few belongings tied in a bit of dirty canvas, fork out his pass-money at once, at the wicket of the Barge Office, Castle Garden—a place where on landing-days, with the emigrants of three or four incoming

steamers to be handled, is presented a scene of hubbub and confusion such as has not its like in the world.

Goethe puts into the mouth of one of his characters in *Wilhelm Meister* the following sentiment: 'Since Time is not a person whom we can overtake when he is past us, let us honour him with mirth and cheerfulness of heart while he is passing.' Always excepting a certain proportion of the passengers who are doomed, even in fine weather, to be afflicted with sea-sickness, this strikes the prevailing note on board a Transatlantic steamer when well under way. Some people find time heavy on their hands when they are at sea. It is apt to be so unless one makes friends with one's neighbours, or is prepared beforehand, like Macaulay, with a library to be digested during the passage. Upon the whole, it is much better, as well as easier, to chatter idly, or read for diversion, or, better still, to lounge about doing nothing at all, than to undertake a course of study at sea. The idleness of the sea is charming, and work, except at the dinner-table, is not to be endured. Besides, it is wonderful what a stock of information it is possible to acquire in a week's voyage to New York if you are lucky in your selection of temporary intimates.

The steerage passengers have hearts like the rest of the world, and they make themselves merry on deck in the evenings in their own way. They trill forth 'In the sweet By-and-by,' or 'Home, sweet Home,' or 'There is a Land,' or mayhap 'Two Little Girls in Blue,' with a most disastrous amount of sweetness and pathos. It needs no wizard to know that their eyes are moist as they gaze upon the stars or upon the darkening waste of waters, flecked with the foam of the white horses, while sitting side by side, hand-in-hand, or with the old folks of their parties pillowed against their strong pliant bodies—all thus going into exile.

When everything else palls, there is one subject which is of perennial interest at sea, and that is the daily 'run,' with its corollary, the record of the route; which topic is officially encouraged as much as possible by the presentation of the passenger list and pocket chart. On these points the old voyager and the well-primed first-crosser have much to say. You will hear the well-worn tale of the Atlantic from the earliest period, from the last paddle-boat, the *Cunard Scotia*, which brought the record down to nine days, down to the successive feats of the *Britannic*, the *Arizona*, the *Alaska*, the *Umbria*, the *Oregon*, and the *City of Paris*, which latter brought it within six days, till we come to the *Campania* and *Lucania*, *Teutonic*, and *St Paul*, of our own days, which run so closely that the difference of time between their performances is but the fraction of an hour. And you will hear that it could soon be done in five days were it not for

the price of coals; and, more extraordinary still, that it may be done in four and even in three, when the Grand Canadian Pacific scheme comes off, by which the boats are to run to Louisburg. And the mention of the Cape Breton haven of promise will naturally lead on to the St Lawrence records, which the ill-fated Dominion liner *Labrador* was lowering hour by hour before she met with disaster among the Hebrides.

It has become a truism that a great ocean liner is a little world in itself, its human freight consisting often of considerably over a thousand souls—literally all sorts and conditions of men. There is no place in the world like the deck of an Atlantic liner on a fine day for studying the dispositions, manners, and foibles of your fellow-creatures. Every race and nationality in Europe is represented in the well-ordered crowd with which you mingle so freely. Leaving out the two upper sections, if you are travelling westward in the steerage, which may be called the great nursery of the naturalised American citizen of the future, you will find yourself among rough, ungainly, undeveloped men and women. Coming back, say a few years afterwards, you will meet these same people, or people like unto them, returning on a long-yearned-for visit to the old home, but so transformed by the influences and experiences of their new free life in the boundless West that the difference is best expressed by saying that the eastward-bound steerage passengers are many degrees more advanced in the social scale, more alert-minded and resourceful, as well as better provided with the good things of life, than those travelling in the same class westward.

Thus, in alternate pleasant converse and indolent, restful longing, the days slip half-dreamily by till we reach the Banks of Newfoundland, where we are intermittently enveloped in chilly, shifting fogs for a day or so, and then our brave ship's prow is turned southwards, and we soon gain a warmer, serener latitude, with the blue American dome overhead, and our port not far distant on our starboard bow. The last day of our voyage comes in due time; and as soon as we are well in the Hudson, and begin to recognise the old landmarks of the American shore, the old forces of civilisation return to take up their abode with us. We stop off Quarantine at Staten Island while the Government medical officer comes on board and rapidly but keenly scrutinises the steerage passengers. This inspection over, steam is got up again, and we sail up the river to our wharf, say the American Line one, which lies nearest to the Brooklyn Bridge. Here, you and I, being in the steerage, if we have our citizenship or naturalisation papers with us, present them to the proper officer, and are then allowed on shore with the saloon and second cabin passengers. If we are without such passport, we have a long and dreary wait on the exposed wharf before we are taken with our belongings

on board the emigrant barge, a two-storied affair, inside of which the crowd is penned off into sections in roped enclosures arranged alphabetically. 'Thank heaven!' we say to ourselves, 'we have escaped that ordeal, and the far worse one afterwards at the Barge Office,' and we make our way gaily up to Park Row, near the bridge entrance, and enter the bar-room of the International Hotel to have a little refreshment before crossing the bridge. And see! it is on the stroke of noon, when we can have a free lunch of excellent tomato soup, with bread and meat and a vegetable or two—a 'square meal,' in fact—all included in our glass of lager beer, for which we pay five cents or twopence-halfpenny. The free lunch! Blessed, cheering boon, native only to the American soil! When we have thus cheaply and satisfyingly fortified the inner man, and we step into the handsomely-equipped electric car which is presently to spin us rapidly across the great bridge, we begin to ask ourselves in the secret recesses of our hearts, which nation, after all, do we belong to—England or the United States? Ponder it carefully, and the answer comes in a still small voice—'To both,' for both are really but one, in essence and tendency—the obverse and reverse sides of the same medal.

TO TIME.

Off! abhorred Iconoclast!

Ruthless hands withhold;

Fling not from their pedestals

All our gods of gold:

Friendship, failing of fruition;

Love, with sweet eyes blind;

Beauty, with a glance misleading;

Pleasure, cypress-twined;

With thy visage saturnine

Mock not our dismay,

As they fall to earth, revealing

Piteous feet of clay.

For we loved them, fell Destroyer,

Loved those idols frail,

Though they lie there now, unsmiling,

Passionless, and pale.

And their memories alluring

Haunt life's after-hours,

As the winds of autumn murmur

Dirges for dead flowers.

And though, Time, thy Vandal fingers

Break them one by one,

We shall find our lost ideals

When thy sands are run.

LOUISA ADDEY.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

A QUIET HAVEN.

BY AN ENGLISHMAN IN SCOTLAND.

OUR writing-table is, if you please, upon the balcony of the Ellangowan Hotel, Creetown. You may not, perhaps, guess off-hand the precise locality of Creetown. But when we say that it is in the heart of 'Guy Mannering Land,' and is surrounded by the country of *The Raiders*; that before us are the bright waters of Wigtown Bay, and behind the purple hills of Kirkcudbrightshire; and that that slowly-moving wreath of white vapour curling in the west, which seems but the whiff from a cigarette, marks the express train that is speeding on its way to Stranraer—the port commanding the shortest sea-passage to Ireland—you will be better able to identify this 'loophole of retreat,' which has not yet 'seen the stir of the Great Babel, nor felt the crowd.'

Creetown is distinguished for its many admirable negative qualities. As a watering-place, it is desirable not so much for what it has as for what it has not. It addresses itself especially to the lover of the sea, the mountain, the heathery moorlands, and the wooded glen; to the brain-worker in quest of quiet, the invalid in search of health, to the recluse who loves seclusion. Even the soft rain and the mist of this country seem idealised and full of artistic attributes, and we feel the force of Sir John Millais's contention that three hours of sunshine in Scotland is worth three months' sunshine in Cairo, and of his description of Caledonia as 'a wet pebble with the colours brought out by the rain.'

Here arbitrary Fashion does not stipulate that you shall dress three times a day and promenade to the melodies of Schumann and Schubert. Here Pleasure is not of a treadmill character, monotonously directed by a despotic master of the ceremonies. Nothing here is stereotyped or sophisticated: no regulation promenading up and down an iron pier; no conventional appointments at the proper times at a spa; no concerts, dances, bazaars, 'functions,' formalities. There is

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no straining after effect, no desire to be something different from what you really are. Here are no Ethiopian serenaders whose barefacedness is not hidden by their burnt-cork complexions. There are no raucous street-singers; no hot-gospel preachers; no phrenologists to tell you how to make the fortune they somehow have not managed to amass; no venders of warm ice-cream; no hawkers of 'native' oysters that are 'settlers'; no brazen performers upon brazen instruments; no torturers of trombones and vivisectionists of the violin; no drummers intent upon getting out of the vellum a louder note of discord than its construction entitles it to emit; no pianos with banjo twangs that turn the blessed sense of hearing into a curse and make you envy the deaf; no itinerant sopranos whose top notes set even one's false teeth on edge; no Italian organ-grinders to accost you at your open window, to throw their filthy kisses at your daughters, and push their pendiculous caps under your very nose.

There is absolutely nothing here of those elements that at certain popular seaside resorts make the foreshore and esplanade a vulgar pleasure-fair or a marine edition of the 'wakes.' There are no touting charioteers who are anxious to drive you out of your mind for eighteenpence; no jetty where crowds congregate to witness the arrival of 'the husband's boat' and receive with raillery and derisive remarks the sickly *voyageurs* who, 'when the breezes blow, generally go below, and seek the seclusion that the cabin grants.' There are no excursionists enjoying 'ten hours at the seaside for half-a-crown'—salt breezes retailed at the rate of threepence per hour. In a word, Creetown has not yet paid the inevitable penalty for its beauties by becoming 'popular.' The only apprehension we feel is that when the place becomes better known it will suffer from the 'receipt of custom.' *Di, prohibete nefas!*

But it must not be supposed for one moment

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that Creetown is without positive advantages to set off against these negative qualities. The law of association—that *lex non scripta* of sentiment—links the district with the romance of history; and scenes beautiful indeed in themselves become more lovely when illuminated by poetry and legend. To-day we enjoyed a sail with the most kippered-faced of skippers to Dirk Hatteraick's Cave, where he and other daring smugglers in the good-bad old times pursued what they euphemistically called the 'fair trade.' They landed with impunity contraband cargoes of cognac and schnapps, Mechlin lace, and hyson and souchong from the Isle of Man, with the connivance of the local magistrates, who frequently discountenanced (through timidity or worse motives) the officers of the revenue in the exercise of their duty. Yesterday we drove in the Ellangowan four-in-hand coach to Newton-Stewart, seated by the side of that fine Highlander, Robert Laing, who could, we verily believe, drive a pair of 'screws' in a manner that would make the spectator think that he was behind real thoroughbreds—something like Dr Blimber's butler, who gave a winy flavour to the table-beer by the superb way in which he poured it out. Tomorrow we go by road or rail to Castle Kennedy, *vid Luce Bay, en route* for Loch Ryan. From Castle Kennedy station the lighthouse on the long, low Mull of Galloway is visible, and Luce Bay, with its sand-dunes, opens with the mountains of the Isle of Man in the gauzy background and the little Scar Rock isolated in mid-sea.

An English army halting here in 1300 found a village called *Creth*. About one hundred years ago Creetown, which was then known as Ferry-Town-of-Cree, contained 104 persons; now the population is about 900. A cotton factory was established here in 1790, a tanyard, and a mill for patent shot-lead. It is said that the first patent shot was made in Creetown. About fifty years ago one writer records that 'a town-hall and lock-up have lately been erected in Creetown, and have been most useful.' We fancy the first in the list the most so. The gardens were then so stocked with fruit-trees that in spring the place looked like an orchard.

Creetown will be spoilt if it ventures beyond its present clean and homely and healthy status and becomes a fashionable watering-place. If it becomes *ton*, it would be every bit as demoralising as one of John Leech's young, fresh, joyous maidens masquerading as a Parisian 'professional beauty.' The Ellangowan Hotel should be 'up-to-date' enough to meet 'all reasonable requirements of 'progress and civilisation.' We would infinitely prefer to see—as is to be seen to-day in the one long street—bonny, shapely-limbed, barefooted bairns, with the blue of the sea and the sky in their eyes, and the bronze of the hills on their cheeks, than that the thoroughfare should be modernised and usurped by that precocious, languid,

luxurious creature, 'the child of the period.' Don't think that because these careless, romping Creetown children go (on week-days) barefooted they belong to back-slumdom. No supposition could be more remote from the truth. The bare foot in these Scotch villages is by no means an indication of straitened circumstances. And what grace the absence of leather gives to the feet! What a beautiful anatomical structure is the youthful foot, with its arched instep and the absence of cramping tightness! Here be no corns or bunions, or other excrescences calling for the chiropodist's attention. At Creetown we doubt whether a chiropodist has ever been seen; the place is so abnormally healthy that they must have to send to a big town in the rare event of a death to find an undertaker; while as to a doctor, bless you! why, he would go through almost as much suspense as Captain Dreyfus in waiting for patients that wanted his services.

Young Creetown is, perhaps, taught by a descendant of poor, modest, worthy Dominie Sampson himself, who was willing to suffer hunger and thirst in exchange for acquiring Greek and Latin. Educated thrift has been the keystone of the Scottish character. There was sober truth as well as gay humour in the motto which Sydney Smith proposed for the *Edinburgh Review* when that powerful organ of the higher criticism was launched. It was *Tenui Musam meditamus avenâ* ('We cultivate literature on a little oat-meal'). And what a grit of national character has come out of groats! In war and commerce, in the pursuits of industry and the paths of exploration, in universities of learning and in fields of foreign travel, Porridge has been omnipotent. It availeth alike in every latitude and longitude. It is your friend and supporter when you are frozen in the Arctic regions or fevered in equatorial Africa, squatting on Australian sheep-runs or running American cattle-ranches, trapping the moose-deer and the wapiti that roam the backwoods of the Great Lone Land, or carrying the flag or following it in far-off lands beyond the sea. Porridge is more powerful than the Pen. It won the battle of Waterloo, and is associated with the conquest of India and the exploration of the world, supporting Marlborough in the Low Countries, rallying Wolfe at Quebec, marching with Wellington in the Peninsula, following Sir Colin Campbell up the heights of Alma, avenging Delhi and Cawnpore with Outram and Havelock, routing Ayoub Khan with Roberts, storming Dargai with Mathias. And in the future it will be the grown-up lads of such little places as Creetown who will fill professors' chairs, wax eloquent at the Bar and inspiring in the pulpit, and lead forlorn hopes against overwhelming odds just as if the task was part of every day's duty.

A pedestal of which Gallovidians are pardonably proud is the Murray Monument. Alexander

Murray, philologist, was born and reared in a rude cottage at Dunkitterick. On the very spot where his memorial stands he watched sheep and studied his books. His father, a poor shepherd, had taught him the alphabet by tracing the letters with the burnt and blackened end of a 'heather birn' (a heather stick) on the flat of a 'peat wecht' (a shaved sheepskin stretched round a hoop, and used for carrying peats from the stack to the kitchen fire). Murray may be said to have had hardly any school education. He was self-taught and self-made. The aspiring youth wrestled until he had thrown them—

Those twin jailers of the daring heart,
Low birth and iron fortune.

He owed nothing to adventitious aid or influence, 'luck' or fortune, whatever. His life-story shows that the brightest career is open to the poorest youth. 'God,' says Shelley, 'has given man arms long enough to reach heaven, if he will only put them forth.' Murray put forth his arms. To epitomise his biography, the hillside shepherd lad became a D.D. and Professor of Oriental Languages in the University of Edinburgh, and the monument that is such a notable landmark in Galloway was erected by his countrymen in 1835. But, after all, Murray's best memorial is the personal legacy he left to the youth of his country—the heritage of a heroic name and the encouragement of a great example.

The pious Samuel Rutherford, afterwards Professor of Divinity, St Mary's College, St Andrews, author of the famous 'Letters,' frequently preached in this parish, when in Anwoth (1627-39), which is within easy reach of Creetown. When it was proposed to make him a professor in St Andrews his parishioners made a strong but unsuccessful attempt to retain his services. A square granite pyramid on Boreland Hill commemorates his residence in Galloway. This parish of Kirkmabreck gave Edinburgh University another professor, Dr Thomas Brown, Professor of Moral Philosophy, who, if not quite so great a prodigy as Alexander Murray, could read when between four and five years of age, and had a memory so tenacious that he could recall twenty or thirty lines of French or Italian after a single reading. He was popular with his students, and his *Lectures* reached a nineteenth edition in 1850. He was very fond of animals, and believed that some of them had a moral sense and immortal souls. Did his countryman William Nicholson, the peddler poet, also share his belief? We know not, but being a good piper who attended country fairs and gatherings, one day he was found playing vigorously to young cattle and colts, and said he was better pleased with

the antics of the animals 'than if the best leddies in the land were figuring before him.' Dr Murray and others so helped Nicholson to subscribers for his first volume of poems that he realised £100 of profit from it. As a poet he reached his high-water mark in 'The Brownie of Blednoch,' which has been quoted and eulogised by Dr John Brown in his 'Black Dwarf's Bones.' Some of William Nicholson's poems still make good local reading, even after a course of Crockett's Scottish novels, or Scott's *Redgauntlet*, or Harper's useful *Rambles in Galloway*.

This country-side also teems with memories of the Covenanters. Its very stones are cemented with their blood. Crowning the hill-top at Wigtown is the Martyrs' Memorial. It is a monument to two sisters, Margaret Wilson and Margaret MacLachlan, who were tied to a stake and drowned by the rising tide in Wigtown Bay for their adherence to the Covenanters' cause in the fierce days of King James, whose religious persecutions were worthy of Philip the Second.

But the *odium theologicum* no longer disturbs Creetown; the 'Raiders' are friendly Sassenachs, who are welcomed across the Border; the Smugglers' Cave is filled with the joyous 'spirits' of tourists and holiday-makers; and cattle-lifting has given place to industrial pursuits that illustrate the dignity of labour, such as the great granite quarries a mile or two from the town. The present writer had a beautiful little cube of this marble-like granite presented to him at the quarries for a paper-weight. But the compliment was, perhaps, an equivocal one. Our enemies might urge that our literary style is heavy enough without being burdened by the weight of chunks of granite!

This quarry deserves a sentence or two to itself. It was first opened in 1831 by the Liverpool Dock Company, who between that date and 1844 employed from 60 to 450 men, according to the demand for material. Its working in 1834 cost £15,000. Powder was at first employed to loosen the stone, as much as 50, 60, or even 70 lb. of powder being used as a blast; but it was found that the young earthquake caused by this charge destroyed some of the finest blocks of granite, and drills and wedges and crowbars were again reverted to for the time.

Creetown as a health-resort is so salubrious that a valetudinarian who, 'given up' by his physicians, came here some years ago to die, took a new and long lease of life. He has built a house at Creetown, and in personal appearance seems to become younger as he grows older. He may be seen on the Ellangowan Nine-Hole Golf Course (which, by the way, was laid out by old Tom Morris) driving balls in a manner worthy of a holder of the Open Championship.

TORPEDO-BOAT 240.

CHAPTER IV.



WINTER sprang on to the bulwarks, and dragged her up, clasped her in his arms, and jumped overboard. As he did so a wild cry rang in his ears; he struck out with his feet, and then felt himself drawn under water as if by an irresistible power. Down he went lower and lower, but still struggling to rise. It seemed to him that there was a tremendous pressure on his brain; then this lightened, but he was almost losing consciousness when his head suddenly came above water. There were numbers of figures struggling in the water behind him. Miss Aspern was still holding him with a convulsive clasp, and with great difficulty he shifted himself so as to be able to use one arm as well as his feet, and then struck out so as to get away from those struggling around him. Then he looked around for the boat, but the mist hung heavily on the surface of the water. He was not trying to swim now, but only to keep his mouth and that of his companion above water. In a minute or two the shouts and screams ceased. Looking round, he saw a dark object just above the water, and with difficulty making his way to it, found that it was one of the gratings. Putting his weight on one side, he brought the edge below the water, and undoing Miss Aspern's clasp, laid her head upon it; then he sank it still farther, got his handkerchief from his pocket, and tied it round her arm to the grating to prevent her from slipping off; after which he swam round the other side of the grating, and climbed on to it. With the weight it sank level with the water, but he was able to grasp Miss Aspern and drag her on to it. She opened her eyes now.

'Where are we?' she murmured. 'Where is the boat?'

'I have no doubt that the boat is all right,' the lieutenant said briskly; 'we are on a grating, and you are perfectly safe for the present.'

'Do help me to sit up. Why, the water nearly covers this raft we are on.'

'Yes; so long as we both sit still it will just support us and no more. Fortunately, you see the water is quite smooth, and to-morrow morning I have no doubt I shall be able to get hold of some bits of wreckage and lash them to this grating so as to be able to make a decent sort of raft of it.'

'Are you sure that the boat got away, Mr Winter?'

'I have no doubt that it did.'

'Then why does it not come and pick us up?'

'It had as many on board as it could hold, and

the only thing for them to do was to row away. They know where the land lies, and will be half-way there by now. It was not more than ten or fifteen miles away.'

'Then I suppose they will get help and send out boats to find us?'

'No doubt they will,' the lieutenant said, though he knew that the chance of their obtaining any help at Anticoesti was slight indeed.

'Then there is nothing whatever to do?' the girl said after a pause.

'Nothing at all. I might get over and push this grating along a little, and I will certainly do so in the morning if there is nothing in sight; but at present the stars are all hidden by the mist, and I have no idea which way to go; and in the next place, we are at present close to any wreckage that may be floating about, and it is important to get some more if we can, so as to make this grating more buoyant in case of the wind getting up at all.'

'Do you think that many of the boats got away?'

'I should hope two or three of those forward may have done so. I should think that the only quarterdeck boat that got away was the one that your mother was in.'

'You saved her life as well as mine, Mr Winter.'

'Well,' he said lightly, 'we don't know yet who are saved and who are not, so we will wait until we are all safe. Are you very cold, Miss Aspern?'

'I am very wet and uncomfortable, but not very cold. What time will it begin to get light?'

'It will begin to lighten between three and four; it must be past twelve by this time, so there will be only three hours of it.'

'Well, you must talk. Talk about anything, but do talk, or I shall think that this is a sort of nightmare; only don't talk about the ship, please. Tell me where you have been before, or about your people at home.' There was a shake in her voice telling him that the tears were very near.

'I will talk,' he said; 'but first of all let us try and make you a little more comfortable. Let me take off that cloak and wring it out; then you might try to wring out your own things a little, so as to give them a chance of drying a bit as soon as the sun comes out. That is right. Now, if you don't mind leaning against me a bit you might be able to drop off to sleep while I am talking. There, that is better; I am sure you must be more comfortable now.'

Then he began to talk about his boyhood in

the quiet cathedral town in which his father was a minor canon; he talked of his brothers and sisters, and how he, the eldest, had been nominated as a cadet on board the *Britannia*. He told her stories of boyish pranks on board the training ship, and of his delight when, having passed, he was appointed to a ship on the China station. He had got to this point when he broke off. 'There, Miss Aspern, the day is breaking. I am glad to say the mist is clearing off already; now we must look about and see if we can pick up a spar or two, or something to make our raft a rather more solid affair. We should be much more comfortable if we could stand up and move about a little. You see we are almost sitting in the water here; it did not matter as long as there was no chance of drying at all; but as soon as the sun gets up you must make an effort to get your things dry.'

'Shall we see the land?' she asked.

'No, we are too low in the water; but the position of the sun will show us where the land lies, and I shall set to work to try and get to shore in case we should not be picked up by one of the boats.' In the distance he saw some objects floating just above the line of the water, but they were too far off for him to attempt to swim for them. 'There is nothing to be seen that will help us much, Miss Aspern, so I shall take to the water.'

'I would much rather you stopped here,' she said nervously.

'I shall be close by, within six feet. I will take off my coat and waistcoat and shoes, and you must get to one side of the grating while I get to the other; then, when I slip off, I will hold it until you get to the middle again. You had better spread out your shawl to dry, and if you can manage to slip off some of your petticoats all the better; they will never dry all in a lump round you.'

Miss Aspern obeyed his instructions quietly, and in two or three minutes he was swimming and pushing the grating before him northwards.

'There is something floating in the water ahead,' she said presently. 'I think it is an oar.'

'Give me instructions which way to push,' he said. 'The oar will be very useful. I can scull her along with that when I get tired of swimming, and it will do to make a signal with if anything comes in sight.'

He swam for two hours, and then climbed on to the raft again, fastened his handkerchief through the grating and over the oar, and with it began to scull the raft along.

'It is very unsociable your sitting there with your back to me, Mr Winter,' Miss Aspern, who had now recovered her spirits, said, with a laugh; 'we are going a great deal faster now than when you were swimming.'

'Yes, I think we are. I did not expect to make

such good way with it; when I get a little more practice it will go faster still.'

As the sun rose and gained in power their clothes dried. 'I wish we had your torpedo-boat here for an hour,' she said.

'I wish we had, Miss Aspern. Still, slow and sure does it. I don't know much about the tides and currents here; but I do think that if there is nothing to throw us back we shan't be far from shore by nightfall. I think we are going through the water a knot and a half an hour; and as we have another twelve hours of daylight, we should certainly be close to land by that time.'

By noon Miss Aspern announced that she could see the land stretching away ahead; and then, looking back astern of them, she exclaimed, 'There is a black spot behind us. I am pretty sure it is a boat.'

'If you will sit down I shall stand up and have a look. Yes, it is a boat, sure enough, end on to us. I think it must be rowing in this direction. I expect they have been out to see if they could pick up any survivors where the ship went down, and are now rowing back to shore. I will fasten your shawl to the oar as a signal.'

In another ten minutes it was certain that the boat was pulling towards land, and that it would pass within half a mile of them.

'How far is she off now, Mr Winter?'

'About four miles, I should say.'

They were now close together on the middle of the raft, and sat down, as the grating was very unsteady when they stood up. The girl sat for some time in silence, her fingers playing nervously with her watch-chain. The young officer was no less nervous, though he did not show it. Again he wished, as he had done a score of times before, that his companion had been a penniless girl, when he would have known what to have said. As it was, he felt that his lips were sealed. If ever he were able to speak, it would certainly not be now. It would be ungenerous and ungentlemanly in the extreme to take advantage of the service he had rendered her.

'Well,' she said suddenly, 'what are we to say to mamma?'

'She will be so pleased to see you alive and well, Miss Aspern, that there won't be much to say.'

'Except that you saved my life, as you saved hers.'

'I shall always be happy in the thought that I was able to do so, Miss Aspern,' he said quietly.

'You are horrid,' she burst out. 'I call you downright mean. Do you want me to say anything else?'

He could not pretend to misunderstand her. 'It would not be fair or right to ask you to say anything else,' he said.

'Do you mean because of money?' she flashed out. 'What would it be to me now if it hadn't

been for you? Only tell me this: if you were rich now, and I were a penniless girl, would you have anything to say?'

'I don't think I should say it now, Miss Aspern. I hope I shouldn't. I should not like to have given me for gratitude what I should want given me for love.'

'You are very unfair,' she cried again; 'but I can't help it. If you won't ask me I must tell you I love you. I love you with all my heart—there!'

After that there was no occasion for further talk, till he said at last, 'I must put up the signal, or the boat will be passing us.'

A quarter of an hour later they were on board the boat, which was manned by the boatswain and four of the crew of the torpedo-boat. They had started immediately after reaching shore with the passengers, and had been rowing about for hours near the spot where they believed the ship had sunk. They had found floating objects, but no survivors, and having given up the search as hopeless, were returning to land when they made out the raft, and had just turned the boat's head in that direction when the signal was hoisted. Two hours later they were ashore. Fortunately, the spot where the boat landed was not far from the lighthouse, where the survivors from the steamer, fifty-two

souls out of three hundred and twenty, had already made their way.

'I am very glad to hear what Clemence has told me,' Mrs Aspern said when she came out of the lighthouse and joined Lieutenant Winter. 'Of course she would do as she liked; but I am so glad she has chosen some one that I shall like too. She has told me what you did for her, and you saved my life as well. Her father will be as glad as I am when I tell him all about it.'

Three days later a steamer was seen coming along the coast; the boat went out to cut her off, and before sunset the whole of the survivors of the *Manitoba* were on board, and some days afterwards were landed at Quebec. A telegram was despatched to Cincinnati, and Mr Aspern met the party at New York, where Lieutenant Winter had no reason to be dissatisfied with the hearty greeting of Mr Aspern after he had heard from his wife and daughter the events of the wreck. He returned in the first steamer to England, and stood his court-martial for the wreck of the torpedo-boat. He was honourably acquitted, and then sent in his application to be put on half-pay. After spending a few days with his family he again crossed the Atlantic, and now lives with his wife in a mansion on Madison Avenue, having a large sailing-yacht on the Sound, and a fast launch on the Hudson River, which has been christened *Torpedo-boat 240*.

MOSQUITOES AND THE SPREAD OF DISEASE.

BY A SOUTH AMERICAN SETTLER.



SYDNEY SMITH scarcely exaggerated when he described the plague of insects which is one of the great drawbacks of the tropics. Of all the insect pests which make life a burden in tropical countries, the first place must surely be given to the mosquito. It is true he is not confined to the torrid zone, although it is there that he is most plentiful and most troublesome. He is found in all latitudes, even within the arctic circle, for we are informed that in frozen Klondyke he is so ubiquitous during the short summer months that life in some parts is almost unendurable, and even animals are driven to the water to avoid his attacks.

The British Isles enjoy a happy immunity from mosquitoes, although they appeared in one district of London this summer, and they are to be found in the same latitudes east and west. This is perhaps to be attributed to the comparative coolness of our summers, and also to the fresh breezes which sweep across the islands from the Atlantic; for coolness and wind are alike unfavourable to the mosquito. There is, however, a gnat common in Britain which so closely resembles the mosquito as to be almost indistinguishable; there are, indeed, some who claim that he is no other than the true mosquito bereft

of his stinging powers owing to climatic conditions. We have several times seen newspaper paragraphs to the effect that the mosquito had been observed in some part of Britain; it was probably the gnat in question which had been taken for it.

The writer has made the acquaintance of mosquitoes in many parts of the world: in the swamps of Florida, the New Zealand bush, and in their native forests of tropical America; and though there are several varieties, they do not differ greatly in size, shape, or disposition. In New Zealand, it may be observed, as in many other islands of the Pacific, the mosquito was quite unknown prior to the advent of Europeans, and was doubtless introduced as an unwelcome passenger in some passing vessel; for, although the insects are rarely seen in the cabins or saloons of vessels (which are always well ventilated in warm weather), in the close atmosphere of the ship's hold they are frequently to be found in swarms.

We well remember one or two dreadful nights passed in the interior of South America, when we happened to have no mosquito-net with us. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that there were more mosquitoes than air, for it was impossible to open one's mouth without capturing a few. Sleep was out of the question; and the hours of

torture seemed as if they would never end, until daylight brought welcome relief.

It is seldom, however, that mosquitoes are so plentiful as this. It is frequently possible to sleep in comfort, even within the tropics, without a mosquito-curtain; but where the insects are numerous these nets—made of muslin, or of a specially prepared fabric—are indispensable. On retiring in the evening any mosquitoes that may be inside are ejected, then the edges of the net are tucked under the mattress, and the remainder of the night can be passed in peace.

New arrivals in the tropics are most liable to the attacks of mosquitoes. It is said to be because their blood is thicker than that of an acclimatised individual; but it more probably is because, in course of time, the system becomes hardened or inoculated with the virus, and the bites of the insects are not felt to the same extent. In the daytime mosquitoes are seldom troublesome; but on the approach of the short tropical twilight they become active, and the ominous humming which betrays their presence soon makes itself heard. If a single mosquito is in the bedroom he will inevitably make the acquaintance of the sleeper before the night is far advanced. He seldom attacks his victim at once, but continues to circle round him, piping shrilly all the while; and there is no sound in nature more irritating than the piping of a mosquito. If the sufferer imagines for a moment that his tormentor has left him, he soon finds out his mistake, as with a vicious whoop he whizzes past his ears. He will continue to manoeuvre in this fashion for several minutes, or it may be even half-an-hour; but the victim knows by experience that he will not leave till he has had his blood. At last he feels the sharp sting which informs him that the mosquito has applied the combined lancet and pump which he carries in his proboscis, and he gives himself a vicious slap in the face (the mosquito's favourite point of attack) in the vain hope of killing his tormentor. But the mosquito is far too nimble to be caught so easily, and only retreats for a moment, to renew the attack with increased vigour.

The sting of a mosquito is almost as sharp and painful as that of a bee; and it is also said that, like the female (or working) bee, it is only the female mosquito which stings.

Human blood is only a luxury, and not a necessity to the mosquito, for he is found in many places where the presence of man, or other large animals, is a rarity. His main article of diet appears to be vegetable juices or decaying vegetable matter; for if such be left in a suitable spot (such as the bottom of a barrel), it will be found to attract a large number of mosquitoes. They are specially fond of moist brown sugar or treacle.

The main requisites for the comfort of the mosquito are heat, moisture, shade, and a calm atmosphere. Where these conditions are united he will be found in abundance. He cannot

endure the slightest breeze, and in rooms which are well ventilated, and in which the air circulates freely in every corner, the insects are seldom numerous; while, on the contrary, in close, stuffy rooms they are generally plentiful.

One of the charges laid to the mosquito is that he acts as a medium for conveying infectious diseases from one person to another, as the result of his blood-sucking habits. It is said that yellow-fever can be easily spread in this way; if so, it might easily explain the ravages caused by the disease in tropical countries. No less an authority than Professor Koch, the eminent German bacteriologist, has stated it as a confirmed fact that the mosquito is instrumental in conveying the infection of malaria. This disease is known to be caused by a parasitic protozoon which inhabits the red corpuscles of the blood, and mosquitoes are said to be the most fertile source of contagion. There would seem, therefore, to be some truth in the saying, common in tropical countries, 'No mosquitoes, no ague.' In an article in *Knowledge* (March 1, 1899) Mr P. H. Grimshaw gives some account of the researches of Professors Grassi and Bignami into the question of the spread of disease by means of mosquitoes. Grassi found three species of gnat or true mosquito which must be regarded with suspicion. *Culex pipiens*, which is half-an-inch long, and which announces its presence by a peculiar piping sound, he acquits as harmless. *Anopheles claviger* Grassi calls the 'spy' of malaria, and he confirms its connection with its spread in Lombardy, Tuscany, and the Roman Campagna. *Culex penicillaris* and *Culex malarie* he regards with more than suspicion. It appears, however, that in order to produce fever in a healthy person by the bite of the mosquito the insect must previously have bitten some one who has been stricken with illness. Professor Grassi believes, however, that mosquitoes are probably the only means of spreading the disease.

Not long ago Major Ronald Ross, head of the Malarial Mission, which left Liverpool on 29th July, sent home this cablegram from Sierra Leone, West Africa: 'Malarial mosquito found. Ask Government to send at once men.' The theory of Major Ross, which is similar to that of Professor Grassi, is that malaria is disseminated by a particular kind of mosquito, which frequents malarial swamps and, laden with poisonous germs, injects them into the human body with the sting. Before leaving Liverpool, Major Ross explained that the efforts of the expedition, which was sent out by the Liverpool School of Tropical Diseases, would be mainly directed to find the mosquito in question. Mr Jones, one of the organisers of the Liverpool Tropical School, who received the cablegram, at once apprised Mr Chamberlain of the discovery. A representative medical man was afterwards sent to assist in the further prosecution of the researches.

The South American Indians utilise the services

of the mosquito. One of their favourite articles of food is the armadillo, a species of large tortoise. This animal, as its name indicates, is covered with a thick coat of armour; but, like Achilles of old, it has certain vulnerable points, as the mosquito knows by experience, for he enters his burrow to pursue his parasitic calling. When hunting for armadillos the Indian thrusts a stick into the animal's burrow, and if a cloud of mosquitoes emerge he knows that the animal is at home, and proceeds to dig him out. On the other hand, if few or no mosquitoes are found in the hole the Indian knows it is a waste of time to wait any longer, and proceeds to investigate the next burrow.

We have heard of the mosquito being utilised in another way. A West Indian planter who was much troubled with unwelcome visitors hit on the following mode of getting rid of them. His house was much infested with the insects, and every bed was fitted with a mosquito-curtain. In one of the rooms was a netting such as is frequently sold by outfitters in England to the unsophisticated traveller, in which the meshes are too large to prevent the ingress of mosquitoes,

which pass freely in and out, like sprats through the meshes of a fisherman's net. This room was reserved for the use of troublesome guests, whose stay was in consequence generally short and their departure abrupt.

We ourselves remember one instance in which the mosquito befriended us—involuntarily, of course. When living in a tropical part of South America we were in the habit of receiving a bundle of newspapers by every mail from England. The papers were frequently delayed in transit; we discovered the cause one day when, on opening a magazine, a dead mosquito was found flattened between the leaves. It clearly could not have got there before the magazine left England; it was evident, therefore, that somebody was in the habit of opening and reading our mail matter *en route*. This little incident helped us to trace the culprit, and to receive our papers more promptly in future.

There is, we believe, no effectual remedy for mosquitoes. It is said that they have a dislike to the smell of eucalyptus, and that a few of those trees planted round a house will keep them away; but we have never had an opportunity of testing this remedy.

YAGAN, 'THE AUSTRALIAN WALLACE.'



THE early colonists of Western Australia had met with a peaceful reception from the aborigines of the Swan River Settlement. Their intrusion was, in fact, regarded by the swarthy blacks with supreme indifference. Some, from primitive curiosity, approached and examined with reſh the raiment and vestures of civilisation; while others fled from the white man's presence, declaring, in their jabbering dialect, that the invaders were their forefathers come to life again. This superstitious dread was sufficient to keep the tribe at a safe distance in the bush.

The settlers had endeavoured to show every kindness to the aborigines, on the score of diplomacy as well as humanity. Trinkets and various ornaments, food and multi-coloured apparel, were meted out liberally to the tribe, to conciliate their good wishes and preserve them in their inoffensive attitude.

But the reign of general amity was soon to be broken; and the cause, pitiable to relate, must be laid at the door of the pioneers of civilisation. A few nefarious deeds by contemptible settlers kindled the fire of sedition in the settlement, and provoked the wrath and just resentment of the innocent aborigines.

One day a labourer, who had recently migrated to this quarter from Tasmania, was proceeding through the bush with a friend of a cog-nate disposition, when some natives were spied in

the distance. A few yards from the *wurly* (native tent) a black woman was innocently playing with her little child, to the great amusement of the camp. 'Confound those black trash!' he said. 'I'll show you how we treat them in Van Diemen's Land.' With this he levelled his gun at the harmless woman and shot her dead. The terrified natives fled with pitiful yells from the scene of the murder. This foul and impious deed was not destined, however, to remain unpunished. Though the act was condemned by the community as a cold-blooded murder, they never expected retaliation, or that vengeance would recoil on their heads. The murderer was, however, to receive justice from the outraged blacks.

During those years of hostile encroachment on aboriginal territory there was one man whose spirit burned with ire at the injustice of the men who were robbing his people of their lands and lawful possessions. Yagan, the chief of the Koombana tribe, was a man of Herculean stature, of enormous physical strength and courage, and chivalrous and daring to a degree that excited the affection and dread of every homestead. His followers feared and worshipped him. In the hunt, in love, and in war this valiant chief had no rival. He was proud of his native home, and, with the patriotism of a Wallace, was ready to spill his last drop of blood in her defence.

Yagan had suffered the settlers to till and develop their lands in peace. Where kindness

was shown he had returned it liberally, and many a colonist was indebted to him for his good services to them in distress. To women he was particularly chivalrous, and oftentimes did he carry to their homes dainty fish and the flesh of the kangaroo. His magnanimity was admired; he was extremely sensitive, and the community took every precaution to avoid giving him offence, for when roused to anger his appearance was such as to create alarm for those at whom his wrath was directed.

When the tragic news of the woman's murder was brought to Yagan his anger knew no bounds. Summoning his tribesmen to a conference, he harangued them with the full might of martial eloquence. From that night Yagan was destined to be the relentless foe of the colonists.

Choosing two of his most trustworthy tribesmen, he sallied forth from the camp in search of the delinquent. The Tasmanian's whereabouts had been ascertained, and by taking a wide circuit Yagan could make a descent on him from an unseen point in the rear of the house. The sportive murderer and a hired labourer, John Hope by name, were busy working in their master's garden, when suddenly the latter raised his head and descried three natives in warlike array within fifty yards from the spot on which they were working. Quickly informing his companion of the suspicious fact, he and his fellow-servant hurriedly deliberated on the best course to be adopted. To get back to their axes they would have to face a row of deadly spears, while the river in front was a great barrier to their flight. The latter alternative had to be adopted, and, throwing down their spades, they made off with all speed to the river, closely pursued by the fleet Yagan. The race of death was hard and short. Reaching a spot where a fallen tree did duty for a bridge, the two fugitives proceeded to rush across the uncertain log. From incessant rain the primitive bridge had become slippery, and when midway across, the Tasmanian slipped and fell into the deep, rushing river. His end had come. A shower of spears from the unerring hand of Yagan settled his frantic struggles in the stream, while Hope was only spared to gain the opposite bank. Vengeance having thus been doubly exacted, the natives quickly retraced their steps into the interminable bush.

The farmer on returning home was full of anxiety about the absence of his servants. When they did not return in the morning his suspicions were aroused, and he commenced a search. To his horror and regret, he found their mangled remains beside the ill-fated log, transfixed with numerous spears. The agency that had procured their death was only too obvious, and, with hastened steps, he went to the capital to report the murder. As for Tasmanian Jim, the farmer had always feared that justice would overtake him; but the innocence of his comrade

in death filled him with resentment. The authorities issued orders for the arrest of Yagan, who was suspected on the grounds of a conversation he had had with a settler a few hours before the commission of the audacious act of vengeance. But where was the relentless and retaliatory chief to be found?

A company of red-coated dragoons, under the command of a skilful officer, scoured the surrounding country for Yagan and his confederates; but their mission was difficult and perilous. Midgegooroo, an old man, alone was captured, and conveyed by the soldiers to the commanding officer. Despite his loud lamentations, he was escorted to the jail at Fremantle to be treated as an example for the benefit of those who should deliberately destroy the life and property of settlers. As an arch-accomplice of the rebel Yagan he was ordered to be shot by the dragoons, as a wholesome warning to his tribe. The day on which the sentence was put into execution Yagan was, unknown to the authorities, in the vicinity of the prison, and beheld the grim despatch of his friend. Yagan marked the destroyers well. In his wrath and vexation, he resolved to await alone near the scene of the execution, and fulfil the promise to which he was pledged. Night stole on, yet the hungry chief forsook not his hiding-place. He knew well that his life was in the direst peril; but what mattered that to one so bold in facing death? As the last streaks of twilight were fading into night Yagan crept closer to the prison wall. He heard the gay laugh of the soldiers as they descended the narrow path leading to the village. Two soldiers in uniform passed within a dozen yards of the spot where Yagan lay. Gently raising his head to scan their countenances, he saw one of the slayers of his friend. Allowing them to walk a few yards in advance, he jumped to his feet, poised his spear, and hurled it at his victim. A terrific and death-sounding shout rent the air, and a comrade beheld his brother-soldier fall to the earth pierced through the heart by a spear. Quickly recovering his senses, after the startlingly sudden assault, he levelled his rifle at the quarter from where the deadly weapon must have issued; but no human being was visible. Yagan, with his remarkable fleetness of limb, had once more dived into the bush, and was soon safe from all pursuit.

While an expedition was busy scanning every nook and corner of the forest in search of him, leagues away from the capital, Yagan, with unparalleled audacity, entered a settler's house in Perth and demanded food. On obtaining his request he politely thanked the inmates, and told them that he would bring them fish in return for their kindness. The family recognised Yagan, but were too much afraid of his vengeance to betray his visit to the constabulary.

Many other colonists knew of the outlaw's whereabouts, but they were loath to betray a stranger to law and civilised order. They had found him exceedingly courteous, gentle, and generous in all his dealings with them, and they admired his straightforward character and his unflinching magnanimity. Yet they feared his wrath and vengeance; and, while they would willingly have had him secured, they hesitated to convert their desires into responsible action. There was something in the daring of the guileless warrior-chief that defied the ignominious thought of treachery.

Despite Yagan's successful endeavours to elude straightforward search, he was, nevertheless, led into a very clever trap. Five occupants of a boat were engaged fishing on the river, and Yagan, with one of his known accomplices, was indulging in the same pastime on the bank. Friendly conversation passed between the shore and the boat, and the two natives were induced to come on board and enjoy the luxury of a cruise. Unsuspicious of any ulterior intent, the natives accepted the invitation gladly, and on the boat coming alongside they sprang on board with great glee. The boat was immediately rowed out to midstream; and while the attention of the natives was forcibly drawn to a large fish near the surface, agile hands quickly seized and bound them fast with ropes. Had the chance been less favourable and their motions less smart it is possible that Yagan would have given them a splendid opportunity for swimming exercise. The victors were aware of the magnitude of their achievement, and with no little self-satisfaction they disembarked their pinioned prisoners and marched them to the capital.

The news of the capture quickly spread, and the citizens felt not a little relieved. The captives were lodged in Fremantle prison under double lock and key and an additional array of warders.

There was a division of opinion among the Government authorities as to the sentence that should be imposed on the law-breakers. By their former edict they had outlawed Yagan and granted liberty to any one to shoot him; but since that promulgation they had, after further inquiry, changed their views about the nature of his punishment. It was decided, on the score of his many excellent qualities, to spare his life, and subject him to a term of close imprisonment on Carnac Island. A Crown official, who had evinced unusual interest in Yagan's case, undertook to accompany the prisoners to their destination, and teach them the new lessons of morality and civilisation. His offer was accepted, and on the following day the prisoners, accompanied by their ethical tutor and two fully-armed warders, were rowed across to the barren, desolate shore of Carnac.

Weeks flew by, and the zealous reformer kept

unflinching to his self-imposed task of educating the savages. From time to time he despatched favourable reports to the Government on the moral and mental improvement of his students. He had taught them useful arts, and a commendable specimen of the carpenter's handiwork in the form of a well-built bungalow for the reformer proved in some measure the success of his tuition. Each day he marked with satisfaction an improvement in their mental organisation, and he prophesied that within a year he would have them transformed into respectable members of society. After repeated questioning, moreover, he was convinced that they were happier under their new régime, and had no further wish to return to their primitive life and customs.

One day, however, a boat had been accidentally left on the beach, and afforded a splendid opportunity to the natives for carrying out a purpose they had long agreed upon. It was a sultry afternoon, and the reformer had betaken himself to his couch for a siesta. The warders, who were continually grumbling at their monotonous surroundings, had strayed to a distant part of the island to catch sharks. This favourite amusement helped to 'fill in' the day for the discontented guardians. Everything was at hand, with the exception of the rowlocks, which were usually kept in the dining-room of the bungalow; Yagan crept into the room where the reformer slept, and cautiously removed them from the cupboard. With all haste the two fugitives pushed off the boat, and before it was known that they had gone the prisoners were well across the channel.

The voyage across did not attract the notice of the Fremantle authorities, though it was made within full view of the prison. Yagan steered his course for a point at a considerable distance from the port, where he knew there would be none present to prevent his retreat into the woods. On gaining the shore the natives pulled up their craft, and, after a hurried survey of the neighbourhood, darted forth at a quick pace into the friendly bush. Free once more, with nimble steps they made for their old haunts on the Swan River.

The following day a fishing-boat was attracted to Carnac by repeated signalling of sheets and firing of guns. The occupants, surmising that something was amiss, responded to the summons and rowed to the jetty. Here they received the first intimation of Yagan's escape. The three solitary inhabitants of the island, who had no boat left to enable them to proceed to the mainland and report, then embarked, and were ferried across to Fremantle with all speed. The superintendent of Yagan's incarceration related the unfortunate tidings to the governor of the jail, and laid marked emphasis on the warders' absence and their guilt. Information was immediately carried to the constabulary, and the search was renewed. Like former expeditions, it was doomed

to inevitable failure. The area was too wide and the forest too dense with scrub and undergrowth to permit of systematic and successful search. While the hunters were busy tracking secret paths in the interior, the game was in the village from which they had set out.

When all hope of laying hands on Yagan was beginning to vanish from men's minds, the Attorney-General of that time was surprised by a visit from the chief, who was on this occasion attended by two of his most powerful followers. It was truly an unpleasant situation for the representative of law. The Crown official, who was more than any one concerned with Yagan's rebellious conduct, and whose duty it was to apprehend the fugitive, was enjoying a few hours of relaxation in his garden. The natives had approached so silently that he was unaware of their presence till Yagan touched him lightly on the shoulder as he was bending to plant his vegetables. Apprised thus, he turned suddenly round to find himself confronted with blackskins and a deadly array of spears. A tumultuous conflict of ideas passed through the lawyer's mind as he stood surveying his uninvited guests. Yagan looked sullen and gloomy, and his face betrayed hostile designs. As if in constant anticipation of treachery, his spear, of exquisite finish and exceedingly sharp-pointed, was poised. Well did the lawyer appreciate the danger that threatened his life, for the part he had taken in his capacity as the prosecutor for the Crown in bringing about Midgegooroo's death was known to the chief. Helpless in their hands, he apathetically, though stoically, resigned himself to whatever fate the outcome of this meeting should bring about.

Yagan's reassuring manner set the lawyer's fears at rest. Approaching the learned official, Yagan laid one hand gently and familiarly on his shoulder, while with the other he gesticulated, to give emphasis to his speech. Strong and fervid patriotism burned beneath each disjointed syllable of the narrative.

'White man, take black man's home and food ; white man hunts him to bush ; black man do white man no wrong, yet white man shoots all black man. Why should white man treat us so ?'

There was an earnestness and a truth in these simple sentences that carried home conviction to the listener's mind. The colonists were to blame for the retaliation, for it was they who began the murder of the innocent aborigines. Yagan continued his reflections :

'White man shoot black man. Yagan (s)pear two.'

'If Yagan,' replied the lawyer, 'spear white man, all white men will shoot Yagan.'

'Yagan fear no white man. White man shoot ; Yagan kill.'

Seeing that it was dangerous to remonstrate

with the barbarous views so forcibly held and expressed by the native chief, the intelligent official thought it wise to leave his arguments and intentions unanswered. To his immense relief, however, Yagan, evidently fearing he had delayed long enough in hostile territory, took leave of his host, and departed with his retinue.

About a month after this latest episode in Yagan's outlawed career, several natives were convicted of having stolen goods from a Fremantle store, and were brought up for sentence. One, more unfortunate than his brother criminals, was accused on a second charge of incendiarism, and sentenced, on his guilt being established, to be shot. It was never known by what means information of this capital sentence was conveyed to Yagan. The Government, too, never dreamt that the rebel would again dare to question its right by reprisal. A cruel deception immediately followed.

The solemn threat of the chief in the lawyer's garden at Guildford was too surely fulfilled : 'White man shoot black man ; Yagan (s)pear two.' Though on former occasions the successful avenger had directed vengeance at the guilty culprits, it was not necessary, according to the spirit of their primeval law, to search out the actual agent for adequate punishment. Their conscience was satisfied and their wrath appeased on the spearing of any one of the tribe or race to which the delinquent belonged. On this particular occasion it was impossible for the chief to ascertain who was responsible for his tribesman's death ; but special ignorance on this head did not prevent retribution at his hands. Regardless of capture or danger, Yagan hastened with two of his confederates to the confines of Perth. While in secret hiding here, a native messenger who had, for his own edification, witnessed the execution of the native, related to the chief the sad events of his death. The lurid picture fired his ire and stimulated bloody revenge. Next morning, as the citizens of Perth were bestirring themselves, a messenger rode in to the governor at breakneck speed. An unusual spectacle like this aroused their curiosity. Its meaning was soon divulged. Two farm-labourers in the employment of a farmer named Philipps had been speared in their cart as they were returning home to the farm. Seventeen spear-wounds were found on their mangled remains. The following account of the tragic incident and its authorship was given by Philipps himself :

'As our team was making its way towards Dargeeling I was surprised by a speedy visit from Yagan and two of his followers, who darted from out the bush, and confronted me in a most disagreeably hostile fashion. The outlaw looked uncommonly grave and sullen, and the fierce glare that flitted with amazing rapidity across his eyes gave convincing signs that he was bent on mischief. Many a time have I met the gallant and courteous native, but never under so

inauspicious circumstances. His old cordiality had somehow frozen into icy coldness, and his greetings were short, severe, and abrupt.

"Yagan," I remarked, "you look extremely fierce and unfriendly," at the same time pointing to his agitated features. To this remark he made no reply, but, coming nearer me, asked in a nervous undertone where the men were. "They're some way behind; but what do you want with them? Come up with me to the house and get some meat." "Nulla, nulla; tanke" ("No, no; thanks"), he replied; "I want John see." Before I could utter another syllable the three disappeared quickly into the bush. I sat ruminating over this extraordinary meeting, and endeavoured in vain to divine the reason for Yagan's present hostility.

The whole household had lived on the best terms with the brave chief; and no one, as far as he knew, was guilty of any cruelty or unkindness to the blacks. He forgot that John had stolen one of the native women, and had seriously wounded her husband in his successful abduction.

'The more I pondered the more the conclusion was forced upon me that Yagan had sinister designs on their lives, whatever his motive for the assault might be. I stopped my horses and listened. Not a sound could I hear in the awful stillness of the bush. I feared something must be amiss, as their team ought by this time to have come up to where I was. They could not have been more than a mile away from me at the time Yagan presented himself so unceremoniously. My suspicions aroused, I walked briskly back in their direction, and when I had proceeded a few hundred yards I heard sounds of heavy groaning. A gruesome picture loomed up before my vision, and I ran as one demented. Reaching the fatal scene, I nearly fainted on beholding the horrible spectacle. James Neil I came across first, lying stretched on a plot of grass amid a pool of blood. I raised him, spoke to him, entreated him to speak; but, alas! life had fled beyond recall. Deep moaning from the other side of the road flashed the happy intelligence of life. Running to the aid of the wounded man, I found him writhing in the greatest agony; but my efforts were unavailing. He expired in my arms with the name of Yagan on his lips. Dazed, furious, and sad, I sat down, and for several moments was lost in bitter thought. Nothing that I could do could restore their precious lives. With tender care, and amid the solemn hush of the eternal forest, I laid the two bodies side by side and spread over them the cart rug. With eyes bedimmed, I departed to gain assistance; and within a few hours the remains were removed. I kept wondering why Yagan had selected them for his victims and spared me, who was alone and unprotected.'

A perfect storm of indignation swept the little

capital on the receipt of the news of the double tragedy. Settlers met in small groups and discussed the grievous incident. Their wrath at this diabolical outrage was inexpressible. Yagan could no longer expect mercy. The Government was in a state of great anxiety, and offered a sum of five hundred pounds for Yagan's head, dead or alive. It was now determined to get rid of this pest at whatever cost. There could be no security as long as this notorious cut-throat was allowed to go at large. Voluntary expeditions were got up for the capture of the outlaw. Policemen were detached in companies to search the neighbouring woods. But the end of this untamed actor was not to be reached by straightforward means. It was left for the old application of treachery to realise this desirable goal. His death was compassed by a method that was soon after to be condemned as unworthy of civilisation.

Two boys named James and John Lewis, of whom Yagan was extremely fond, tempted by the reward of five hundred pounds offered by the Government to any one who would shoot him, invited the native chief to dinner one day on the outskirts of their farm. They were prevented from accomplishing their treacherous act the first day. Yagan enjoyed himself with the boys, and as they rose to go invited them to come to a repast in his camp on the day following. During the meal given them by the chief, as Yagan rose to refill James's plate, John, the younger lad, levelled his gun and shot the chief through the head. The warrior-chief fell dead.

When the boys saw the result of their terrible crime they fled in great terror and dismay. But vengeance quickly dogged their steps. A few of Yagan's followers, who never went far from their beloved chief's side, heard the report of the gun, and at once ran towards the camp. There they found their noble master stretched in the cold clasp of death. With fiendish yells they pursued the guilty youths, and came up with the younger at the bank of the river. A volley of spears whistled through the air, and when James looked behind he beheld several natives driving their spears through his brother's body. No share in the spoil would the unfortunate and misguided youth now claim; his reward for cold-blooded treachery was other than his sanguine hopes had expected. The surviving brother reached the farm in safety, and reported the death of Yagan and his brother. The reward was paid the following week; but pressure was brought to bear on him, and he left the colony forthwith. The whole community was horrified at the unparalleled treachery and deceit of the boys; and instead of praise their action elicited strong condemnation from the local press. Thus ended the life of a patriot so honest and generous that he had not even withheld a share of his scanty repast from the hand that slew him.

A MODERN STAGE-COACH.



HE coaching days are done. The railway has killed them. Where now the romance of a journey, with the risk of being 'held up' by the way? Gone for ever.

Yet there are still a few coach-drives in different parts of the country, perhaps as much for the novelty of the idea as anything else.

Such an one, taking the better part of a day, is the interesting drive from London to Brighton; and, on a smaller scale, that from Birmingham to Coventry. It was our good fortune recently to enjoy the latter drive; not that we were unable to go to Coventry by rail. Not at all. We could easily have done that, there being a very convenient train-service; but we were desirous of precipitating ourselves, if we could, into the stage-coach days, forgetting for the moment that we were staying at the *Station Hotel*, and that there was such a thing as the mighty locomotive carrying its train of carriages at the rate of sixty miles an hour. So to the *Grand Hotel* we hied, to get a coach-ticket, a quarter of an hour before the start. 'Was there a vacant place?' we humbly asked, thinking, in our innocence, that all seats might possibly be taken up. 'There are not any taken yet, sir.' 'Oh!' we answer. 'We believe in plenty of room, but something less than the whole coach will suit us.' As it happened—and a very exceptional thing, we understand—we were the only passenger; and, punctually at a quarter past eleven, with crack of whip and blare of horn, we started on our trip from the door of the 'Grand.'

There is nothing in the 'Grand' to remind you of the old coaching days; a most modern up-to-date hotel, upholstered in the most luxurious fashion. But even this gives some interest to the drive; for, as you proceed on your journey from this hotel and modern Birmingham to quaint old Coventry and the six-hundred-year-old inn at which you are set down, you seem to be travelling back through the centuries. For the first few miles the route is from the centre to the circumference of the Midland capital. Attention is directed to us by the continual blowing of the horn, and all eyes are turned our way. Whether our guard has read the Scripture, 'Do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do,' we know not, but he evidently disregards it. Of course, we sit with stolid countenance, cigar in mouth, as if it were quite an ordinary occurrence being the observed of all observers; and thus we sweep on through the long suburbs, rising gradually from the lower slums to the genteeler terraces, till, on the outskirts of the city, as we come to the villas of the higher middle-class, garden framed, looking pictures

of comfort and moderate luxury, one is put in mind of the suburbs of London, only on a smaller scale—a municipal spider-web, but not quite so large as that of the great Metropolis, yet of a respectable size. The great Scotch romancer is honoured as we pass out of Birmingham by the Waverley Road, containing one of our modern palatial Board schools—this one, we believe, devoted entirely to more advanced pupils—past the picturesque village of Yardley, about five miles from the city, and change horses at the 'Three Horse-Shoes' at Sheldon, six miles on our way.

All old inns are those we pass on the road, which but a few years ago were crumbling to decay; gone are their palmy days when the London coach used to pass—for we are now on the London coach road. The cycle has, however, given these old inns a new lease of life, and every one of them has awakened as from a death-sleep, donned new robes, and decked itself with modern adornments; and now no more inviting hosteleries are to be found anywhere.

This road, let us say in passing, is a very paradise for cyclists—long, smooth, straight, without inclines; an inn every couple of miles, where everything can be had. What more is wanted? On high days and holidays the ground is literally covered by the wheel.

Horses changed, on again through a beautiful Warwick country, smiling fields on every side; no hills to interrupt the view, and the eye can range for miles in any direction. On the right of the road we have a splendid game-preserve, and a little farther on a great fox-hunting country. Passing the hamlet of Stonebridge we reach the picturesque village of Meriden, said to be the very centre of England, an old weather-worn cross marking the spot. Here we again change horses for the final stage of our journey, and, passing the village of Allesley, with another final flourish of trumpet we sweep into the ancient city of Coventry, and are plumped down at the 'Craven Arms,' formerly the 'White Bear,' an inn at which the old London coach changed horses. This inn is said to be six hundred years old, and has a romantic history. Many strange sights it has seen that the pen of a Fielding would have revelled in. It was rebuilt at the beginning of the century, although the stables date back to Elizabethan times. 'Mine host' is in evidence, and welcomes his visitors, delighted to give them any information in his power. With sharpened appetite we sit down to luncheon, as visions of Earl Leofric, Countess Godiva, and Peeping Tom pass before our eyes; and in the after-noon these are strangely mingled with bicycles, tricycles, and motor-cars, as if it were not on a horse but a machine that the Countess was obliged to take her unwelcome ride.

THE STORY OF AN ORCHID.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

By FREDERICK BOYLE, Author of *Camp Notes*, &c.

HERE are those who pronounce *Vanda Sanderiana* the stateliest of all orchids. To compare such numberless and varied forms of beauty is rather childish. But it will be allowed that a first view of those enormous flowers, ten or more upon a stalk—lilac above, pale-cinnamon below, covered with a network of crimson lines—is a memorable sensation for the elect.

We may fancy the emotions of Mr Roebelin on seeing it: the earliest of articulate mortals so favoured. His amazement and delight were not alloyed by anticipation, for no rumour of the marvel had gone forth. Roebelin was travelling 'on spec' for once. In 1879 Mr Sander learned that the Philippine Government was about to establish a mail service from Manila to Mindanao. Often had he surveyed that great island longingly, from his arm-chair at St Albans, assured that treasures must await the botanist there. But although the Spaniards had long held settlements upon the coast, and, of course, claimed sovereignty over the whole, there had hitherto been no regular means of communication with a port whence steamers sailed for Europe. A collector would be at the mercy of chance for transmitting his spoil, after spending assuredly a thousand pounds. It was out of the question. But the establishment of a line of steamers to Manila transformed the situation. Forthwith Roebelin was despatched, to find what he could.

He landed, of course, at the capital, Mindanao; and the Spaniards—civil, military, even ecclesiastic—received him cordially. Any visitor was no less than a phenomenon to them. It is a gay and pleasant little town, for these people, having neither means nor opportunity, as a rule, to revisit Europe, make their home in the East. And Roebelin found plenty of good things round the glorious bay of Illana. But he learned with surprise that the Spaniards did not even profess to have authority beyond a narrow strip here and there upon the coast. The interior is occupied by savages, numerous and warlike, Papuan by race, or crossed with the Philippine Malay. Though they are not systematically hostile to white men, Roebelin saw no chance of exploring the country.

Then he heard of a 'red *Phalenopsis*' on the north coast, a legendary wonder, which must have its own chronicle by-and-by. Seduced especially by this report, Roebelin sailed in a native craft to Surigao, a small but very thriving settlement, which ranks next to the capital. People

there were well acquainted with *Phalenopsis*, but they knew nothing of a red one; some of them, however, talked in vague ecstasy of an orchid with flowers as big as a dinner-plate to be found on the banks of Lake Magindanao, a vast sheet of water in the middle of the island. They did not agree about the shape, or colour, or anything else relating to it; but such a plant must be well worth collecting anyhow. It was not dangerous to ascend the river, under due precautions, nor to land at certain points of the lake. Such points are inhabited by the Subano tribe, who live in hourly peril from their neighbours the Bagabos, against whom they beg Spanish protection. Accordingly, white men are received with enthusiasm.

The expedition, therefore, would be comparatively safe, if a guide and interpreter could be found. And here Roebelin was lucky. A small trader who had debts to collect among the Subanos offered his *sampan*, with its crew, on reasonable terms, and proposed to go himself. He was the son of a Chinaman from Singapore, by a native wife, and spoke intelligible English. The crew also had mostly some Chinese blood, and Roebelin gathered that they were partners of Sam Choon, his dragoman, in a very small way. The number of Celestials and half-breeds of that stock in Mindanao had already struck him, in comparison with Manila. Presently he learned the reason. The energetic and tenacious Chinaman is hated by all classes of Spaniards—by the clergy because he will not be converted, by the merchants because he intercepts their trade, by the military because he will not endure unlimited oppression, and by the public at large because he is hard-working, thrifty, and successful. He is dangerous, too, when roused by ill-treatment beyond the common, and his secret societies provide machinery for insurrection at a day's notice. But in Mindanao the Chinaman is indispensable. White traders could not live without his assistance. They do not love him the better, but they protect him so far as they may from the priests and the military.

I have no adventures to tell on the journey upwards. It lasted a good many days. Roebelin secured few plants, for this part is inhabited by Bagabos, or some race of their kidney, and Sam Choon would not land in the forest.

At length they reached Lake Magindanao; the day was fine, and they pushed across. But presently small round clouds began to mount over the blue hills. Thicker and thicker they rose. A pleasant wind swelled the surface of the lake, but those clouds far above moved continually faster. Roe-

belin called attention to them. But the Chinaman is the least weatherwise of mortals. Always intent on his own business or pleasure—the constitution of mind which gives him such immense advantage above all other men in the struggle for existence—he does not notice his surroundings much. Briefly, a tremendous squall caught them in sight of port—one of those sudden outbursts which make fresh-water sailing so perilous in the tropics. The wind swooped down like a hurricane from every quarter at once, as it seemed. For a moment the lake lay still, hissing, beaten down by the blow; then it rose in solid bulk like waves of the ocean. In a very few minutes the squall passed on, but it had swamped the *sampan*. They were so near the land, however, that the Subanos, hastening to the rescue, met them half-way in the surf, escorted them to shore, laughing and hallooing, and returned to dive for the cargo. It was mostly recovered in time.

These people do not build houses in the water, like so many of their kin. They prefer the safety of high trees; it is not by any means so effectual, but such, they would say, was the custom of their ancestors. At this village the houses were perched not less than fifty feet in air, standing on a solid platform. But if the inhabitants are thus secured against attack, on the other hand—each family living by itself up aloft—an enemy on the ground would be free to conduct his operations at leisure. So the unmarried men and a proportion of the warriors occupy a stout building raised only so far above the soil as to keep out reptiles. Here also the chief sits by day, and public business is done. The visitors were taken thither.

When Roebelin had dried his clothes the afternoon was too far advanced for exploration. The crew of the *prau* chattered and disputed at the top of their shrill voices as case after case was brought in, dripping, and examined. But Sam Choon found time in the midst of his anxieties to warn Roebelin against quitting the cleared area. 'Bagabos come just now, they say,' he shouted. But the noise and the fuss and the smell were past bearing. Roebelin took his arms and strolled out till supper was ready.

I do not know what he discovered. On returning he found a serious palaver, the savages arguing coolly, the Chinamen raving. Sam Choon rushed up, begging him to act as umpire; and whilst eating his supper Roebelin learned the question in dispute. Sam Choon, as we know, had debts to collect in this village, for cloth and European goods, to be paid in jungle produce—honey, wax, gums, and so forth. The Subanos did not deny their liability—the natural man is absolutely truthful and honest. Nor did they assert that they could not pay. Their contention was simply that the merchandise had been charged

at a figure beyond the market rate. Another Chinaman had paid them a visit, and sold the same wares at a lower price. They proposed to return Sam Choon's goods unused, and to pay for anything they could not restore on this reduced scale. It was perfectly just in the abstract, and the natural man does not conceive any other sort of justice. Sam Choon could not dispute that his rival's cloth was equally good; it bore the same trade-mark, and those keen eyes were as well able to judge of quality as his own. But the trader everywhere has his own code of morals. Those articles for which the Subanos were indebted had been examined, and the price had been discussed at leisure; an honest man cannot break his word. Such diverse views were not to be reconciled. Roebelin took a practical course. He asked whether it could possibly be worth while to quarrel with these customers for the sake of a very few dollars? At the lower rate there would be a profit of many hundreds per cent. But the Chinaman, threatened with a loss in business, is not to be moved, for a while at least, by demonstrations of prudence.

Meantime the dispute still raged at the council fire, for the crew also were interested. Suddenly there was a roar. Several of them rushed across to Sam Choon and shouted great news. Roebelin understood afterwards. The caitiff who had undersold them was in the village at that moment! Whilst they jabbered in high excitement another roar burst out. One of the men, handling the rival's cloth, found a private mark—the mark of his *Hoey*. And it was that to which they all belonged. The *Hoey* may be described as a trade guild; but it is much more. Each of these countless associations is attached to one of the great secret societies, generally the T'ien T'i Hung, compared with which, for numbers and power, Freemasonry is but a small concern. By an oath which expressly names father, son, and brother, the initiated swear to kill any of their fellows who shall wrong a member of the *Hoey*. This unspeakable villain who sold cheap had wronged them all! He must die!

They pressed upon the chief in a body, demanding the traitor. All had arms and brandished them. Probably the savages would not have surrendered a guest on any terms; but this demonstration provoked them. In howling tumult they dispersed, seized their ready weapons, and formed line. The war-cry was not yet raised, but spears were levelled by furious hands. The issue depended on any chance movement. Suddenly from a distance came the blast of a cow-horn—a muffled bellow, but full of threat. The savages paused, turned, and rushed out, shouting. Roebelin caught a word, familiar by this time—'Bagabos.' He followed; but Sam Choon seized his arm. 'They put *ranjows*,' he said breathlessly. 'You cut foot, you die!' And in the

moonlight Roebelin saw boys running hither and thither with an armful of bamboo spikes sharp as knives at each end, which they drove into the earth.

Men unacquainted with the plan of this defence can only stand aside when *rangjous* are laid down. Roebelin waited with the Chinamen, tame and quiet enough now. The Subanos had all vanished in the forest, which rose, misty and still, across the clearing. Hours they watched, expecting each moment to hear the yell of savage fight. But no sound reached them. At length a long line of dusky figures emerged, with arms and ornaments sparkling in the moonlight. It was half the warriors returning.

They still showed sullenness towards the Chinamen; but the chief took Roebelin by the hand, led him to the foot of a tree upon which stood the largest house, and smilingly showed him the way up. It was not a pleasant climb. The ladder, a notched trunk, dripped with dew; it was old and rotten besides. Roebelin went up gingerly; the chief returned with a torch to light his steps before he had got half-way. But the interior was comfortable enough; far above the mosquito realm anyhow. Roebelin felt that an indefinite number of eyes were watching from the darkness as he made his simple preparations for turning in; but he saw none of them, and heard only a rustling. 'What a day I've had!' he thought, and fell asleep.

It was a roar and a rush like the crack of doom which woke him; shrieking and shouting, clang of things that fell, boom of great waves, and

thunder such as mortal never heard dominating all. A multitude of naked bodies stumbled over him and fell, a struggling, screaming heap. In an instant they were gone. He started up, but pitched headlong. The floor rolled elastic as a spring-board. It was black night. Dimly he saw clearer patches where a flying wretch, tossed against the wall of sticks, had broken it down. But the dust veiled them like a curtain. Gasping, on hands and knees, Roebelin sought the doorway. Again and again, even thus, he fell upon his side. And all the while that thundering din resounded. He understood now. It was a great earthquake. At length the doorway was found; holding on cautiously, Roebelin felt for the ladder. It was gone—broken in the rush.

Of the time that followed I do not speak. There were no more shocks. Slowly the sky whitened. He turned over the wreck—not a creature was there, dead or living. Great gaps showed in the floor and in the roof. Through one of these, against the rosy clouds, he saw a wreath of giant flowers, lilac and cinnamon, clinging to the tree above. It was *Vanda Sanderiana*!

But that plant and the others collected at the same time never reached Europe. Upon returning to Surigao with his treasures, Roebelin found little beyond heaps of rubbish on the site. Earthquakes have a home in Mindanao. But that of 1880 was the most awful on record as yet. Two years later he returned and brought home the prize.

A S O N G.

MY LADY wanders through the glade;
Across the sunshine and the shade
I see her pass.
She has a smile that's very sweet,
And softly fall her little feet
Upon the grass.

The woodland falls a-wondering;
Methinks the birds forget to sing,
A little space;
And through the brake a rabbit creeps,
Or here a timid squirrel peeps,
To see her face.

And where the trees their branches spread,
The dancing sunbeams overhead
Play hide-and-seek;
Come gliding, glancing through the green,
And steal the jealous leaves between,
To kiss her cheek.

And now and then, between the trees,
There comes a little whispering breeze,
And, passing there,
Flutters the muslin of her dress,
Or touches, soft as a caress,
Her radiant hair.

And every primrose in the dell,
And every nodding woodland bell,
To greet her tries;
And bashful violets, peeping through,
Rejoice to know that they are blue
As her sweet eyes.

Methinks that every living thing
To her a song of praise doth sing;
And only I,
That would so deep a love confess,
Am silent at her loveliness:
I know not why!

V. CRAIGIE HALETT.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA.

By A BRITISH OFFICER ON THE SPOT.

THERE are probably comparatively few people who have had an opportunity of visiting Santiago de Cuba; indeed, there may be many whose ideas concerning the place before the outbreak of the late war between the United States and Spain were of a somewhat hazy description. Since the conclusion of the war, however, Santiago and its surroundings have been a source of interest to a large number of visitors from the United States and Jamaica, and a most interesting visit it is while recent events are still fresh in the memories of those who took part in them, and before all traces of the recent conflict have been effaced.

As we approach the entrance to the harbour, the inside is completely concealed from view by a projecting point of land; but on the right-hand side a good view is obtained of the Morro Castle, a most massive and picturesque pile, situated on high ground but quite out of date as a modern defence work, and just beyond the ruins of the Estrella Battery. On the left-hand side of the entrance, also on high ground, is a battery that was erected by the Spaniards when Santiago was first threatened, and armed with guns taken from the cruiser *Reina Mercedes*; while in the distance, to the west, may be seen the battered wreck of the *Almirante Oquendo*, one of Admiral Cervera's ill-starred squadron.

We are much struck with the extreme narrowness of the harbour-entrance, which is not more than two hundred yards in width. Passing on up the channel to the city, the spot where the *Merrimac* was sunk is soon reached (the top of one of her masts being now the only indication of her position), and soon afterwards the place where the Spaniards endeavoured to block the channel by sinking the *Reina Mercedes*. Like the *Merrimac*, she quite failed to serve the purpose intended, for neither vessel was ever the smallest obstruction to traffic to the city; and she has now been raised and taken in tow to the States.

Going up the channel one has leisure to admire the magnificence of the harbour and the beauty of the scenery surrounding it. An amphitheatre of verdure-clad hills, with ground gradually sloping up towards their base dotted with white houses, and the blue waters of the harbour overlooked by the city of Santiago, the whole bathed in the rays of a bright tropical sun, combine to produce a most charming picture.

Santiago is situated on the slope of a ridge which rises close to the water's edge, and possesses many fine and striking buildings. On the top of the ridge is the public square, with the Cathedral, Government offices, and what used to be the old Spanish Club (now used by the Americans for the same purpose); while a little way to the west is the hospital, a large building situated in a fine airy position. The streets, which appear to have been much neglected in the past, are being rapidly improved by the Americans; the macadamised surface, made on scientific principles, taking the place of the rough cobbles, which are most trying to the feet. The houses, built on the Spanish plan, are cool and airy; but the native huts are mere hovels, to improve the sanitation of which, and of the place generally, most vigorous measures are being adopted.

There is already a large American population in the place, and a fair percentage of foreigners, but few Spaniards. The natives, who talk Spanish, are of the yellow Cuban type; the negro, who abounds in Jamaica and other West Indian Islands, being not nearly so much in evidence.

With regard to the possibilities of the country, there are without doubt plenty of openings for trade of all kinds in the towns, while in the country fruit-growing and cattle-rearing suggest themselves as industries which would have an excellent chance of success. As to climate, it is of course hot. But in the hills the climate is most delightful; and even in the towns, with the improvement of sanitation and with ordinary precautions, there is no reason why the

health of the average European should suffer in the way that is generally supposed.

The American garrison at Santiago, which consists of an infantry regiment (now the 5th), occupies the old Spanish barracks, which are just outside the town, looking out over San Juan Hill, and are cool and airy. The officers are living at present in temporary huts, there being no proper officers' quarters, as the Spanish officers did not live in barracks. The men are clothed in a serviceable kit of brown breeches and gaiters, dark-blue flannel shirt, and brown felt hat, and are now being converted into mounted infantry. The officers are an excellent set of fellows, and both they and the men look very fit.

The chief attraction of Santiago, however, lies in the scene of the struggle between the Americans and Spaniards. The two battlefields are on San Juan Hill, some three miles from the city, and at El Caney, about three miles farther. El Caney, where the first severe action took place, is a village situated on rising ground, with an old blockhouse on a hill a quarter of a mile outside it. In front of the position the ground is hilly and covered for the most part with scrub; while the blockhouse itself stands out in a most conspicuous position, offering a splendid target for artillery fire. This was the scene of some very severe fighting, and was held by the Spaniards for a whole day in spite of very severe losses. The position on San Juan Hill was undoubtedly a much better one than at El Caney; and it was here that a most stubborn resistance was offered to the advance of the Americans. The ridge of the hill is somewhat in the shape of a crescent, and had a small blockhouse in the centre; while, in front, the ground slopes rapidly down to the San Juan River. At the foot of the hill the ground is flat and open for about half a mile, when it rises again up to another ridge. This ground in wet weather, such as we are told there was at the time, must have been exceedingly marshy and have greatly impeded progress. In rear, the ground towards the city is undulating, with ideal hollows for supports and reserves, and covered with low brushwood which offers no obstacle to the advance of infantry, with a road (which has since been improved) leading to the city, screened the whole way from the view of the enemy. The Spanish first line was on the front slope of the hill, and occupied a most commanding position, with a clear field of fire in front. The real weakness of the Spanish position, especially after the capture of El Caney, lay in the flanks; but the Americans relieved them of all anxiety on this account, and delivered their attack in front. To an enemy adequately supplied with guns—and neither side was—the position would have been a good deal exposed, inasmuch as an effective enfilade-fire might have been brought to bear; but the Americans were too weak in guns for this to affect the situation. Indeed, American

officers say that of the three batteries that reached San Juan for the opening attack, one was put out of action by long-range rifle-fire before it ever fired a shot.

The Spaniards held their first position with determination, inflicting severe losses on the enemy, until the Americans succeeded in crossing the open ground in front, and were about to deliver the final attack, when they abandoned their trenches and occupied their second position, about half a mile in rear. The Americans, after carrying the first position, threw up trenches along the crest of the ridge; but, in spite of exposure and the most miserable food, the Spaniards held their second position for close on a fortnight, when the capitulation of Santiago was signed.

The tree under which the negotiations took place is now one of the chief objects of interest; but was being so mutilated by persons anxious for a piece as a memento that it is now protected by a double barbed-wire fence.

Mention has already been made of the Morro Castle at the entrance to the harbour; but perhaps a little more concerning it may be of interest. The landing-place is in a little cove just inside the entrance, completely concealed from view outside. From there a steep and rather rough road leads up to the Morro Castle, situated on a small plateau about one hundred and fifty feet above the sea-level. It is a charming situation, with a magnificent view in all directions, and fanned by the delightful freshness of the sea-breeze. The Castle has been little damaged during the war, as it was so badly armed that the Americans could afford to practically ignore it. It is a fine specimen of the fortifications of the past, with its massive loopholed walls, turrets, and bastions; but, according to modern ideas of permanent works, quite out of date. At the present time a detachment of the American infantry regiment stationed at Santiago garrisons the place, the men living inside the Castle, while huts outside are used as officers' quarters, hospital, and offices; and a road has now been made connecting it by land with Santiago. To the east of the Castle itself the Spaniards had a battery of some eight guns of about 7-inch calibre, one of which was dismounted by an American shell; but these guns were as antiquated and useless as those in the Castle. They were mounted on the carriage-and-slide principle, and fired cast-iron projectiles, the heads of which were somewhat longer in proportion to their calibre than ours. The elevating-gear was of the most primitive pattern, consisting of a long vertical screw, with a T-headed handle reaching considerably above the level of the gun. The artillerymen concerned with the laying must have occupied a most exposed position, for, besides the gunlayer, the elevating gunners (and two must have been required) would have to stand up on the slide in a manner most conspicuous

to the enemy. Traversing, too, must have been no easy matter, for the emplacements were quite innocent of racers of any description, and no facilities for the supply of ammunition seem to have been provided.

At the foot of the Morro Hill, just inside the harbour, is the Estrella Battery, which was armed with the same useless class of weapons as the Morro, and is now in ruins. The only modern guns available for the defence of the harbour were those taken from the *Reina Mercedes*, the remainder being guns of the last century, as the dates on them showed, and were such as one is accustomed only to look upon as curiosities, and not as part of the defences of an important harbour against a modern fleet.

The Spaniards, realising the uselessness of the guns, appear to have relied on submarine mines to prevent the Americans entering the harbour; but, either from want of materials or scientific management, these seem to have been as ineffective as the guns, except, perhaps, as regards their moral effect, which is said to have had a great influence on the Americans, who had the recollection of the *Maine* disaster fresh in their memories.

The story of how Admiral Cervera's squadron, driven forth by orders from Madrid, endeavoured to escape from Santiago is now well known; but had the Spanish ships been able to make the speed of which they were capable, on paper, the result might have been vastly different. The four cruisers—the *Infanta Maria Theresa*, *Cristobal Colon*, *Vizcaya*, and *Almirante Oquendo*—were all modern vessels, and, on paper, capable of attaining a speed of twenty knots; and, had they been able to do this in reality, they would in all probability have easily escaped the American fleet—which had only steam up for seven knots—even allowing for a loss of speed due to fouling of their bottoms after several weeks of inactivity in Santiago harbour. Instead of this, the fastest of them, the *Cristobal Colon*, which got some ninety miles along the coast before she was run ashore, did not attain a speed of even fourteen knots. Thus it is that the last Spanish possessions in the West have passed into the hands of the conqueror, and the Spanish language is the only heritage left of the once vast and opulent western empire founded by the early conquistadores, Columbus, Cortes, and Pizarro.

THE ROMANCE OF A PROMISSORY NOTE.

By W. SCOTT KING.



For romantic adventure my thirty-three years of mortal existence have been conspicuously bare. My constitution is normally tough, so that I have not had to wander Europe over in quest of golden health. My only brother is a staid bank-clerk, whose immaculate morals have effectually deprived his brother of even the reflected notoriety of being related to an absconder. My one sister for three years sustained the ambiguous rôle of lady's help, but never 'did' anything that I am aware of, at least nothing that necessitated her eldest brother being interviewed, except that eighteen months ago she 'did' marry her bereaved employer. Most fatal of all to any chance of adventurous experience, my heart is an exceptionally low-temperated organ, and up to the time of going to press has failed to embroil its proprietor in even the most conventional of love-entanglements. To close my inventory of disabilities, my sole and only adventure occurred six months ago; and maybe, when acquainted with it, the reader will conclude that only the utter absence of anything really sensational could have induced me to christen even that a romance.

For fifteen years I have been engaged every day, except Sunday and Bank-holidays, in identical fashion. My employers are a firm of City merchants, and, I believe, regard myself as their trusty man and true. However this may be, I

leave my bachelor 'home,' twelve miles away in the south suburbs, at exactly 9.24 every morning; and at exactly 4.47 P.M.—it has just been altered, to the discomposure of my punctual mind, to 4.49—I am stepping into my first-class compartment at Charing Cross. From this it will readily be credited that few know that twelve miles of suburban line better than I, and —what is more to my story—the business-men, clerks, and commercials who favour my train. Two or three score of them I meet as inevitably as I crack the top of my morning egg or run my coat-sleeve round my hat; and, though I am an Englishman, which means that I seldom dream of conversation with them, unless 'Good morning: damp!' is conversation, I know them from tip to toe and almost to the dates on their spade-guineas.

Among these unspoken-to intimates is a gentleman who has patronised my 4.49 for several years, and has not infrequently been my travelling companion. He is by far the most conspicuous of all the 4.49ers, owing to his singular aspect. In age he must certainly be beyond sixty, for his long shaggy hair and beard are quite white. He is tall but much bent, and his long neck is usually pushed forward. His eyes are large and wonderfully piercing, and look out from wrinkled, cavernous sockets, while his jaw—that unmistakable lower jaw—smacks indisputably of the Hebrew race.

At 4.49 one afternoon last November, on getting

into my compartment, I found it already occupied by the owner of the tell-tale jaw. I sat down on the same side as himself, but near to the opposite window, and, unfolding my *Mail*, was soon lost in South African muddles. The carriage jolted over the points outside G— Junction, and I glanced up. My companion had opened the somewhat ponderous black bag which he invariably carried, and had literally bestrewn the seat opposite and the vacant space between us with papers blue and white. As I have said, I am an Englishman, and so I resumed my study of South African affairs, merely indulging in that slight clearing of the throat which indicates isolation and reserve. I read on, and the blue and white papers fluttered and crackled around me. Chancing to look down below my *Mail* to flip some cigar-ash from my waistcoat, my eye involuntarily caught sight of a paper that had fluttered close to my side; and, though I lifted my head the next moment, the movement was too late to prevent my reading two words printed in clear black type—Promissory Note. Mr Chamberlain, President Kruger—all interest in them vanished in a second. 'The report of the South African Commission is'— Who cared what it was? What was written on that promissory note? With shame I confess it, but confess it I must, that my wontedly incurious and unspeculative mind took fire. I longed to drop my eyes again—just for one moment. Such a desire was wholly illegitimate and dishonourable, I knew; the paper was private and absolutely no concern of mine. 'Leave to servant-maids the prying into other people's correspondence,' I said to myself. The train rattled on. I looked down.

'DEAR SIR,—Your letter of this morning has terrified me. I know that I have long since worn out all your patience, having promised and promised, and not been able, unhappily, to keep my word. But, pray, sir, have mercy on me and mine once more. Should you carry out your threat of to-day's letter, I am for ever a ruined man, and my wife and little ones will be cast upon the streets. I have already paid, as you know, three times over the amount of the original advance; but if you will only have pity once more I will faithfully pledge myself to send £10 on December 21st, when my quarterly stipend falls due. If'—

I had read quite enough; I was sick. Fool that I had been to give way to my unseemly curiosity. But who could this unfortunate be, and who was the monster sitting in the other corner of my carriage? I have no natural disposition for knight-errantry, as I have suggested, and could never have ridden to the rescue of Johannesburg however piteous its appeal; yet for a brief moment there flickered in even my well-regulated heart a desire to lead there and then a single-handed raid upon the owner of that Israelitish jaw.

I turned my head. The papers had ceased for some time to rustle, and the explanation was plain. In the midst of his array of documents, lulled doubtless by the oscillation of the train, my companion had dropped his shaggy head upon his breast and was apparently asleep. My action which occupied the following minute is the only one I can confidently say—for I am never indeliberate—of which I am totally unable to give any explanation. With my eyes fixed on the sleeper, I picked up the promissory note and the imploring letter to which it was pinned, and, slowly tearing them into fifty pieces, dropped them out of the window, and saw them flash past like a tiny snowstorm. I then drew up the window as unfeelingly as a man who feels the draught, and, taking out my pocket-book, scribbled down the address I had noticed at the head of the suppliant letter. I should have said, further, that scrawled across the letter now lying a mile or more behind on the grassy embankment were the words in red ink, 'Proceed at once,' evidently directions to a manager or clerk.

I have sometimes reflected whether Nature did not design me for a forger or light-fingerer, for I am told these artists are total strangers to mental and cardiac perturbations while plying their craft, for I too, during this momentous act, felt a like immunity. The pump of my heart was as usual, for I slipped my hand into my waistcoat to ascertain. Exemplary organ!

The train began to slow up, and I knew that we were nearing the station at which my gaunt companion was accustomed to alight. We stopped.

'My dear sir,' I shouted, 'this is S—; I believe you get out here.'

'S—? Why, yes. Dear me! I've been asleep. Heavy day—tired.' He grasped his bag.

'Let me assist you to collect your papers.' I did so, and succeeded in bundling him out on the platform as the impatient guard shouted 'Right away.'

Now, of course, I saw perfectly well that my act of merciful dishonesty would be of no service to the owner of the signature at the foot of the note unless he was made acquainted with the fact that the legal evidence of his liability was no longer in existence. On reaching my rooms, therefore, I wrote a brief note stating that no further fear need be entertained nor threats regarded, as the signed note was destroyed; and, though destroyed against the knowledge of the lender, as he, the borrower, had already repaid the principal and a legitimate interest, he need have no scruples in reaping the benefit of the act. The next day, when alone in my office, I typed this letter to avoid committing my handwriting, which I should labour in vain to disguise, and posted it at a pillar-box in the Strand.

During the following two or three weeks nothing transpired with any bearing upon my escapade. I caught the 4.49 at Charing Cross as

usual each afternoon, and several times saw the tall, bent figure with the Jewish under-jaw, who likewise appeared as usual. The only precaution I allowed myself to indulge in—for, strange to say, I remained on most unremorseful terms with my conscience—was to avoid getting into the same compartment with him. On Saturday I am always liberated at one o'clock, but still catch the 4.49; as it is my custom, being of rather an antiquarian turn, to have a few hours' browse in the Egyptian or Assyrian department of the British Museum.

One Saturday, a month later, I determined to yield to an awakened inquisitiveness and have a look, if possible, at the house occupied by the impecunious borrower and his 'wife and little ones.' The address I had scribbled in my pocket-book was of a house named 'Sunnydene,' in a suburb of North London, and I resolved to spend my half-holiday in a trip thither. Going as far as the 'bus would take me, I got out and found upon inquiry that I had still a walk of some two miles. This was to my taste, for the air was frosty and the afternoon just right for walking; and as I marched along I could not help wondering for the thousandth time what sort of a reception my strange note had received at Sunnydene. My reflections may have been coloured slightly by my bachelor position, nevertheless I certainly did surmise that probably the 'wife and little ones' were the luxuries which had driven the unhappy man into the clutches of my gaunt railway companion.

Half-an-hour's walking brought me to a pleasant village-like cluster of houses, though mostly, alas! of the red-and-white villa type of which I am a sworn enemy. But, as if to atone for these smug abominations, there stood a little way off from the main road a quaint little church with a distinctly Norman tower. Now, ecclesiastical architecture is another of my specialities, and I immediately promised myself a pleasant hour in examination of this wayside shrine. In fact, I quite overlooked for a moment my original errand, and found myself trying the iron ring of the church door almost before I knew it. The door was locked.

'Where can I obtain the key?' I inquired of a boy loitering near.

'At the parson's, next door,' he replied.

I retraced my way a few yards up the road, and was about to enter the long wooden gate which had been indicated to me, when my eye caught the name painted on the top rail: 'Sunnydene.' My patience! The parson was my borrower then! What should I do now? Kill two birds with the same stone, said my practical good sense; so I opened the gate. As I did so there came from behind a laurel shrubbery by the side of the house a lady; but such a lady as, impervious bachelor though I am, I am free to confess I have never seen the like of before or since.

I must be allowed to pause a moment to tell you what she was like, or rather to tell you that I absolutely cannot tell you at all. She was tall and with the bearing of a Meredithan Queen. Her dress, I think my sister would say, was poor, almost to shabbiness; but I had no eyes for it, but only for the eyes—the magnificent black, passionate eyes—of the lady herself. Around her shoulders there fell a perfect storm of coal-black curls, which surrounded as with a gleaming frame of ebony a face of strange, un-English beauty.

Each chapter of my one and only adventure was destined to reveal to me unexpectedness in my own nature; for at this moment my heart—an organ in which I had been totally uninterested except for its association with valvular weakness—demeaned itself in an altogether surprising fashion, and commenced to thump in most unbecoming admiration. I raised my hat as she came towards the gate, and, hazarding the conclusion that she was the rector's wife, inquired whether it were possible for me to obtain the keys of the church. The lady's face was not a merry one, nor had it any of the complacent fulness one associates with the mistress of a country rectory. On the contrary, it seemed worn and lined, while there flitted over it a look of hungry wistfulness. My civil inquiry, however, brought a faint tinge to the dark cheeks and a light to the lustrous eyes, while the voice which answered, 'Oh yes, with pleasure,' rang with a deep musical note. When she returned with the key we went together into the frost-covered burying-ground and round the ivy-covered chancel to the vestry door.

'I am much interested in old churches,' I remarked, 'and often spend a leisure Saturday in exploring those in my own neighbourhood. I was taken at once with your fine old Norman tower here. But, pray, do not let me detain you any further. I will return the key to the rectory in half-an-hour.'

'I have nothing whatever to do,' replied my dusky guide, with an air of weariness, 'and it will give me pleasure to hear what you think of our ancient little church—that is, if my presence will not disturb your explorations;' and she turned those wonderful eyes of hers upon me.

I replied—never mind what I replied; only the words had seldom got in my way so awkwardly before.

After inspecting the long, cool nave and the tiny tessellated chancel, we sat a while in the quaintly-carved choir-stalls while the dying light of the winter sun threw the purple and crimson of the eastern window across the altar steps.

'What an enviable existence to live away from all the frantic roar of the City,' I said half-aloud; 'and have constant access to an historic retreat like this. I should fancy a life under such tranquil conditions knows little, if anything, of what we call worry or care.'

Was it crime, I thought, to thus trench on what might be sensitive ground? Once again those deep-set eyes were turned upon me.

'Is that what you think? Ah! there, how deceptive must externals be! You take me probably for the rector's wife, and imagine I spend my mornings listening to the roll of the organ, and my afternoons in driving round in my pony-carriage paying four o'clock calls or distributing coal-tickets?'

'Well?'

'I am not. The rector is an invalid, or fancies himself so, and winters abroad. My husband is only the curate, one of the starving curates you read of in the *Church Times* every week, and far, far more in need of a winter on the Riviera than his rector;' and the face beside me, shadowed by the old oak stall, flamed with intensity and anger.

The church grew dark, and the colours of the east window were as sullen patches of blood upon the floor.

'I must go,' I said abruptly.

On my way back, in the corner of the 'bus, I pondered on my encounter. Still before me burned the passionate eyes of the curate's wife. How I hated that selfish valetudinarian lounging on the Riviera, squandering upon bath-chairs and peaches the living-wage of his sickly substitute at home! And so it was from this distressed little family, above all from the housekeeping of that queenly lady, that the brutal under-jaw had exacted his usurious interest! Had my felony in the 4.49 brought a moment's relief to that pinched rectory, or one second's respite from the agonising discussion of ways and means to the owner of the glorious eyes?

'I hope so,' I muttered as I ran into Charing Cross Station to catch the 7.5.

The following Monday afternoon I was sauntering up the platform, waiting for my train, when I observed coming towards me with the inevitable black bag—infernal machine I thought it, with an inkling as to its probable contents—the tall, gaunt figure of the money-lender. Again yielding to impulse—I distrust calculation now—I followed him into a compartment.

'Looks likely for snow.'

'Very. I hope it will come.'

'“A mild January”—you know the old saying.'

In five minutes we were in full swing of conversation.

'We ought to be friends by this time,' said the Hebrew. 'We travel together often enough.'

By the time we reached S—— we had struck up quite a friendly intimacy. From that day—why, of course I do not know, unless you believe in predestination—I regularly looked out for him if I arrived first, as I usually did, being a most punctual individual, and he for me if by phenomenal chance I was cutting it fine. How I had patience to talk to such a bloodsucker

may surprise you, but it surprised me more; still I had. I was dimly awaiting developments.

One evening, in the early spring, he remarked as we met at the station: 'You are a bachelor, you say; so am I. Only you are a young bachelor, and I am an old one. What do you say to turning in to dinner with me to-night? You can catch the 11 down.'

I went.

At the little station at S—— a solemn man in livery met us, and, relieving my companion of his bag, led the way to a trim little brougham that was in readiness outside. The house at which we pulled up was large and low, and almost totally hidden from the road by trees; but when I entered the wide hall, and a moment later the dining-room, I found that those gloomy firs and hollies enshrouded an art gallery, a museum, and a mansion combined. On every hand was costly furniture of no English make, rich curtains, skins, lamps, all redolent of Eastern luxuriousness. Taken off my guard by the sight, I broke into what for me was a perfect dithyramb of ecstasy; but, instantly remembering how the wherewithal had been procured, I had to summon iron self-restraint to keep back curses from my lips.

We sat down to dinner. Behind our curiously-carved chairs, a vigilant being, with a Southern skin and impeccable linen, watched our glasses and our plates. The pheasant and Burgundy were *À la* to my chop-accustomed palate; but ever and again they stuck in my throat: had not their purchase involved nameless indignities to my lady of Sunnysdene?

Dinner over, my host led me to a padded masculine boudoir with heavenly chairs and equally celestial cigars; and, having donned a species of loose dressing-gown of Syrian hue, broke the silence, the almost total silence, which he had maintained since I entered his paradise.

'Do you know my name?' he began.

'Why, yes,' I replied; 'Kendrick.'

He smiled.

'No, not exactly. By the way'—he looked sharply at me—'I was a little amazed when you addressed me by that name first some weeks ago when we came down together.'

Now for the second or possibly the third time in my life I blushed—blushed as I saw the error I had committed. It was from the destroyed promissory note that I had learned this name Kendrick.

'Nevertheless, that is your name,' I managed to say.

'It is the name of my chief clerk,' he answered; 'my own name is Solomon. Ah! I see that you have already divined my nationality. I advertise, it is true, under the name of Kendrick, "a gentleman with a considerable amount of un-invested capital"'—and he laughed in a way that made me feel a trifle uneasy—in deference to Gentile sensitiveness; and he laughed again.

I had accepted Mr Kendrick's or Solomon's

invitation to dinner, possessed by a somewhat nebulous purpose or hope of again getting on the track of my recent exploits; otherwise, not fifty traction engines should have dragged me into this extortioner's den. I now ventured a shot.

'You are a money-lender?' He nodded. 'Had you no anxiety as to who might be the next called before the Royal Commission?'

He raised himself on his elbow, and gave vent to what I presume, in the absence of certain knowledge, is a Hebrew form of chuckling. I have produced the same noise myself once or twice; but that was when my tea went the wrong way.

'Anxiety? No; by Our Fathers, no! My clients have more to lose than I by figuring in a witness-box. Do you know from what class they are principally drawn?'

The question was rather hissed out at me than asked.

'Tradesmen who desire to put in a new shop-front, embarrassed lordlings, young sparks awaiting the demise of maiden aunts!' I answered, with affected indifference.

'Ph—ph—h. Not at all. Clergymen—parsons, rectors, curates—infernal curates.' His eyes came from the back of their caverns and glared at their entrance like a tiger's. My pulse became brisk.

'Why the oath, Mr Solomon?' I inquired.

'Why?' The monosyllable fairly rang through the room and soon penetrated the walls, till I fancied fifty mocking money-lenders were echoing us outside. He sprang from his lounge chair, and, going over to a massive inlaid cabinet, unlocked a small drawer; and, taking from it what appeared to be a leathern case, returned to the hearthrug and stood before me. 'You ask why, my friend. Shall I tell you? Shall I reveal to a friend of one night and a few train talks the secret tragedy of this house?'

I did not answer; my eyes were fixed on his face.

'I will. I will tell you a story I have told to no living man; though why I should'—He did not finish the sentence. Then he continued: 'But first look at this, and tell me—tell me on your word as a—a Christian—did you ever gaze on a fairer, lovelier face than that?'

He handed me an oval-shaped cream-coloured opal, framed in softest Persian of olive-green colour, and I rose to the light to view it. Yet one more self-revelation—my tongue did not cry out, and my colour was obedient, though my heart lifted itself to the roof of my throat; for there, exquisitely staining the creamy surface of the opal, was my lady of the wondrous eyes. I knew it at a glance. For a full fifty seconds I gazed at it and made no answer, though I knew two gimlet eyes were boring into my back.

'No,' I said, turning calmly round; 'never. It is the loveliest face I ever saw.'

The salt sea washed a moment the dark cavern, and the Jew groaned aloud. 'It is my daughter—my only child—my only one in all this "strange land"—Jessica. But she is dead.'

The deep caverns filled again.

I gasped, 'But I'—

He went on unheedingly.

'Ten years ago I lost her. After her mother's death we lived together—she and I—in this house, no father and child more happy nor contented in all our scapegoat race. And then she died: not of fever nor of any other sickness—that I could have endured, for then she would have been gathered to her people; but of something which to a Jew is a million times worse than the dissolution of the body: she renounced the faith of her fathers.'

My cigar had gone out, and I wondered whether the Burgundy had been doctored. He resumed:

'When, I do not know—I never knew—but some time when I was away in the City, from curiosity no doubt, she strayed into the "High Place"—bastard architecture and worse rites—you perhaps noticed as we turned up the avenue here; and—and, well, the curate in charge there noticed her, as well he might, and spoke to her, and with his cunning wiles got round her gentle heart, and wooed her from the ancient faith, and wooed her to himself. I never saw him—his God help him if I had!—but he wrote and asked for my Jessica for his wife. I replied; but my sweet one faded, lost the glory from her eyes; and one day, when I returned, I found my nest empty. He had stolen her from me.'

A murmur of desolation seemed to be creeping through the house, and I was too preoccupied with my thoughts to say a word.

'I never lifted a finger to trace them,' he went on; 'but I cursed them both for ever—sleeping and waking, in life and in death: a Jew can curse you may have heard. But I swore to have my revenge; and I have had it. I send my "private" circulars to every clergyman and curate on the "List," and—well, scores are the white-faced hypocrites that I have brought to beggary and the clods.'

I shuddered.

'But'—and he rose, and, coming across the hearth, stooped his haggard form over me—'I am a lonely man, and know not the day of my death; and I have repented. And what is more—you have never heard of such a thing before—but, Jew though I am, if I could find her and her—husband, I would forgive her and him; by the tombs of my fathers I swear it!'

I sprang to my feet. For the first time in my life, and possibly the last, I knew that I held the ace of trumps in my hand.

'Sit down, Mr Solomon,' I said, with an emphasis of power unique in my speech, for I felt sure of my ground, and wished to play my

card with fitting majesty. 'May I ask you to sit down a moment; I think it is my turn to speak.'

He stared; and, with a look of mortification, as I thought, went back to his seat, exhausted. Evidently he thought he had poured out his heart at the feet of a stone.

With absolute clearness the main threads of this strange affair disentangled themselves in my mind. The curate of Sunnydene, being in impoverished circumstances, through the niggardliness of his sweating superior, had applied to 'Mr Kendrick' for a loan, not knowing that by so doing he was asking help of the outraged father of his Jewish wife. And Mr Kendrick or Solomon, ignorant of the name or whereabouts of his son-in-law, had been unconsciously throttling the very daughter for whom his relenting old soul was hungering. 'Plain as a pikestaff!' I summed up. Now to play the Fairy Godmother, and say my own *Peccavi*!

'Mr Solomon, you have spoken of forgiveness. I accepted your invitation to dinner to-night, half resolved, if circumstances favoured, to ask you to extend an exercise of that virtue towards myself.'

The Jew hardly seemed to be listening, and, as I thought afterwards, probably imagined that under an assumed name I myself had got into his clutches, and was about to ask for clemency on the plea of having tasted salt with him.

'Go on,' he said, dejectedly.

'May I ask then, whether within the last few months you have lost or mislaid a promissory note belonging to a person named'—

'Ah!' He jerked his head forward. 'Let me see. You rode in the carriage with me the night I dozed so stupidly over my papers. Now I remember. It never struck me to'—

'To imagine I took it,' I finished promptly. 'But I did. My eye happened to catch sight of the letter to which it was attached. I was indignant, tore it up, and threw it out of the window while you were dozing, as you say.'

His blood flowed perceptibly under his olive skin.

'It was an illegal act—grossly illegal;' but, as if diverted from that track by a fresh remembrance, 'the rascal never replied to any letters sent afterwards, though we threatened him with an injunction. But, not possessing the legal voucher, we could not prosecute. Was that your doing too?'

'That is going a little too fast,' I replied, revelling in the unfamiliar consciousness of having for once the upper hand. 'A little too fast, Mr Solomon. What I want to ask you is, will you give me the assurance of your pardon for my conduct in destroying the note? If you will, I will give you something in return—a piece of information—which I believe you will consider worth your purchase.'

'What is that?'

I copied my host's behaviour of ten minutes before, and bent over him.

'I will tell you where you may find your daughter, your lost Jessica, and whom and where her curate-husband is at this moment.'

'You will?' he shrieked. 'Who? Where?'

'He is the man who signed the promissory note that I tore up, and he lives at Sunnydene.'

When I was a child I was kissed and fondled by my mother, no doubt; but I do not recall the experience. But the next moment, not a mother's, but the bony arms of the sunken-eyed Jew, were wound around me, while the old cry, that still, they say, may be heard at evening by the pensive wanderer in far off Venice, was being sobbed into my neck, 'Jessica, my child.'

I now live upon my laurels—my past. I still catch the 4.49 at Charing Cross. But I have an inward conviction that my one romance is over; and yet it is not altogether over. For, once every week at least, I get out at the station one before my own—not drawn by the prospect of pheasant and Burgundy, though they or kindred delights always await me; but once more, and this time without the accessories of carven stalls and eastern windows, to bask in the gladsonne society of the Lady of the Wondrous Eyes.

THE STAGE SUPER: WHAT HE DOES AND HOW HE DOES IT.

By LOUIS MELLARD.



YOU have all seen at the bottom of your theatre programmes the phrase, 'Soldiers, peasants, mob, &c.' It refers to the harmless, necessary supers. And you would be surprised if you only knew what a variety of human beings that cold, brief phrase covers.

The regular super—that is, the man who is either

attached, more or less permanently, to a theatre or big company—may be roughly divided into two classes: the man who is a 'broken' third or fourth rate actor, and the man who hopes some day to be a 'star.' Of course, in addition to these, there are the 'occasionals'—men who are engaged casually for particular occasions. This kind usually blossom out at pantomime time. They seem to come from nowhere in particular and retire

eventually to the same place. The writer once asked such a man, who had been engaged for a special performance of *Hamlet*, what he thought of the play. 'Well,' he replied, 'it's a good play, well written and all that; but it's full of old jokes!'

When a company runs short of a man for a small speaking-part, a likely super is sometimes given a chance. This is how a super, thus given an opportunity of distinguishing himself, once delivered a few short lines descriptive of a man being picked up after a cab-accident: 'The hansom cab was picked up off the Esplanade, with a handkerchief tightly tied around its mouth; when removed, it was found to be perfectly dead.' Still, the manager gave him another trial the following evening, when he acquitted himself as follows: 'The Esplanade was picked up off the man, with the hansom cab tightly tied around his mouth,' &c. He was sent to the back row again—or maybe farther. This is not an unusual sample of what the average super can do. Naturally, therefore, managers look askance at training him.

Mr F. R. Benson once, in coaching two 'armies' of supers for a battle-scene, had some difficulty in persuading the weaker side to be conquered. Even at the first performance the vanquished force, which was led by a pugnacious Irishman, upset traditional usages by severely mauling their victors. So Mr Benson interviewed the Irish leader. 'Look a-here, sir,' said that worthy; 'shure, if you want us to be beaten you must put me in the other army. That's the only way.' Next night the suggestion was adopted; and after that the two armies 'fought correctly.'

A good story is told against a well-known theatrical manager who, during the rehearsal of a modern military drama, entered the theatre at the moment the stage manager was giving the necessary instructions to the supers who were to represent the army. He silently watched them drill for some time, and then bawled out: 'Not a bit like it! Not a bit like it! Why don't you try to look like real soldiers?' After scolding them soundly for five minutes, and strutting up and down the stage for their instruction, his disgust may be imagined when the stage manager succeeded in whispering into his ear: 'Go easy; they're some of the Coldstream Guards!' History does not chronicle what he said; but probably his language was about as bad as that of the manager who, noticing that something was going wrong during the grave-digging scene in *Hamlet*, asked for the reason of the trouble. 'It's the "First Grave-digger,"' whispered 'Horatio.' 'He says that unless you send him the price of a square meal he's going to eat the loaf they're using for Yorick's skull.' That super got his supper.

The super's lot is not a happy one. There is not much of beer and skittles about it—but sometimes a lot of cold water.

At Nottingham, a year or so back, a drama

was produced entitled *A Dark Secret*—one of those dramas abounding in realistic effects. Amongst other things, a large tank containing many thousand gallons of water was fixed on the stage to represent a river. On the surface of this floated a small steamer and one or two boats. It was the business of one of the supers to punt across in a boat; and, not being much of a punter (at least in that way), he failed to make much progress. The stage being darkened, he did not perceive, until almost too late, that he was gradually stepping to the farther end of the boat; and so, in order to prevent himself from falling overboard, and thus spoiling the action of the play, he carefully stepped out into the three feet of water. He was surprised to receive an immense round of applause. The audience thought it was meant for a 'swimming act.'

'Twas a lucky slip—much more so than that of a poor super who acted as 'ghost' to a certain well-known 'Mazeppa' about forty years ago. In those days, when *Mazeppa* was always a big draw, every little stock-company used to play its own little version. The better-class theatres, as far as possible, used to make the horsemanship portion of the play a strong feature. A celebrated 'star' was playing the piece for some weeks in the Midlands, and had one of his supers (who had formerly been a circus rider) made up to look very much like him, the said 'star' being a wretched rider. The trick was cleverly done, and of course the audience always supposed the super rider to be the 'star.' In this particular production, the runs up the mountain-side were most elaborately arranged, and the flight of the wild horse was the 'great startling effect' of the evening. One night, the horse and its burden fell with a tremendous crash from the flies to the stage. The curtain was promptly rung down, while the audience rose to its feet horror-stricken; but presently the 'star' was led forward staggering as though badly injured. In a weakened voice he said that in spite of his pains he would endeavour to finish his part. He did so, amidst repeated bursts of enthusiastic applause. But the poor super lay in the hospital five weeks, then died.

The makeshifts of needy actors are proverbially funny and smart; but the makeshifts of managers are often equally so. Phelps had an ingenious way of making a big 'crowd' when his means did not allow of him paying for extra supernumeraries. During his management of Sadler's Wells he produced *Henry V.*; and in the march-past before Agincourt the troops defiled behind a set-piece which rose breast-high. Tussauds modelled eighty wax heads, which were fixed on wickerwork dummy figures clad in the armour of the period. There were in reality only forty live supers; and each of them carried two of these figures, one on either side of him, attached to a frame-work which was lashed to the man's waist. Hence

it appeared that they were marching three abreast. With banners streaming, drums beating, and trumpets braying, the stage was seemingly crowded with soldiers; and the illusion was so perfect that, probably, the audience never perceived the deception.

Another instance of smartness in this way was witnessed in Berlin not very long ago. Engel, the manager of Kroll's Summer Theatre—a very popular resort—announced the *Prophet*. He was asked by a pressman how he would arrange the elaborate Coronation Procession on so small a stage. But he refused the information with a mysterious smile. When the procession was about to start, the curtain dropped, and the orchestra went on playing the March. When eventually the last few bars were reached the curtain went up again, showing three white-robed choristers marching off, as if forming the rear of the long procession.

Four-legged animals in drama are, of course, a very common sight to-day. Although they are often of far more importance than the mere super, they have an affinity to that class—for theirs is no speaking-part—unless one counts the bark of a dog as such! A little time ago the writer met an actor who was taking the part of villain in a play wherein a big mastiff seizes him at the back of the neck just as he (the villain) was about to murder the heroine. 'Nasty part that of yours. How do you manage to escape nightly being bitten by that big brute of a dog?' 'Not

a nice part, it's true,' he answered; 'but the dog is well trained. He is kept without food for a few hours before the show. A piece of cooked liver is tied to my neck. He is held in the wings till the cue comes, then he rushes on to me for his supper; and the curtain goes down on a very effective tableau. I don't object to the dog—it's the liver!'

The mention of stage dogs brings to mind an amusing incident that occurred in a well-known theatrical agent's office last summer. In came a rough-looking little man wearing a check suit that once used to speak out for itself, but was now silenced by the heavy hand of time. The man was followed by a dog of attractive appearance. The visitor said he did a 'tramp act,' assisted by the animal. Then they gave an exhibition of themselves and were certainly above the average. 'What are your terms?' the agent queried. 'Ten pounds a week.' 'I'll give you two.' The imitation tramp—but he was not far off the real thing—looked with a sad, reproachful eye at the agent and silently backed out of the office, the dog meekly following. However, within a few seconds the man returned, quickly closing the door to exclude his partner, who clamoured to get in. 'I'll take it,' he said, in a hurried whisper. 'Where's the contract? I'm real broke, so it's a clear case of push; but for heaven's sake don't mention the price where the dog can hear you!'

THE STORY OF AN ORCHID.

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.



THE discovery of *Phalænopsis Sanderiana* was an interesting event; nor for botanists alone. Some thoughtful persons always incline to credit a legend or an assertion current among savages, so long as it deals with facts within the limits of their knowledge. Human beings are truthful by instinct; and if we can assure ourselves that no motive tempts them to falsehood, it is more likely than not that even an improbable story will prove correct. The rule applies in all matters of natural history. Numberless are the reports concerning beasts and birds and reptiles accepted now which were a mock for generations; numberless, also, one must add, are the reports too grotesque for discussion. For imagination asserts itself in the case of animals, and gives a motive, though unconscious, for the wildest inventions. But it is rarely excited by plants. When a savage describes some flower he has seen, the statement may be trusted, 'barring errors;' and they will probably be slight, for his power of observation, and his memory in matters of this sort, are alike wonderful. A collector of plants who knows his business encourages the

natives to talk; often enough they give him valuable information. The first hint of *Calla Pentlandii*, the yellow Egyptian lily or 'arum,' was furnished by a Zulu who came from a great distance to visit a relative in the service of Captain Allison. I may venture to tell secrets which will be common property soon. A blue *Calla* and a scarlet have been found—both of them on report of Kaffirs.

The story of *Phalænopsis Sanderiana* is a striking instance. Its allied species, *grandiflora* and *amabilis*, reached Europe in 1836 and 1847 respectively. Their snowy whiteness and graceful habit prepared the world for a burst of enthusiasm when *Phalænopsis Schilleriana*, the earliest of the coloured species, was brought from the Philippines in 1860. The Duke of Devonshire paid Messrs Rollison a hundred guineas for the first plant that flowered. Such a price was startling then. Reported at Manila, it set the Spaniards talking and inquiring. Messrs Rollison had sent an agent to collect *Phalænopsis* there, who presently reported a scarlet species! No one he could find had seen it, but the natives spoke confidently, and he hoped to forward a consignment without delay. But years and years passed.

The great firm of Rollison flourished, decayed, and vanished, but that blessed consignment was never shipped.

Other collectors visited the Philippines. They also reported the wonder, on hearsay, and every mail brought them reiterated instructions to find and send it at any cost. Now here, now there, the pursuers hunted it to a corner; but, when they closed, it was elsewhere. Meantime the settled islands had been explored gradually. Many fine things escaped attention, as we know at this day; but a flower so conspicuous, so eagerly demanded and described, could not have been missed. As years went by, the red *Phalænopsis* became a joke. Interest degenerated into mockery.

As a matter of fact, it is very improbable that the plant had ever been in Manila, or that a white man had beheld it. For it is found only in an islet to the west of Mindanao, the most southerly of the Philippine group. Mindanao itself is not yet explored, much more occupied, though the Spaniards pushed farther and farther inland year by year. Seafaring Tagalas may have visited that islet, and seen the red *Phalænopsis*. When they heard, at Manila, how an English duke had paid some fabulous amount for a flower of the same genus, they would naturally mention it. And so the legend grew.

In 1881, a score of years afterwards, the conquest of Mindanao was so far advanced that the Spanish mail steamers called there. When Mr Sander of St Albans heard this intelligence he thrilled with hope, as has been told. Mr Roebelin had instructions, of course, to inquire for the red *Phalænopsis*; Mr Sander's experience teaches him that local rumours should never be disregarded. But the search had been very close and very long. Perhaps there was not another man in Europe who thought it possible that the marvel could exist.

Mr Roebelin is still living, I believe, and he could tell of some lively adventures on that first visit to Mindanao. Constantly he heard of the red *Phalænopsis*; it was *en l'air*, he wrote, using the expression in two senses. At the northern settlements they directed him south; at the eastern, west, and so round the compass. But he had other matters in hand, and contented himself with inquiries.

I do not learn whether it was accident or information which led him to the little island Davao on his second visit, in 1883. He may have sailed thither on chance, for a traveller is absolutely certain of finding new plants on an untrodden shore in these seas. Anyhow Roebelin knew the quest was over, the riddle solved triumphantly, before landing.

The half-breed Chinaman, Sam Choon, was personally conducting him on this occasion also; he found the vessel (a native *prau*, of course), boatmen, provisions, and the rest. Everything was at

the collector's disposal; but Sam Choon took a cargo of 'notions' on his own account, to trade when opportunity arose.

Davao lies, I understand, some sixty miles from Mindanao. Its inhabitants are Papuan, thorough bred of the brown variety. Roebelin was deeply struck with the appearance of the warriors who swarmed to the beach when his intention of landing was understood. A body of men so tall and stalwart can scarcely be found elsewhere, and for graceful carriage or activity they could not be surpassed. A red clout was their only wear, besides ornaments and weapons. They had the kinkled hair of the race (not wool), bleached with lime, and dyed yellow. Very strange and pleasing is the effect of these golden mops, lustrous, if not clean, decked with plumes and fresh flowers. But admiration came afterwards. When Roebelin saw the big fellows mustering in haste, armed with spears and bows, stone-headed maces which the European soldier could scarcely wield, great swords set with sharks' teeth, and outlandish tools of every sort for smashing and tearing, he regarded the spectacle from another point of view. They ran and leapt, brandishing their weapons, halloed, and roared, and sang, with Papuan vivacity. The vessel approaching was too small to alarm them. Laughter predominated in the uproar. But this was no comfort. Men are cheerful with a feast in view.

Sam Choon, however, kept up his spirits. 'Them chaps make rumpus all time,' he said. 'We see.' He held up a green bough shipped for the purpose. It was all laughter now and gesticulation. Every Papuan tore a branch from the shrubs around and waved it boisterously. 'Them no hurt,' said Sam Choon. 'Good trade.' The Chinaman was as careful of his person as one need be, and experienced in the ways of such people. Roebelin took courage. As they neared the surf, the whole body of islanders rushed towards them, splashed through the shallows whooping, dived beneath the wave, and came up at the vessel's side. Ropes were tossed to them, and they swam back again. But the first yellow head popped up just where Roebelin was seated. Among the feathers twisted in it, dragged now, he saw a spray—surely an *Aerides*! but bluish-red, unlike any species known. The savage grinned and shouted, whirling the hair like an aureole around his glistening face, threw one brawny arm into the air, and at a stroke reached the bows. Another shot up; another. The sea was peopled in an instant, all grinning and shouting breathlessly, all whirling their golden locks. Among the flowers with which every head was decked, Roebelin saw many *Phalænopsis*. And most of them were ruddy purple!

Sam Choon lay to whilst the islanders swam ashore and formed a chain; then, at a word, they ran up the beach full speed; making a noise, says Roebelin, which reminded him of the earth-

quake he had lately felt. Simultaneously the crew paddled their hardest, also yelling in the shrill Chinese way. The *prau* sped like a flash, but half-full of water. Beyond the surf a mob seized and carried it ashore.

Papuans have no acquaintance with ceremony. Paying little attention to their chiefs, they are not apt to discriminate among strangers. All alike seized one of these new friends—who brought trade!—slapped him about the body, and hugged him. Roebelin had been subjected to merciless shampooing occasionally in Indian *hammams*; but he never felt the like of that welcome. It was *massage* by machinery.

The women had come on the scene now. Though they took no part, they mingled with the warriors, and showed quite as much assurance as is becoming. But they are not by any means such fine creatures as the men, and they do not allow themselves—or they are not allowed—the curious attraction of yellow hair. Roebelin noticed a few, however, worthy to be helpmates of those superb animals; one girl in especial, nearly six feet high, whose figure was a model, face pleasing and expressive, full of character.

These people live in trees like the Subanos of Mindanao. As soon as his baggage had been taken to the public hall, Roebelin got out beads, wire, and Brummagem jewellery. The glimpse of that *Aerides* and the assurance of a purple *Phalenopsis* made him impatient. But even Sam Choon found difficulty in identifying the chiefs, to whom of course presents must be made before business can open. However, the point interesting to Roebelin was settled in an instant. The *Phalenopsis*, they said, abounded within a few hundred yards, and the *Aerides* was common enough. The white man wanted them for medicine? He might have as many as he liked—on due payment. To-morrow the chief would show him, and then a price must be fixed.

He slept in the hall, and at dawn he was more than ready. But early rising is not a virtue of savages. To explore without permission would be dangerous. Gradually the village woke to life. Men descended from their quarters high in air, bathed, made their toilettes, and lounged about, waiting for breakfast. Girls came down for water and returned, whilst their mothers tidied the house. Smoke arose. In due time the men mounted, ate, climbed down, and gathered in the public hall, where Sam Choon was setting out a sample of his wares. Hours passed. But the chief's door remained shut. No one passed out or in.

Roebelin saw people glance upwards with a grave air; but they showed no surprise. He

consulted Sam Choon, who had been too busy to notice.

All he said was: 'Spect chief get bad bird! All up this day!' And he stopped his preparations.

So it proved to be. A fowl of black plumage had flown across just as the door was opening. None of the chief's household came down that day. But after negotiation some of the men led Roebelin to see the *Phalenopsis*. They grew in thousands over a brook close by, clinging to small trees. He counted twenty-two plants, bearing more than a hundred flowers open, upon a single trunk. Very curious is one point noticed. The *Phalenopsis* always grows on the northern side of its support, and always turns its flower spike towards the southern side. It is a very bad species to travel. Of the multitude which Roebelin gathered, not more than a hundred reached Europe alive, and every collector since, I believe, has failed utterly. Very few possessed his knowledge and experience.

That was *Phalenopsis Sanderiana*; rather purple than red, but certainly the flower so long sought. With the superb *Aerides*—now called *A. Roebelini*—he was even less successful; it is only to be seen in a very few collections of the highest class.

So the legend ends. But there is a funny little sequel. Sam Choon did well with his 'notions.' After Mr Roebelin's departure, he returned to Davao and opened a promising branch of trade. To secure a permanent footing, he thought it would be judicious to marry a daughter of the chief, and he proposed for the giant beauty whom Roebelin had noticed on landing. The father was astonished and amused, but finally indignant. A Chinaman, however, though thrifty by habit and taste, does not count expense when pleasure or business urge him, and both combined here. The chief wavered, and took counsel of his elders. They also were astonished and indignant; but Sam Choon found means to persuade them. So the young woman received notice that she was to marry the Chinaman next day. Her remarks are not chronicled. But there was much excitement among the bachelors and maidens that evening, and presently a band of stalwart youths entered the hall where Sam Choon sat with the chief—his father-in-law on the morrow. They told the latter gravely that they disapproved of the match. Sam Choon interposed with a statement of the advantages to follow, with equal gravity; then they threatened to smash every bone in his carcass. So the marriage was broken off; but without ill-feeling on either side.



THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

A PORTABLE MUSEUM.



NEW aid to education, called the 'Musée Scolaire,' has recently been devised by a publisher of school material in France. The museum consists of a large number of card-board-mounted charts, to which are affixed, by means of wires, objects of various kinds to illustrate different subjects. Thus, a particular industry or process may be demonstrated throughout by first showing the raw material and concluding with the finished product, the intermediate spaces being filled in by specimens illustrating the various stages of manufacture. It is only a few schools which can have the advantage of being within reach of a good ordinary museum; and even if a school has a collection of its own, it must necessarily be incomplete and of very modest dimensions. The portable museum here briefly described seems to be a step in the right direction; and we shall doubtless find before long that something of the same kind will be available on this side of the Channel.

GLASS-MAKING BY ELECTRICITY.

A French technical journal gives a description of an electric furnace used by Kroll, of Cologne, in the manufacture of glass. Like other electric furnaces, the heat is produced within the crucible by the arc generated between carbon electrodes. Many are the advantages claimed for the new process over the old. First, an economy of 60 per cent. in fuel, and the absence of any risk of coal or cinders spoiling the product; next, the heat required being kept within the containing vessel, it is so localised that the workmen are enabled to approach the mass of molten glass without danger of injury from the heat. It is said also that a mass of 'metal' requiring thirty hours to melt it in the ordinary glass-furnace can, by employing electricity, be reduced to the plastic state in fifteen minutes. Small pots or crucibles made of carbon, containing each from 40 to 50 lb. of raw material, are found to be most convenient in working. Another noteworthy advantage connected with the electric furnace is that work can be stopped or resumed very quickly and without that loss which must attend the firing and banking-up of an ordinary furnace. This means that work on Sundays or at night can be dispensed with.

AIR-RESISTANCE IN RAPID TRAVELLING.

The astonishing feat of the American cyclist who recently rode one mile on a bicycle in less than one minute is interesting from many points of view. The task would, however, have been quite impossible of accomplishment had not the rider ridden behind a wind-shield, which took

the form of a kind of open cupboard, which was fixed behind a locomotive engine on a railway. If the rider had not had this protection from the air it is probable that he would not have covered more than half the distance in the same time. Perhaps our railway companies may now be induced to make some experiments with a view to avoid much of the air-resistance which is such a foe to speed. The flat surface which the end of a locomotive engine offers to the air, as well as the ends of the coaches and every projection upon the vehicles, all tend to stop progress, and it is quite time that an experimental run were made with a sharp-nosed engine and coaches specially designed to cheat the air. What speed should we expect to get out of a steamboat were it built with as little regard to the resistance of the medium in which it moved as one of our railway engines? Some years ago it was stated that engines with boat-shaped prows were to be built, but the notion seems to have sunk into oblivion. It is useless to make so much effort to save coal if energy is wasted by making no provision to contend against air-pressure.

A NEW LIFE-BUOY.

A life-saving apparatus for use at sea, called the 'Franklin,' has now for some time been adopted by the United States Navy; but it is new to this country. It is the invention of Admiral Hichborn; and while it takes the form of the ordinary buoy—that of a hollow ring—it has certain attachments which render it far more serviceable, especially for use at night. When on shipboard the terrible cry 'Man overboard!' is heard, the first thing to be done is to fling after him a buoy, which will support him until a boat can be launched to the rescue. But at night a buoy is of little use unless the drowning man can see it. Luminous paint has been suggested and tried; but the light afforded by a buoy coated with it is far too feeble to be of any practical use. On either side of the 'Franklin' buoy there is a receptacle containing calcium phosphide—a chemical which takes fire on contact with water—so that directly the buoy is thrown overboard its position is marked by two flaring torches. We understand that this apparatus has already been the means of saving many lives, and it is for that reason worthy the attention of shipowners and others.

A BALLOON TRIP TO FRANCE.

Once more has the Channel been crossed by means of a balloon. Starting from the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, at half-past two, the aeronauts, Messrs Spencer and Pollock, safely dropped on French soil at eight o'clock the same evening, and their narrative of the voyage is very interest-

ing. It conclusively shows that an experienced balloonist like Mr Spencer is able to take advantage of aerial strata having different temperatures so as to economise gas; and in this respect the modern aeronaut is far ahead of the pioneers. But in reading the story of the trip one cannot help reflecting, after all, how risky is this business of balloon travelling when once the coast-line is crossed. Happily in the present instance all went well, and this was chiefly due to the meteorological conditions which prevailed at the time; but, according to the aeronaut's own showing, it was at one time a grave question whether the balloon would not drop in the sea. 'Fortunately for us,' Mr Spencer writes, 'our fears were not realised. The loss of the sun's rays did not cause so rapid a drop as we had anticipated. . . . We still cherished every hope of reaching the shore.' But the shore was not reached until nearly every portable thing, including the anchor and its gear, was sacrificed. Once more, to quote Mr Spencer's words, 'desperate situations require drastic measures.'

FOOD PRESERVATIVES.

So many contradictory reports are published as to the harmfulness or harmlessness of various food preservation and colouring compounds that we are glad to see that the question of the fitness or unfitness of such things for the purpose designed is to be set at rest by a committee of inquiry. This committee has been appointed by the President of the Local Government Board, and their instructions are to report 'whether the use of such matters or any of them in certain quantities is injurious to health; and, if so, in what proportion does the use become injurious? They are also to find out, as far as possible, to what extent and in what amount are these substances used at the present time. The names of Professor Thorpe, Dr Bulstrode, and Dr Tunncliffe, who are to act on this important inquiry, are a guarantee that the matter will be thoroughly and scientifically sifted. Let us hope that the conclusions arrived at will not be docketed and hidden away in a pigeon-hole, as is too often the case with reports from these departmental committees, but will be acted upon without undue delay.

PROFICIENCY IN MUSKETRY.

Of recent years the scoring recorded at the meetings of the National Rifle Association and at various ranges throughout the country has been of a very wonderful nature. To place a bullet on a distant 'bull's-eye' several times in succession, as several of our marksmen can do without difficulty, shows perfection of training both of hand and eye, and is good testimony to the efficiency of our weapons. On a recent occasion Field-Marshal Lord Roberts issued a general order, in which he called attention to the paramount importance of perfection in small-arm fire. He pointed out that courage, sound health, discipline,

power of endurance, and all the other fine qualities which have given the British soldier the victory from the time of Cressy onwards, must under the present conditions of warfare become more or less subservient to rifle-fire at the supreme moment of actual conflict with the enemy. However valiant they may be, perfect in organisation, and rapid of movements, however boldly and intelligently they may have been taught to take up positions, unless they are able to use their rifles with effect, their knowledge and obedience to orders will be of little avail. He stated his belief that the stage is not far off when musketry instruction will be recognised as the *sine quâ non* of infantry soldiers' training, and as very important to cavalry soldiers also.

A LONDON ROOF-GARDEN.

An important addition to one of the new theatres now being built in London is a garden on its roof, covered in with a construction of iron and glass. This new kind of conservatory will be welcomed with delight by the occupants of the theatre, as a pleasant lounge between the acts, and access will be gained to it from the stalls, dress circle, &c., by means of a lift. The idea is a good one, and might, we think, be extended to various other public buildings. The House of Commons has its terrace garden, but very few other buildings have any open-air refuge, and their occupants have no relief from the exhaustion which is inseparable from close confinement and bad ventilation.

INVENTOR OF THE BUNSEN BURNER.

By the death of Professor Robert William Bunsen, of Heidelberg, which took place in that city on the 17th of August, science has lost one of its most successful inquirers and pioneers. He has wrought indefatigably for the last half-century, and to his labours chemistry and physics alike owe some of their most splendid successes. His name first came into prominence in 1846, in connection with his scientific expedition to Iceland, and his investigations into the geyser phenomena there. He was then led to take up the study of arsenic and its compounds, and succeeded in discovering an infallible antidote to the poisonous arsenious acid (iron-oxy-hydrate). He was also the inventor of the 'burner' that bears his name, and the first to make real effective use of the magnesium light. It is, however, in the domain of analytical chemistry that Bunsen's greatest exploits were achieved. Unweariedly he pursued his work over many fields, and his great reward came in 1860 when, in collaboration with Kirchhoff, he made his greatest discovery, that of spectrum analysis, and at the same time pointed out for the first time the existence of two new chemical elements, caesium and rubidium, and succeeded in isolating them. He was also the discoverer of the so-called Galvanic-element, and his researches on the subjects of specific gravity,

the laws of the diffusion and absorption of gases, the influence of pressure on the solidifying-point of substances, made his services to physics only less valuable than those to chemistry proper. His name will take rank in the annals of chemistry alongside those of Volta and Galvani.

RENEWABLE ELECTRIC LAMPS.

Ever since the electric glow-lamp came into use the greatest drawback found in connection with it is its short life, so that frequent renewals are necessary. In a large installation the expense of these renewals is considerable; and before the patents ran out, when lamps cost something like a crown apiece, the item was a very serious one. Moreover, the waste of material was great, for the only part of the lamp which gave way was the hair-like carbon filament within the glass bulb; all the rest of the structure remained intact but useless. A company has recently been formed to exploit a new form of lamp which is capable of renewal when the carbon gives out. It is like the existing glow-lamps, but has a slightly longer neck; and when the carbon fails this neck can be cut, a new filament inserted, the two parts of the glass are once more fused together, and the vacuum renewed at a very trifling cost. The company have in view a house-to-house collection of old lamps, which will be exchanged for new ones, or rather renewed ones, at about sixpence each.

OUR SCHOOLS OF ART.

The national competition of the students at the schools of science and art throughout the country, and the exhibition of a selection of works sent in by them, is now an important annual event at South Kensington. These works seem to cover every department of the arts and manufactures of the country, from their highest expression as found in oil and water-colour paintings, to designs for objects of the most homely description. More than one thousand schools and nearly one hundred thousand students are represented here, and the influence thus exerted upon the artistic tastes of the community cannot be overrated. Half a century ago British manufacturers used to go abroad for the beautiful designs which they can now easily find at home; and presently, perhaps, we shall see foreign manufacturers coming over here to profit by the work of our art schools.

THE ORIGIN OF PEARLS.

The presence of pearls in the shell of a mollusc used to be attributed to congealed drops of dew or rain; and Pliny has left an elaborate account of the manner in which the phenomenon is brought about. Later investigations have, of course, given a more rational explanation for the occurrence of these ocean gems; and the common one is that the nucleus of the pearl is a piece of sand, driftwood, or any foreign body getting within the shell, which the mollusc is unable to

remove, but covers with layers of nacre, in order to reduce the irritation which its continued presence would necessarily cause. But according to a paper recently presented to the Académie des Sciences, Paris, by M. Leon Diquet, there is a distinction between fine pearls and these intrusive bodies coated with nacre. Moreover, he alleges that the latter have not the fine iridescence of the true 'Orient' pearl, but only that of mother-of-pearl. The true pearl, he holds, has no connection with the shell itself, but is a pathological calcification or 'stone,' and seems to arise from parasites. It begins with a small sac of humour, which becomes gelatinous and calcifies in a series of concentric layers, while at its centre may be found a cavity holding organic matter, the remains of the parasites which gave it birth.

THE DEATH PENALTY.

So long as the law of 'a life for a life' is accepted by civilised states the grim question as to the most humane method of putting that law in force is one which is bound to come up for discussion from time to time. In our own country the old method of hanging by the neck has been so far modified as to ensure the instantaneous death of the culprit; and in America the same end is gained by electrical means. In some other states the death penalty is enforced in a far more ghastly manner. It has been reserved for the clever Japanese to suggest another system, which seems to be both effective and at the same time free from the reproach of inhumanity. The condemned person is shut up in a lethal chamber, and by means of powerful pumps the air is rapidly withdrawn from it, and death at once ensues. Experiments on animals point to the conclusion that this method of execution is quite painless. It is obvious that if the principle of the lethal chamber is admitted, there are many methods of making the air within it irrespirable.

PRINTING IN COLOURS.

A new colour-printing machine, the invention of Mr Ivan Orloff, chief engineer of the Government Printing Works at St Petersburg, may now be seen at work at 119 Shaftesbury Avenue, London. This clever machine was originally designed to print multicoloured engine-turned patterns on bank-notes as a precaution against forgery, and thirty-two of them are at present so employed in Russia; but it is now being applied to more artistic purposes. As is well known, most coloured designs can be reproduced by the use of the three colours red, yellow, and blue, the secondary tints being made by the overlapping or admixture of the primaries. In dealing with such a design the Orloff machine employs four electric blocks, which are attached to a cylinder; three of these are for the primary colours, whilst the fourth is a complete electro or master-block representing the full design. The machine is so

arranged that, as the cylinder turns, each block is inked with its respective colour, and each then in turn gives up its impression to a large glue roller. This roller, now charged with all the colours in their right places, is brought against the master-block, which it inks, and the master-block transfers its multicoloured impression to paper. At the time of our visit this machine was printing two intricately-coloured pictures at the rate of one thousand per hour, with wonderful uniformity of result and with perfect registration.

THE IRON INDUSTRY IN INDIA.

At the recent annual meeting of the Iron and Steel Institute a most interesting paper was read by an Indian gentleman holding an official position under the Nizam of Hyderabad, upon the mineral resources of that district. He said that iron ores of the very best kind, chiefly hæmatite and magnetic ores, occur extensively in the Nizam's territories, and from time immemorial cast steel of very superior quality has been manufactured there and transported to Western lands. Indeed, it has been discovered that the raw material of the far-famed Damascus blade was obtained from an obscure village in this part of India. The rules for the admission of arms into Hyderabad were so beset with restrictions that the people were led to depend upon home production for their swords and daggers, and these were of very fine quality. The lecturer urged that British capital might well be employed in reviving the iron industry in the Nizam's dominions, for iron, coal, and the necessary flux were found in large quantities and in close proximity to one another. As to the coal, one seam alone was computed to amount to forty-seven million tons, a supply which might be deemed inexhaustible.

ELECTRIC TRACTION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

A special number of *Cassiers' Magazine* for August (33 Bedford Street, Strand, London) is devoted to the latest developments of electric traction. It is profusely illustrated, and gives a great variety of articles which all interested in the subject should see. Although the growth of electric traction in the United Kingdom and Europe generally has been slower than in America, yet this publication enables us to see how many towns have either availed themselves of this power of locomotion or are about to do so. For instance, we learn from the article on 'Electric Tramways in Great Britain' that the London United Tramways Company is to construct about thirteen miles of electric lines in the suburbs of London. The tunnel line of the Central London Railway is six and a half miles in length, with a double track, and thirty-two electric locomotives will be employed. The City and South London Electric Railway was the first underground railway to utilise electricity as a motive-power. It is three miles long, with an equipment of sixteen

locomotives, and has carried over fifty million passengers since last December. The Waterloo and City Railway, opened last year, is a mile and a half long. The only elevated line in this country is the Liverpool Overhead Railway, opened in 1893, which operates six and a half miles of double track, and has forty-four motor-cars. The main advantage of the underground conduit system, as compared with the overhead trolley, is the prevention of electrolysis and injury to gas and water pipes. It is more costly than the overhead system, but does not detract from the appearance of the streets. Another method of traction still to be tested is Kingsland's mechanical surface contact system, by means of metal studs placed on the track between the two tram lines. Up to the autumn of 1898 there were in this country one hundred and fifty miles of track electrically operated, with five hundred motor-cars. When the Dublin Central power-station is completed it will operate three hundred cars. At present fifty are in operation and one hundred and fifty under construction. Details are given of the systems adopted, amongst other places, by Middlesbrough, Douglas (Isle of Man), Norwich, Kidderminster, Blackpool, Leeds, Dover, Halifax, Bradford, Cork, and Guernsey. Coming to Scotland, we find that Glasgow has made an experiment on the Springburn route, while Edinburgh has adopted the cable system, which is only now being tardily completed. A statement by Mr Pearson, of the Metropolitan Street Railway Company, New York, as to cables is not very encouraging. He says that the system, having for some time posed as unimprovable, is now on the decline. He considers that the cable has been superseded, and 'that no more cable roads for city traction will be built, and that those now in use will eventually be operated by some other power.'

THE THREE VOICES.

THERE are three voices born of Heaven's blue :

The first to all men sounds at Morning's break ;
It rings a trumpet-blast the whole world through,
When God says 'Wake !'

The second comes when Noonday's sun is high ;

A voice commanding and imperative,
Bidding men strive and pray unceasingly,
When God says 'Live !'

The third, when Evening follows in the shade

Of manhood's dying day, sounds last and best
To those who woke, and lived, and worked, and prayed,
When God says 'Rest !'

*. TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them in FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

TREGAVIS THE CHEMIST.

By JAMES PATEY.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

IT was a wet Saturday night. Since three o'clock in the afternoon there had been a continuous downpour, and the gutters of the cobble-paved streets of Langissack ran like rivulets.

The marketing was over, and the throng of miners and fisher-folk that made a weekly stir of shopping in our little town had dispersed to their homes. The shops were all closed but the chemist's, whose mighty bottles of amber and ruby and emerald still glowed in the dreariness, throwing a glamour upon the very puddles, and mitigating the misery of the night. Within the shop, the last customer stood at the counter—an old man, with a strip of sailcloth across his shoulders to protect him from the worst of the weather.

'That will be tenpence, altogether,' said the chemist, scrupulously sealing the package. 'It must be rubbed well in; the rubbing will do as much good as the embrocation.'

To which the old fellow replied, 'Ted'n for me; 'tes for Simeon. Bless thy sawl! I niver use no druggist's trade. Whenever my leg troubleth me, I rin awver to Farrier Tregooze for a dab o' sheep's ointment, an' it doeth wonders.'

When the man had gone the chemist yawned and looked wearily at the clock. It seemed a waste of effulgence to keep open longer.

Tregavis the chemist was a tall, lank, loose-limbed man, with thin hair and whiskers of a lightish colour, and pale-blue eyes behind his spectacles; he had a slight stoop at the shoulders, and minuteness of measuring had given him a peering habit.

Going to the desk at the corner of the counter, he said to his assistant, 'I wish that coastguard would come for his mixture, Vanstone; we might then close.'

'He came in some time ago, sir,' replied Vanstone, looking at his master in some astonishment.

'I mean the man from Polveen who left the prescription and was to return for the medicine. It's time he came.'

The assistant turned scarlet. 'He was here three-quarters of an hour ago, sir. He said he was in a hurry to be off, as the wind was rising, and he was going home by boat. I let him have the mixture.'

'Then what is this?' cried the chemist, aghast, taking a paper-wrapped bottle from the desk.

'Cap'n Gerran's medicine, sir.'

'My God, Vanstone! what have you done? You have given the man the wrong bottle!'

Captain Gerran was suffering from an incurable malady, and at seasons was driven to a strong narcotic to alleviate his agony; and this was the draught that Richard Curtis, the Polveen coast-guard, was carrying home to his sick child! It was a fearful mistake—Life and Death lay bottled side by side on the chemist's desk; and Death, swift and terrible, was now in the pocket of the coastguard, who had braved the weather for the sake of his little maid, and was by this time sailing homeward.

Vanstone might have pleaded that the scrawled 'Capt. Gerran' in his master's handwriting was passably like 'Coast Guard;' but it was no moment for excuse or justification.

In the desperate hope that the man might not have left the town, Tregavis snatched the bottle and rushed hatless out of the shop and down the steep street towards the shore. The quay was deserted—there was no boat at the steps, and no sign of a boat's light upon the dark water. The rain fell in torrents, and there was a thickness over the sea.

A man with a lantern was removing tackle from one of the fishing-boats drawn up on the beach.

'Hulloa!' shouted Tregavis.

'Hulloa!' answered the fisherman.

'Can you tell me whether the Polveen coast-guard has gone home?'

'Iss; he left half-an-hour ago. I had a word with 'en. His little maid's bad, and he's cruel troubled about her; but he's got a bottle o' stuff that'll putt the cheeld right. I reckon he'll find it purty rough round the Point.'

With a thumping heart Tregavis retraced his steps, running uphill all the way to the 'Plume of Feathers.' The only hope to avert a tragedy was to overtake the coastguard, or to follow him close enough to prevent the administering of the draught. The distance from Langissack to Polveen by road is twenty miles, owing to the indentation of the coast; but across the estuary and around Penzele Head it is but five or six miles by sea. An out-of-the-way, inaccessible little village is Polveen, and there is no telegraph.

There was revelry at the 'Plume of Feathers,' and Johnny Roscorla was singing. Johnny was famous as a vocalist beyond the limits of the parish, and some of us thought that with a little training he might have 'travelled.' His voice was a strong tenor, clear and manly, with something of the ring of a trumpet in it; and he had the knack of lending a touch of sentiment or redeeming humour to the dreariest of ditties.

There was considerable emulation among the various little sects of Langissack for the possession of Roscorla, for such a voice as his would be an acquisition to any congregation. Zion yearned for Johnny, and Ebenezer was equally anxious for his in-gathering. But our *tenore robusto* had no sectarian predilections, and, with a fine impartiality, sang for everybody, his services being generally in demand at anniversaries; he even volunteered for the harmonium fund of the Primitives of the next parish, on which occasion he gave 'The Armour Bearer' so valiantly that the Primitives lost all prudence, and the collection was heroic.

Alas! Johnny's efforts were as much appreciated at the tavern as in the chapel, and the recognition of his talent took the too-frequent form of the gratuitous replenishing of his glass. The elders of Langissack began to shake their heads over Johnny. He was too often loafing about the town when other men were fishing; and it was prophesied that his singing would be the 'ruin of 'en.' But old Siah Hosken, our rubicund Silenus, said, 'Nay, let 'en sing while the music's in 'en, for the voice of 'en mellows the cider.' So Johnny pursued his melodious path to perdition.

Clear on the night from the crowded parlour of the 'Feathers' came the singing of Roscorla:

'They drank their king,
An' they drank their queen,
An' they drank their constitution;'

and presently, in full blast, the chorus of the old sea-song:

'The wind that blows,
The ship that goes,'

leaving Johnny to give the requisite tenderness to the culminating sentiment:

'And the lass that loves a sailor.'

Into the midst of the revellers sprang Tregavis the chemist, panting, bare-headed, dripping with wet—a somewhat ludicrous figure.

'I want a boatman for Polveen!' he cried in agitation.

The men stared in astonishment, and one said, 'You'm too late, sir. I reckon our work's done for wan week. 'Tis blowing a brave bit outside, an' nobody but a fool wed stir to say.'

'The Polveen coastguard has gone home with the wrong medicine,' gasped Tregavis, 'and I must overtake him!'

A simultaneous grin overspread the faces of the fishermen, and old Siah Hosken said, 'Don't 'ee trouble yourself, maister. If 'tis the wrong stuff I reckon 'twill do 'en all the same good—p'raps more; for 'twas a mistake that cured Granfer Pengelly. He swallowed the liniment by the spoonful every four hours, an' anointed his back with the physic, an' in wan week he was a-larrupin' the constable.'

There was a burst of laughter, and the levity maddened the chemist.

'I must have a boat,' he cried fiercely. 'A mistake has been made—a terrible mistake—the man is taking home the wrong medicine to his child, and one dose will inevitably kill her. Isn't one of you man enough to go?'

A solemnity fell upon the men, and Johnny Roscorla said instantly, 'I'll go, sir!' and, reaching his cap, he strode out with Tregavis.

'Take the *Gilliflower*, Johnny,' cried Reuben Cardennick, following him; 'she's a safe boat, and purty swift.'

The others, desirous of lending a hand in getting the boat down, trooped out of the inn and clattered down the street. Old Bolitho the landlord, unaware of the trouble, coming into the parlour, was astonished to find an array of deserted mugs and glasses.

Cardennick looked anxiously over the water. 'Tis a dirty night, Johnny; an' 'twill be terrible rough round Penzele.'

Siah Hosken said, 'Tis a mazed job; better send Farrier Tregooze to Polveen a-horseback, an' trust to Providence.'

But Roscorla answered simply, 'The time's too precious. Bless my saw! we can't let the cheeld perish. If 'tis to be done, I'll do it.'

When Johnny Roscorla is arraigned for his manifold iniquities, let this night be remembered for him.

As the chemist hurried down the beach, Roscorla said, 'You bide here, Mr Tregavis; you'm no mortal use in the boat, an' I'll give the bottle to the man right enough.'

But Tregavis was not the man to depute a risky duty. 'You're a good fellow, Johnny,' said

he, 'but I must go.' He looked a pitiable object in the lantern-light—his partially-bald head bare to the rain, his black coat saturated, and a distracted look in his pale face.

The *Gilliflower* was carried down by as many eager fellows as could lay hands upon the gunwale.

'Look 'ee here, sir,' argued Johnny. 'S'pose any poor sawl's took bad in the night, who's to physic 'em? 'Twill be said that the chemist's out a-pleasure-sailin' round Penzele wi' Johnny Roscorla. Dooty's dooty, sir; an' my place is in the boat, an' yours is 'long with the gallipota.'

The chemist leapt into the boat, and Johnny followed. As they pushed off one man flung a bucket aboard, and shouted, 'When you'm rounding the Point I reckon you'll have more ballast than is good for 'ee.'

In spite of the weather the night was not very dark—there was a moon somewhere in the dismal sky, according to the calendar. The rain fell in floods, but the group of fishermen stood on the quay and watched the bobbing light of the *Gilliflower* till it grew dim and disappeared.

For the first mile the wind was with them, and they were soon clear of the bay and feeling the wash of the Channel. Straight ahead blazed the light on the promontory of Penzele. Tregavis was consumed with impatience, and the minutes seemed hours. With morbid persistency his imagination pictured with every grim detail the tragic sequel of the night's blunder. Once he took the oars, and attempted to row in the broken water—an attempt that would have been ludicrous enough under other circumstances. If Roscorla had taken a longer tack he might have kept the boat drier, but soon the water was breaking over the bow. The chemist seized the bucket and baled desperately—it suited his mood better than the agony of inaction. The rain slackened, and the weather grew thicker; instead of the pelting downpour there was a driving drizzle. At times the light on Penzele waned to a glimmer and disappeared for several minutes.

'Tis an ugly night,' cried Johnny; 'thickish in streaks.' And he grew anxious as he stared into the vagueness.

Then Tregavis prayed—prayed with a vehemence that was terrifying to Johnny Roscorla. The man called aloud to the Almighty in an anguish of entreaty. 'I tell 'ee 'twas whisht, an' I was mortal skeered,' said Johnny when he afterwards told the story of the night's adventure; 'for the supplication of 'en was terrible to hearken to.'

An impenetrable mist surrounded them, and they could no longer make out the light on Penzele. The boat was at the mercy of wind and current, and the fisherman lost all idea of his course in the darkness.

'The Lord help us!' cried Johnny fervently, 'for I'm no better to 'ee than a blind man.' He made to lower the sail. 'Twill clear again soon,' said he, 'an' 'tis no good to rin scat into Penzele.'

But Tregavis shouted, 'Are you afraid, man? Let her run.'

'Right, sir!' answered Johnny as cheerily as he could; 'I'll steer by faith, as the hymn saith—'tis fitty doctrine, but poor saymanship.'

So they drove blindly on into the thickness. Presently on their ears comes a dull, throbbing sound—the slow pulse of a steamer feeling her way at quarter-speed. The two men could see no lights, and could only vaguely tell the direction of the approaching vessel.

'She'll nivver see us!' cried Roscorla; and with straining eyes he peered into the darkness, knowing that life or death might hang on a turn of the tiller.

Nearer and nearer came the rhythmic throb, till they could almost feel the imminence of the panting monster. Both men shouted at the top of their voices, and out of the obscurity loomed a black wall that bore down upon them with the hideous blare of a siren.

There was no cleaving, smashing impact; but the fishing-boat was struck violently enough at the bow, and its occupants found themselves in the water; and the next moment the half-filled boat was caught in a huff of wind and capsized. So the *Gilliflower*, with its set sail submerged, drifted bottom-up upon the rocks at Penzele, where it suffered the buffeting of three tides, and was eventually flung ashore on Polveen beach, stave by stave.

THE DECLINE OF OATMEAL PORRIDGE.



HERE seems to be a general consensus of opinion among those who are in a position to know the facts of the matter that the 'hale-some parritch' is going out of use.

It is very sincerely to be regretted. Science and popular experience agree in pronouncing it one of the most nutritious of foods, and one of the cheapest too. The fact that it is very cheap is indeed probably the chief reason for the decline in its consumption. Because it is

cheap it has been accounted the poor man's food, as it really has been very extensively in the past. Everybody knows that all over Scotland especially it used to be the chief article of diet with the working-classes. But people will not eat 'poor men's food' if they can help it; and of late years the working-classes have been prospering. Work has been abundant and wages good, and unfortunately large numbers of them have spent their entire earnings on the more highly-appreciated though often far less nutritious and

more expensive knick-knacks of the middle-class meal-table.

When Carlyle saw Lord Macaulay he said, 'Ay, any one can see that thy face is made out of Scotch oatmeal.' It seems quite likely that one hundred years ago, when the range of articles of diet was more limited, oatmeal was overdone in Scotland, as it now seems underdone. Dr William Alexander, in his *Rural Life in the North*, quotes an old interrogatory, which shows that this diet was partaken of in one form or another by some poor folks three times a day. 'Have you got your *pottage*?' (breakfast); 'Have you got your *sowens*?' (dinner); 'Have you got your *brose*?' (supper). These were all different preparations of oatmeal. Hugh Miller, in his *Schools and Schoolmasters*, relates his experiences, more than seventy years ago, when it became his turn to cook for a squad of masons, to make oatcakes and boil porridge. He spoilt a meal or two, he says, 'ere my porridge became palatable, or my cakes crisp, or my brose free and knotty, or my brochan sufficiently smooth and void of knots.' In his method of making porridge at the barrack the cook continued stirring the mess and adding meal until from its first wild ebullitions it became silent over the fire. Miller managed to make porridge like leaven, quite after this manner. Once he made a dough-like mass partly the colour of chocolate. The rest was burnt brown at the bottom of the pot. His master, when ladling out the stuff, said: 'Od, laddie, what ca' ye this? Ca' ye this *brochan*?' 'Onything ye like,' he replied; 'but there are two kinds in the pot, and it will go hard if none of them please you.' No wonder the master was angry as he discussed what seemed a hard brown dumpling.

Dr J. McGrigor Robertson, author of *The Household Physician*, in one of the Edinburgh 'Health Lectures' on *Food and Drink*, gives a table showing how much a penny can buy; from which it appears that we can get for that sum twenty times the amount of nutritive material in the shape of oatmeal that we can in the shape of lean beef. He states the matter in another way, by giving two breakfasts, in the first of which oatmeal appears, costing half the money of the other, yet with 'pre-eminence in nutritive quality which ham and egg cannot hope to rival,' as given in the second: (I.) Six ounces oatmeal made into porridge, ten ounces sweet milk, one pint cocoa, quarter-lb. bread, half-ounce butter—yields 120 grains nitrogen, 2145 grains carbon. Cost, 3d. (II.) One pint coffee, one egg, quarter-lb. bacon, half-lb. bread, one ounce butter—yields 80 grains nitrogen, 1792 grains carbon. Cost, 5½d.

Dr Frankland has also said that the same amount of work may be obtained from oatmeal costing 3½d. as from butcher-meat costing 3s. 6½d. Mr T. Brassey, the great railway contractor, who had uncommon opportunities for observing the working power of men of different nationalities,

has left it on record that 'the best navvies are teetotalers. That, where three hundred of them had to widen a gauge, and had to effect the change quickly, working day and night, it was found that oatmeal gruel was the best for keeping up their energies.'

'Twenty years ago, or within a much smaller period in some parts,' writes Mr William Inglis, of Bonnington, Leith, 'oatmeal was the staple article of diet amongst a large percentage of the working population of Scotland, just as rice is in India or China and the East generally. Amongst the rural population, labourers, and the majority living in country villages, oatmeal was always used once a day, often twice—morning and evening. Farm hands were generally, till within some ten or twelve years ago, paid not altogether in money, but had so much in cash and the balance in oatmeal and potatoes.'

That is what in England was known as the 'truck system,' and has been made illegal. It is a bad system wherever it prevails, and in itself would be almost enough to bring about a revolt against the food as soon as the people found it possible. It is satisfactory that it has to a very great extent disappeared in Scotland. Where oatmeal is still given as wages it is frequently exchanged for tea and other provisions, and farmers are everywhere complaining of late that their workers have tea carried out to the fields instead of porridge, as they used to have.

Nor is this food so much used in town as formerly. The poorest class of workers have for the most part given it up, though it is still frequently used by the more intelligent of skilled artisans, who do not take it because it is cheap, but because they like it, and because they believe in its wholesome and nourishing qualities. The falling off in the consumption, it seems pretty evident, is mainly among the poorest and least intelligent section of the community; while there are good reasons for believing that the consumption is decidedly on the increase among those who are better off. The very poor man who eats porridge because it is cheap envies the better-paid workman who can indulge in bacon and eggs, rump-steaks, or fish and fowl; and, as soon as earnings permit of it, he gives up his porridge and pushes on towards what he considers these higher dietary levels, even though he can get only as far as a modest sausage or some indigestible tinned abomination. But among people who are able to eat what they please, and whose choice is determined only by what they consider most wholesome—the better-paid class of artisans and middle and upper class households generally—the consumption of oatmeal is on the increase. The greater intelligence on all matters of health has during the past few years led towards greater simplicity of diet; and many people both in Scotland and in England are now taking from intelligent and deliberate choice the food which

formerly among a large section of the population was eaten from prevailing custom or because it was cheap. Porridge is to be found now as a regular item in the bills of fare at all good English hotels, though in many of them the cooks have not yet learned how to prepare it properly.

Some of the Scotch dealers in the article have another way of accounting for the falling off in consumption. They say that oatmeal is not nowadays what it used to be. The real thing is still to be got by a little care and by paying a proper price; but the keen competition for business and the continual cutting down of prices has led to the 'adulteration' of the genuine article. Between real Scotch oatmeal and the imported American or Canadian article, say the Scotch millers, there is as much difference as between diamond and glass. British traders buy this cheap American stuff and 'adulterate' the Scotch with it; and the consequence is that people who used to get really good porridge would rather give it up altogether than eat what they get now. This explanation is given for what it is worth; and though perhaps Americans and Canadians might not altogether fall in with it, if it is a fact that from increasing competition large quantities of inferior oatmeal are now brought into the market, it would no doubt partly account for the falling off of consumption among the poor, who would of course be the purchasers of the cheapest qualities, and it would not be inconsistent with the increase among those who can buy the best article.

It is a thousand pities that from any cause whatever there should be any tendency to give up this cheap and excellent food in favour of articles that cost twice as much, and are frequently not half as good. Dr Johnson's well-known dictionary definition of 'oats'—'A grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people'—was merely a little splutter of the Doctor's pettiness and prejudice. 'Why,' he said to Boswell, 'I own that by my definition of oats I meant to vex them.' Lord Elibank's rejoinder, when it was repeated to him, however, was crushing: 'And whaur'll you find sic horses and sic men?' English horses and Scotchmen have in the past undoubtedly afforded unquestionable evidence of the value of oats for the building up of frames and the development of muscle, and science has unmistakably shown that that is just what might have been expected from the food.

Professor Norton, of Yale University, some years ago made a thorough analytical examination of the oat-plant in all its stages of growth. He was a very competent chemist, and the results he arrived at have in the main been pretty much what other authorities have come to since. After an interesting account of the manner in which silica is appropriated by the plant in the structure of stalk and leaf and husk, the professor continued: 'Equally

beautiful are the facts which we discover respecting the alkaline sulphates and phosphates. We find little of the latter in the whole length of the straw, in the leaf, or in the chaff. But when we arrive at the grain, the alkaline sulphates disappear, and the phosphates take their places; these have passed up the whole length of the stalk, avoiding the leaves and the chaff, and at last, by a law infinitely more unerring than any which human wisdom could devise, deposited themselves in the very place where phosphoric acid is most needed, in order that, as part of the food, it may build up the bones, the framework of the animal body. . . . We see, then,' concludes the professor, 'that even including the husk, the oat is superior to almost any other corn in those ingredients which go to the production of muscle in the body. The strong, muscular forms of Scottish ploughmen have long been living witnesses to the good properties of their favourite and almost only food.' Professor Norton found that, taking a low average, the oat yields about four per cent. more of the ingredients necessary for bone and muscle making than the best wheat. Fine horses in England and fine men in Scotland are thus just about what you might expect, on scientific grounds, to find.

It is certainly unfortunate that a food that has proved its capability of building up so stalwart a race of men as the agriculturists of Scotland should be losing its popularity. Perhaps, when it comes to be known how extensively it is being adopted by the comparatively wealthy there will be a reaction in its favour. Whatever may be said about imported meal, there can be no doubt Scotch oatmeal or rolled oats cannot be beaten; and, if properly cooked, is as delicious as it is wholesome. Scotch porridge is made as follows: To one pint of water when boiling add three tablespoonfuls of oatmeal, shaken slowly through the fingers or a sieve, and stirred continuously; add a little salt, and boil thirty minutes. Connoisseurs in the matter hold that the cooking ought to be done in a double saucepan, so that the inner vessel containing the oatmeal should come in contact, not with the dry scorching heat of the fire, but with boiling water.

The writer of this, though not a Scotchman, has for many years taken porridge for breakfast, though he has been accustomed to do what probably no Scotchman would do—that is to say, he has always taken stewed fruit with it. The Scot usually takes his 'parritch' with milk—rarely with cream, as a luxury; and, when milk is not available, with treacle, treacle-beer, or the like; but, with these, porridge is apt to get a trifle monotonous. A plate of well-cooked porridge with rhubarb, gooseberries, cherries, plums, damsons, apples, or pears, with milk and sugar, afford a seasonable variety; always cheap, always delicious, and always wholesome.

A NEW NOAH.*

By FRED WHISHAW.

I WAS already married when the following events happened,' said Holdsworth, who narrated this tale at our camp-fire; 'and we were living on a little estate in Florida, growing oranges. The estate and all my orange-trees are for sale, cheap, if any of you want to buy the lot; perhaps you'll make 'em pay—I couldn't! But that's not in the story.

'Well, my house was a kind of shanty, built on the banks of a small river, the Rippler, an innocent-looking, smug kind of a stream that you'd never imagine capable of any sort of mischief; for it was but thirty yards wide, or so, and sluiced along with a harmless kind of a medium current, just as if it were far too busy trying to get safely down to the sea to have time for any fooling around. It had the appearance of sticking strictly to business, and would be the last river, one would think, to waste time in spreading its waters over the surrounding country in floods, and such-like foolery, when it ought to be hurrying away towards the Mexican Gulf. Yet this was just another instance of the truth of that wise saying that "One never knows."

'One never does know anything worth knowing—at least, not much. If one could only be certain, now, when there would be a flood, or a tornado, or a drought, or a deluge, or a war, or any other first-class upsetter of the usual, if I may coin a term, what a lot of money one might make by buying for a rise beforehand!

'Well, we had a very rainy season one year early in the fall, and our innocent-looking little Rippler began to flow faster, and gradually to widen; and this continuing for a few days caused my wife and me to look somewhat grave, though we didn't as yet anticipate anything like what eventually occurred.

'Our nearest neighbours were a young fellow and his wife, Europeans like ourselves, who had no more intimate acquaintance with our river and its ways than we. My wife, Bridget, had been very kind to these good folks at the time of their little one's birth, about a month ago, and they—the Sinclairs—had become pretty intimate with us since, and considerably devoted to Bridget by reason of her kindness at a critical period.

'Well, one day the water began to rise very rapidly—so much more rapidly than it had done hitherto that I began to be seriously alarmed for our house and furniture; for the lip of the

stream now lay but a foot or two clear of the front door, and the water still rising.

"Bridget," I said, "I don't quite like it. I think we'll move the furniture and things upstairs."

'Our shanty was quite a mansion in comparison with most of the dwellings—one-storied buildings for the greater part—in the neighbourhood, for we possessed two stories, the fact being that my partner Harris and I lived under the same roof, he inhabiting the upper and Bridget and I the lower story. Unfortunately, however, Harris was up north, at New York, on business, and when I began, with Bridget's assistance, to work at the removal of our household gods, I found that without the help of another man we could not do much.

'I decided to run over to Sinclair's, therefore, and beg him to come down first thing in the morning and lend me a hand. Sinclair's home stood considerably higher up the river than ours, and I anticipated no danger for him, for his house was built on rising ground some fifty yards back from the stream.

'My good neighbour heartily acquiesced in my request for his assistance, and promised to come over at daylight.

'Sinclair proved as good as his word, and early enough next morning he appeared, having come on foot, leaving the horse at home. Sinclair was richer than I by this horse, which he used for farm-work: I could not afford such a luxury at that time. He had left the horse for his wife, in case, as he laughingly observed, the floods should come up so quickly during his absence that it might be necessary for her to escape with the baby up-country.

'The water, when Sinclair arrived, was standing several inches deep in our rooms, and it was raining cats and dogs. We had all our nice furniture there, mind you—a piano, and several other heavy things; for, though we were poor enough, our respective fathers and friends had set us up handsomely at our wedding, and everything was good and new. Besides all this, there was the season's produce in apples and potatoes, and so on, in the barn; no oranges as yet from our young trees—and all this had to be removed into safety. Poor old Harris would have had a fit if he had seen his cosy sitting-room crammed with our furniture and a few score sacks of potatoes and things, all piled cheek by jowl with and upon one another and mixed with his things.

'With Sinclair's help the work of carrying and removing went on quickly enough, and we had just about finished, at eleven in the morning, when an

* It may interest the reader to know that in its main incident this story is the narrative of an actual occurrence.—F. W.

astonishing thing happened. There was a clattering and a splashing along the road that led by the river behind our house and past Sinclair's towards Manorville (a little township ten miles away), and to our great surprise up rode Mrs Sinclair, pale and very agitated, and obviously frightened.

"Oh Jack," she cried, sitting still upon her panting horse, which was wet up to his body through galloping in the water, for it now reached in the road as high as his knees—"Jack, I've come to warn you you must return home at once; there's a man been in from Manorville who says the lake up at Johnstontown is likely to overflow, and if it does our river will go up six feet or more, and probably whirl everything away, as it did in 'fifty-eight,' he says. There'll be a boat down from Manorville at one o'clock to take us off, and you, too, Mrs Holdsworth—and—and I'm afraid we shall both lose our houses and most of our property as well."

"This was very wretched news. Poor Mrs Sinclair was almost in hysterics as she finished her tale; but she would not consent to dismount and enter the house in order to be refreshed and comforted; there was no time, she sobbed, and she must get back to baby."

"Good heavens, Mary! what have you done with the child?" asked Sinclair, suddenly recalling the fact that his wife had not brought baby with her. "You've never left it alone?"

"Oh, baby is quite safe," Mrs Sinclair replied, smiling through her tears. "The water is not nearly up to the floor-level yet, and baby's bassinette is on the table in the sitting-room; even the six-foot rise of the water would not reach her."

"Well, what's to be done?" I asked, my heart feeling pretty heavy, for I felt that our house was doomed supposing the Johnston Lake should burst, as Mrs Sinclair said.

"I'm afraid you'll have to leave your shanty to take care of itself, old man," said Sinclair, "and come up our way; our house, standing, as it does, so much higher, will be safer than this."

"Maybe ours will stand," I mused; "it's pretty firmly built into its foundations."

"Well, it will stand or fall whether you are by or not," said Sinclair. "Come back with us, man; we must hope for the best and do the wisest!"

"Bridget can ride with me," added Mrs Sinclair, "and Jack and you won't mind wading. Bring any papers or valuables in case of accidents."

"This was obviously the only sensible course open to us. I went upstairs and collected my papers, money, and valuables, and I was still searching about for my wife's little stock of jewellery when I heard a shout from Sinclair, who stood and talked with the ladies outside, the group being just as I had left them.

"Quick, Mary—dismount! Jump into my arms!" I heard Jack Sinclair shout.

"I rushed downstairs—I think I took the whole flight at a bound—and was just in time to see a remarkable sight.

"Mrs Sinclair, in the foreground, was in the act of scrambling from her horse's back—assisted by my wife—into the arms of her husband. In the background, coming tearing round the corner of land which made a bend of the river a hundred yards above our house, there rushed towards us a seething, roaring wave, several feet in height, carrying trees and refuse, and bringing along with it, as it seemed, a storm of wind and rain.

"Back—into the house and upstairs!" cried Sinclair, hustling the ladies in at the door. "Don't waste a second. Come, Holdsworth. God grant your shanty is as strong as you think!"

"We were all in the top room and at the window in less than half a minute, and just in time to see a grand and terrible spectacle. With a hissing, roaring sound the scudding wave reached the house. The water flooded and leaped up the sides, washing, at its first striking, a foot or two higher than its real depth, and actually splashing in at the upper windows. Trees and broken timber and piles of straw went swirling and whizzing past us, breaking the glass of the windows and catching in the frames. Sinclair's horse was washed away in an instant and disappeared; everything seemed to be turning round. I grew giddy and dazed. Were we afloat and travelling with the flood, or had the house stood the shock?"

"It had withstood it, fortunately; Harris and I had cause for self-congratulation on that score, for we built the thing ourselves. I was not long in discovering the fact that we were stationary, and in my joy and relief I shouted suddenly, "Hooray! we are safe; the old place has stood it. So must yours have done, Sinclair," I added, "for it hasn't floated past us. What's the matter with your wife?" I concluded. "Look at her!"

"My good Bridget was busy attending to her already, having discerned her need while Sinclair and I were still at the window.

"She has fainted," said Bridget. "She was thinking of the baby."

"Good heavens, yes—the baby!" I muttered; "but it will be all right, Sinclair, for the house has held together, and will hold, and the child is high out of danger."

"God grant it," he said hoarsely. "I don't know; the water has come up eight feet if it has come up an inch!" Sinclair suddenly went down on his knees. "God—in mercy save our child," he groaned.

"We comforted him as best we could, and Mary too, when she came round; but it was clear that they had little hope, and that they were both, for the time being, nearly heartbroken. To tell the truth, in my secret heart I had

not much hope for the child either. Undoubtedly the water would be standing deep in their sitting-room; the poor creature, in all human probability, was drowned already! In any case she must starve, for how could she possibly be saved until the flood went down? It was utterly impossible to dream of getting back to the poor, doomed little mortal.

'For two hours we sat and stood and shivered at the windows, watching the water that rushed by but a couple of feet below us. We spoke little. The Sinclairs sat close to one another, and, I think, were mostly engaged in praying. Bridget fetched food and a bottle of wine, but they would neither eat nor drink.

'Suddenly Jack said, "The water's a little lower!"

'I looked out. He was right; it had receded by nearly a foot from the high-water mark.

"It will go down, I dare say," said I bracingly, "nearly as quickly as it rose."

'Sinclair shook his head, glancing at his wife, who sat quietly weeping. I knew what he meant; he would have said, if he had spoken, "Too late."

'Half-an-hour more of waiting and watching, and then another excitement came. Floating rapidly on the bosom of the flood came a large boat, half-full of people.

"Here come the rescuers!" I said. "Courage, Mrs Sinclair; now we shall hear news of the—of your house."

'The boat came rapidly bearing down upon us. Those on board shouted cheerily as they approached, bidding us catch the ropes they intended to throw, and to climb out of the window as quickly as we could, once they were alongside. In another minute we were all aboard. I spoke to the man who seemed to be in command.

"Did you stop at Sinclair's place?" I asked him.

"No; we shouted, and found they had left already. I guessed they had come down your way," he replied.

"Was the water up to their windows?" I continued under my breath, for I could see the Sinclairs watching and listening. The man replied aloud, ignorant that he stabbed two fellow-creatures to the very heart:

"Up to them," he laughed. "Well, just about; there's six or seven feet of water in their parlour if there's an inch! They'd have had to sit on the roof till we came along."

'It was all over with hope then. Poor Mary Sinclair hid her face and sobbed aloud; her husband was not much better.

"What is it?" asked the skipper.

"The baby," I muttered, "left alone in the room."

"Good heavens!" ejaculated the horrified fellow, "then I'm afraid— But, Lord knows. Cheer up, missus; Mr Holdsworth's is the last party we've to take up; we'll turn her round now

at once, and head up-stream. The flood's giving fast; in a couple of hours we may reach your house if we work hard—it is but a mile and a half. Pull her round, bow side; we'll take her into the shallows and work up-stream for all we're worth."

'Poor Mrs Sinclair glanced gratefully at the speaker, but shook her head. During the hard struggle up-stream towards their house she sat holding my wife's hand, and for all I could hear I don't think either of them spoke a word, though I don't doubt there was some hand-pressing done. Trust women to find a lot of consolation in holding one another by the hand; it "completes the circle" of sympathy, I suppose, and lets the electric current pass freely between them.

'The four fellows at the oars, with help from Sinclair and myself—it seemed to do Jack good to have something to do—sent the big boat travelling steadily though slowly along against the still powerful current; and in little more than an hour we were nearly abreast of Sinclair's shanty.

'I saw from some distance away that it was all up; high-water mark was visible enough, and it was nearly up at the top of the windows. Sinclair saw it too, and his hand stole to his wife's.

"Courage, old woman," I heard him say; "we've got to face the worst. See where the water reached."

'Poor Mary Sinclair looked up at the house with a white, set face, but said nothing. The water was much lower now, but the boat could still float right up to the building. Mrs Sinclair prepared to get out and climb in at the window.

"Don't let her go in, Sinclair," I whispered, nudging him; "let her wait till she's calmer. Go in first yourself, and prepare things a bit for her; or, better still, let Bridget and me go in first; you can enter at the kitchen window and wait there a while"—

"No; she will insist upon going, poor soul," sighed Jack, with a kind of sob in his throat. "God help her!"

'But as we drew up close to the house, and Mary stood up to step out on the window-sill, an extraordinary thing happened. With perfect distinctness the sound of a baby's cry from within the house broke the sympathetic silence that prevailed without. It was the weirdest, ghostliest thing, under existing circumstances.

"Gracious Heaven! what's that?" exclaimed Sinclair, starting. "The child can't possibly be"—

"She can—she can—she *is*!" cried Mrs Sinclair. "Oh, don't I know her cry in a thousand? She's alive, our darling! Oh Jack! a miracle has happened."

'It was partly true; the child was alive, but there had been no miraculous intervention in its favour. The explanation was simple indeed; and

when old Jack Sinclair came to the window, and made over the facts to us who remained in the boat, the cheer that went up might have been heard in California.

"The bassinette was on the table, boys," said the happy, radiant father; "and when the water rose in the room the table simply floated, and the cradle lay on the top with the little beggar

fast asleep inside—and there you are! We'd call the kid Noah after this if Noah wasn't a man's name; but she's a girl, you see!"

"Call her 'Noa' without the 'h'!" roared some delighted fellow from the boat, concluded Holdsworth; "and hang me if they didn't do it! The child was christened 'Noa' a fortnight afterwards, and Noa she is to this day!"

BANKING ANECDOTES AND INCIDENTS.



AS is well known, many notes of the Bank of England have had singular histories attached to them, some of which have already been told in these pages. Two notes of one hundred pounds each, dated in 1696 (the bank only opened for business on 1st January 1695), were presented at the Bank for payment in 1764—that is, sixty-eight years later. These notes were discovered in an old Family Bible, where it was supposed they had been placed for safe keeping, and had lain ever since. As they are among the curios shown at the Bank, a quaint description of them may be given from the *Scots Magazine* of the period: 'They are as large as an Indian bond, and the figure of Britannia is on the top of them; they contain about six times the writing that our present notes do; there is a reference to and quotation from the charter of the company, and bear to be paid by ten pounds at a time, and to have a penny a day interest for one year.'

In 1791, Mr Pitt, the then premier of England, was busy making efforts to reduce the National Debt, which had been increased by no less a sum than one hundred and twenty-one and a quarter millions during the great American war, and at its close amounted to nearly two hundred and fifty millions. A bright idea occurred to Mr Pitt: Why not annex the Bank of England dividends for which no owners had appeared? This could not be done, however, without an act of parliament, and it was only proper to apprise the Bank of the Government's intention in this matter. Accordingly, at a meeting of the Bank's proprietors, held in the spring of 1791, the Governor was in a position to acquaint the court that a bill would be laid before parliament to appropriate the sum of five hundred thousand pounds out of the unclaimed dividends in the hands of the Bank for the use of the Government. While the bill was before parliament various attempts were made by petition to the House of Commons and personal application to Mr Pitt on the part of the Bank to get the measure withdrawn. The ministry stuck to the bill, which was read a third time; but at this stage a compromise was arrived at, under which the Bank lent the Government five hundred thousand pounds without interest, and

for so long a period as the sum of six hundred thousand pounds in unclaimed dividends should remain in the hands of the Bank.

An effort was made to get from the Bank of England a list of these dividends, which they seemed unwilling to furnish, and even forbade their employes to give any information on the subject, under peril of being discharged from their situations if they did so. At last a list of the dividends was published through the ministry putting pressure on the Bank, and for the first time moneys were brought to light which, in Mr Pitt's words, 'belonged to the public, on whose behalf and as whose agents the Bank of England paid them, and not to the proprietors of that corporation.' Until 1845 the Unclaimed Dividend Books of the Bank were regularly published; but the practice was discontinued, because fraudulent attempts to draw the dividends were so frequent. In that year the Bank received authority to investigate the circumstances connected with these unclaimed sums, so as to find out the owners. Applications for dividends must now be made direct to the Bank.

Forgeries of Bank of England notes have been attempted from time to time, and the first execution for that crime took place on 1st May 1758. This penalty has now been abolished for many years. In the spring of 1819 a curious case was brought before the Court of King's Bench. The plaintiff in the action was a man who had paid away a one-pound note of the Bank of England, which was pronounced to be a forgery. The defendant was an inspector of the Bank, and the story was to this effect: When the plaintiff learned that the note in question was a forgery, he got hold of it by stratagem, and paid the amount of it. The note was demanded back from him, but he refused to part with it. In these days it was the practice of the Bank to retain all forged notes that were presented for payment; now the Bank authorities simply stamp the word 'Forged' on such notes. For declining to deliver up the forged note, the plaintiff in this action was taken before a magistrate on the charge 'of having a note in his possession knowing it to be forged and counterfeit.' As a result of the inspector's evidence against him, he was committed to prison by a magistrate, and after three days' confine-

ment was released on bail to appear when called upon. Not having been cited for a period of twelve months, he raised an action for false imprisonment against the inspector at whose instance this had been done. During the process it was proved that the note about which all the hubbub had arisen was a genuine Bank of England one-pound note, and so the jury had no hesitation in awarding the plaintiff damages to the extent of one hundred pounds, by way of reparation of his character.

Robberies of bank-messengers, of bank clients, and even of bankers themselves occur at intervals in so large a city as London. The thefts from bank employes have taken place sometimes in the open street, and at other times at the bank counter. When the money has been handed to them and they are in the act of taking it, some one diverts their attention by a question; and while this is being answered a confederate of the dishonest querist picks up the money with all the celerity of an accomplished thief, and disappears as swiftly. When the money is sought for it cannot be found. Take again an instance of the street theft or robbery: A lady has just performed her banking business, and has hardly taken a seat in her brougham when a white-haired gentleman approaches her and expresses his great regret that a mistake has been made by the bank cashier in paying her cheque. Would she kindly let him have the money back so that the matter might be rectified? Most willingly, as he seems so insistent to spare her any trouble. The carriage waits accordingly, with its fair inmate, until the return of this courteous bank officer. Some minutes pass, however, without any sign of him, and the lady is reluctantly compelled to re-enter the bank, so as to find out the cause of the delay in his return. What is her surprise to find not the least trace of the *soi-disant* bank-messenger, and to be informed that there was no inaccuracy with the payment made to her, nor was any one deputed to make any statement to her on the subject! What became of the man may easily be surmised. He would soon strip himself of his false wig and get merged in the broad stream of London life, the component parts of which concern themselves with so little outside their own selves.

As is well known, banks act as custodians of boxes deposited with them for safe keeping. They make no charge for doing so, their object being to undertake no responsibility and incur no risk, as the acceptance of payment would imply. Naturally it happens that boxes stowed away by the banks in this manner come to be lost sight of by their owners. Those who left them for safe keeping die without passing on the secret of their existence to their heirs. Who is to know that such possessions could be claimed? It has been suggested that these boxes should be occasionally overhauled and their contents made public. An advertisement was issued in 1881, by order of

the Court of Chancery, Ireland, with a view to discover the owners of the following, amongst other valuables, deposited in a Dublin bank: '(1) Box containing a number of silver articles, coins, medals, and seals, and having on it a crest and the name "E. S. Cooper;" (2) Box containing a number of silver articles, of which several are crested with a coat of arms, supposed to be those of Viscount Netterville; (3) Box containing thirty-nine articles of plate, some of them bearing a coronet; (4) Box containing diamonds and articles of jewellery, lodged by Dr Andrew Blake and George Jennings on December 22, 1796.' The bank in question is believed to have been the old private banking firm of La Touche & Co., which amalgamated with the Munster Bank. There were some curious inquiries and tales about the chests found in their vaults, which were eventually handed over to the Court of Chancery. In the vaults of the Bank of Ireland are some chests of plate which were deposited with the bank before it moved into its present building—that is, before the year 1800—the owners of which are unknown. Some years ago, the confidential staff of the Bank of England discovered in the vaults a chest which, on being moved, literally fell to pieces from age. It contained a magnificent and very valuable toilet service of solid silver. No clue to the owner's identity could be found either on the box or on any of the pieces of plate, which were simply engraved with a cipher and a coronet. However, amongst the numerous other things found in the box was a gold casket of the period of Charles II., and a packet of old love-letters written during the time of the Restoration. These afforded some clue to the original depositor; and the directors having caused search to be made in the Bank's books, the representative of the old owner was discovered, and the plate and love-letters handed over accordingly. The sale of the plate brought in a sum which was most welcome to the poverty-stricken descendants of a once great family. So far as known there are no unclaimed boxes in the keeping of the Scotch banks.

Unclaimed deposits occasionally crop up when from time to time calls are made on banks to pay them. Instances of this become public in sufficient number to indicate that there is something in the demand for publicity of these dormant balances. A few years ago a Glasgow gentleman died, and among his possessions was an old desk. This fell to one of his heirs; and not so long since a lady connected with the family was struck with the similarity of this article of furniture to one she had herself, and she expressed curiosity as to whether it had, like her desk, a secret drawer. Examination was made, and sure enough a drawer was found, and in it two deposit-receipts for sums aggregating something over three hundred pounds. These deposits were dated away back between thirty and forty years, and one of them was on the City of Glasgow Bank.

They were, of course, duly presented, the latter to the Assets Company which took over the unliquidated portion of the City of Glasgow Bank's affairs, and both were paid, with interest. The reflection occurs that if the Assets Company were to publish a list of the holders of the unclaimed balances in their books it would lead to much of the money being claimed. In an old box with books belonging to a provincial library there was found a bank-book which must have lain there for about thirty years. The amount deposited was only three pounds fourteen shillings and ninepence; but so long had the money remained that the interest on that sum amounted to eight pounds eleven shillings and fivepence, making a total of twelve pounds fifteen shillings and ninepence—not a despicable sum in these degenerate days.

Reverting to bank robberies, an amusing tale is told by a writer on banking as to the perpetration of an act of fraud on a Lombard Street banking-house. The narrative begins with an advertisement which appeared in May 1824 in the *Morning Advertiser* asking for the services of a junior clerk at a certain part of Holborn. This announcement seems to have arrested the attention of a young Irish boy named Mike, when he had conveyed his father's meal to the public-house where he usually consumed it. The parent of the lad was a bricklayers' labourer; and, after he had finished his repast, his son set off to apply for the vacant situation. Just when Mike had got to the stair leading to the place he wanted, he was accosted by a gentlemanly-looking man, who asked his errand. On Mike telling his object, the other replied that he was the party in want of a clerk; and being sufficiently satisfied with Mike's simplicity of character, he said to him, 'I shall want you first to go into the City for me and obtain the money for a bill,' which he took out of a black case, and which he said would be paid in Lombard Street. Particular instructions were then given to Mike in the following terms: 'When you have got the money safe in your pocket, and before you leave the banking-house, stand on the step of the door and take your hat off.' While Mike thought his fortune was now made, as he wended his way to Lombard Street, his employer jumped into a cab, and, after leaving it, concealed himself in a court exactly opposite the banking-house. Here he waited for Mike, and in less than ten minutes saw the latter stand on the step of the door and take off his hat in token that he had got the money all right. Off went the employer in his cab to wait for Mike's return, happy that no one seemed to be following. The sum of four hundred and fifty-eight pounds was safely handed over by Mike to his master, who in return for the service made the youth a present of three sovereigns, telling him to buy himself a new jacket and a pair of trousers. The boy then went to relate his fortune to his mother, while his employer hurried to get gold for his notes.

On the Monday following—the date when Mike was engaged to resume his duties—he and his mother together sought the habitation of Mike's employer in Holborn. No such person as Mr Dixon could be found, nor was he even known in the locality. The next thing was to go to the bank in Lombard Street and track him out by means of the bill which Mike had cashed. Off the two went, and after a time the transaction was traced. But the bill turned out, on examination, to be a forgery; and the bank in vain tried to stop payment of the notes. They had been exchanged for gold on the previous Saturday. The bank authorities were in a quandary, and Mike and his mother had to tell them all they knew about the matter, which they did in a very circumstantial way. One of the partners of the banking-house thought he saw how the thief could be caught, and he accordingly made the following extraordinary arrangement with the simple Irish boy. After asking if Mike would know the man if he saw him, he proposed that Mike should perambulate the streets of London all day in search of the man, for which he (the banker) would allow him one pound a week; adding, 'If you find the man, or his haunts, you are to come immediately to me, and let me know.' As Mike's salary was only to be seven shillings a week from his thief employer, the transition to one pound sterling was a welcome one.

It probably occurred to Mike's Milesian mind, as it would to that of almost any other nationality, that his interest lay in not catching his quondam master. Were the latter to be arrested, then 'Othello's occupation would be gone.' At any rate, Mike never found the man he was in search of, though he roamed the busy London thoroughfares in search of his prey with the comportment of a very amateur detective. As luck would have it, Mike was ordered by his banking employer to proceed to France, in company with one of the Bow Street officers, for the purpose of being present at the coronation of Charles X., in the hope that Dixon, whom he was in search of, might be discovered among the spectators at that ceremony. Mike went to France and attended the coronation, but returned, as might be expected, without finding Dixon.

The young detective resumed his rambles in the streets of London; but the banker for whom he was acting came to see that Mike's mission was becoming too unprofitable to be continued. So, one Saturday, as Mike walked into the bank office to draw his weekly salary, he was addressed by the banker in the following terms: 'Well, my boy, you have not found that scoundrel yet, and I begin to think you do not look after him, for I never see you.' To this Mike replied with great naïveté, 'The reason is, sir, that when you are in the east I am in the west.' The upshot of it all was that Mike got his *congé* after having been three months in the banker's service.

at one pound a week, during which time he enjoyed a trip to France at the banker's expense. Mike was told that ten pounds would be paid him if he found the man. The latter was, however, not got, and the bank lost one hundred

pounds through their vain attempt to catch the perpetrator of the forged acceptance. The story seems incomplete without telling the future fate of Mike. Let us hope he went back to his father's hod and lime for an occupation.

A NATURALIST'S EXPERIENCES ON THE AMAZON.

By A. E. PRATT, F.R.G.S., Author of *The Snows of Tibet*, &c.



ANY 'years ago, when I was in the States, an unsophisticated old farmer, surprised at my enthusiasm in capturing insects, used to call me 'The Buggist.' The appropriateness of the title, in a land where every beetle is designated by a term only applied in England to *Cimex lectularius*, rather tickled me at the time. It may be guessed from this that I am a naturalist. In pursuit of insects: beetles, butterflies, moths, and other small deer—to say nothing of orchids—I have visited some rather out-of-the-way portions of the globe. I have been stoned and chased by the Chinese as a foreign devil bent upon obtaining the material for casting a horrible spell on the whole Mongolian race; I have chummed with some remarkably dirty Bedouins in Syria, and have had unpleasant experiences in the mountainous parts of Colombia. But one expedition, in which ill-luck dogged my steps all the time, stands out most prominently in my memory.

It was a trip I made up the river Amazon in the year 1892. My object was to make observations, and fix the latitude, &c., of certain places very seldom visited by Europeans; also to obtain specimens of the flora and fauna. Having been up the Mississippi and Missouri and the Yang-tze-kiang, I knew something about inland navigation; and I was, I confess, rather eager to see something of the vast river which drains the region of the Andes.

I need not detail my experiences in crossing the ocean; they were of the ordinary type. In due course I arrived at Pará. I had with me a number of scientific instruments; and on my arrival in Brazil I was terribly worried by officials; they would not be convinced that my object was strictly scientific. I did not know it at the time, but learned afterwards that my instruments caused a lively discussion, and that the newspapers of the country gravely asserted that I was going up to the borders of British Guiana to annex territory. After a great deal of trouble I managed to get a sort of passport from the president telling people to help me; but, alas! I did not know that edicts were also secretly sent along, forbidding people to assist me in any way. Not knowing this, however, I proceeded up the river.

I was even more impressed by the Amazon than I had been by the Mississippi. It was difficult to imagine that the wonderful waters over which we steamed day after day were those of a river, or that when we arrived at Manóas we were nearly a thousand miles from the sea. The steamers run up to Manóas to take the rubber, which is one of the chief products of the country; and, having arrived there, my wish was to get as far up the Rio Negro as possible.

Then it was I discovered one of the pleasant little customs of the country. The government, I need hardly explain, is a republic—tempered by revolutions.

Amongst those who came under the suspicions of the powers that be was a young gentleman of Rio Janeiro. He was driving as usual one morning to his office when he was stopped by the military. He was not even permitted to say 'Good-bye' to his wife, but was hurried on board a steamer, where he found himself with a number of other suspects. He expected something unpleasant when the steamer left Rio; and he was not disappointed, for he learnt that they were to be taken to the most desolate and deserted part of the fever-haunted Rio Negro. The captors were so far amenable to the public opinion of the civilised world that they did not like to shoot their political prisoners, so they sent them to a place where fever or *berri-berri* would be almost certain to finish them off. But it so happened that the gentleman I have mentioned, having Scotch blood in his veins, had acquired considerable wealth—some said he was a millionaire. Being rich, he naturally had friends who managed to smuggle occasional supplies to him. A steam-launch was leaving about the time I was at Manóas to take these supplies to the place where he and his friends had been transported, which was about four hundred miles up the Rio Negro.

After accidents and drawbacks innumerable, which I then thought a most extraordinary streak of ill-luck, but which I now believe were intentionally arranged, I fell in with the steam-launch which was smuggling sheep and decent provisions to these political exiles; and when those on board found out that, like the Irish emigrant of another part of the continent, I was 'agin' the government, they very readily agreed to take me to the place they were going to,

which they called by the high-sounding name, San Isabel. Like Martin Chuzzlewit, I expected San Isabel to be a town where I should find a few of the amenities of civilisation.

Never shall I forget the magnificent affluent of the Amazon up which we steamed. On leaving Manoaas, after steaming for nine hours, I could easily imagine myself on the ocean again. The river widens out to such an extent that we could see no land around us. After steaming for a time up the Rio Negro the banks became visible again, and I could see that on each side was forest with trees of immense height. I was told that at a certain season of the year the river rose ninety feet, and overflowed into these forests for, in some cases, hundreds of miles. There is a six months' rise and a six months' fall of the river; and at the time I was there the river was at three-quarters flood.

When, in due course, we reached San Isabel my heart fell in a manner which again suggested Martin's impressions of Eden, and I wished for a Mark Tapley to cheer me up. Unfortunately my English companion and assistant was not a Mark Tapley. San Isabel simply consisted of three huts or shelters, made in the rudest fashion, in a swamp surrounded by virgin forest. It was merely a place for the Indians to bring the rubber they collected, and where it was called for at irregular and infrequent intervals. In this fever-haunted region the poor wretches of exiles had been left. How glad they were to see us! Their means were scanty, but their hospitality was lavish. From the young fellow I have mentioned (who spoke English fluently) I heard the story of his abduction, and he introduced me to his companions in misery, one of whom had been a colonel in the Brazilian army. He wrote to me subsequently from Paris, and he then told me that, though they eventually managed to escape, three or four of their number died of fever. It did not take me long to come to the conclusion that San Isabel was a place to get away from. I could not proceed up the river. There were no suitable craft, and no stores to be had for love or money. I could have gone back in the steamer, but I wished to examine the virgin forest on the banks and do some collecting. With immense difficulty I eventually managed to secure a dug-out canoe and a couple of Indians to paddle it; and, bidding a friendly farewell to the political exiles, I commenced a journey down the river, camping on its banks at night.

The Rio Negro takes its name from the colour of its water, which is a rich coffee-tint, and discolours the Amazon, where it joins it, for miles. This water has the peculiarity of quickly clearing a vessel's hull of the algæ. I wondered why this should be so; but when I examined the sand on the banks of the river (which is black when wet, and gray when dry) it looked to me

very like iron pyrites. While we were on the Amazon we were terribly tormented by mosquitoes, and I was struck by the fact that on entering the Rio Negro these pests suddenly disappeared, and we saw no more of them. Our rejoicings, however, were soon cut short, for the mosquitoes were replaced by the equally objectionable sandflies, which are called *pions* in the country. These savage little pests, when we camped out, tormented us fearfully. The irritation caused by their bites did not subside for a fortnight in my case, and they nearly drove me distracted.

It is delicate work to balance a dug-out canoe; and as my specimens increased in number we sank deeper and deeper into the water, till eventually we had hardly three inches freeboard. The discomfort of travelling four hundred miles in such a craft can be imagined. I had to lie very still in the bottom of the canoe, hardly daring to move. The Indians I found to be capital fellows; they paddled up creeks and through openings in the forest which saved us many miles. On the banks, few and far between, we saw places where the Portuguese had tried to establish settlements. These were all overgrown; fever had killed many of the settlers, and driven the rest away. We sometimes paddled for days without meeting a soul. Now and then we saw a cayman float lazily with the stream, or toss a fish which he had caught. We camped out on the banks at night, and it was a great treat to stretch one's self after the cramping canoe.

Our food was mostly *cassava* (or manioc) and fish which the Indians caught. These fish are large and have enormous scales; but their flesh is flabby and tastes insipid. Once when I was trailing my hand in the water the Indians warned me not to do so, as I might have my finger snapped off; and, as I looked at the teeth of some of the larger fish we caught, I could well believe it. When going through some of the quiet, shallow lagoons I heard a strange booming sound, which I was afterwards told was caused by electric-eels. I noticed that the Indians were strangely averse to entering the water, and thought perhaps they were afraid of the eels; but was told that there was also a very much dreaded creature which would effect an entrance into the bodies of men or animals, causing excruciating pain. The Indians, however, were experts at varying our dietary; and on one occasion, when we were all very hot and tired, they felled a species of palm, and cut out the young leaves at the centre; it tasted like a delicious lettuce, with a peculiarly sweet and delicate flavour all its own. On another occasion I also tasted the *sapucaya* nut, and thought its flavour far superior to the Brazil nut, with which we in England are better acquainted. It grows in enormous pods, about the size of a man's head. When it reaches maturity the cap of the pod falls off, scattering the nuts inside in all directions, which quickly become the food of

the monkeys. The pod containing the Brazil nut falls intact, and the monkeys cannot crack it; hence it is so much more commonly seen in England than the sapucaya nut. The forest was very silent. We heard an occasional scream from a monkey or a bird. There were beasts of prey evidently; because once, when we had paddled ashore, and were tying our canoe to the banks, I saw a jaguar in the tree above me; but he was off before I could get my gun. On another occasion a huge anaconda slipped past us and entered the water. During these intermissions of paddling I made excursions into the forest, and secured many specimens, some hitherto undescribed.

As we proceeded the river increased in size. Its width may be judged by the fact that on one occasion, when I wished to cross to the other side, it took my Indians four hours to do so. We were nine days paddling down. Towards the end we were delayed by tropical storms. The thunder and lightning were really terrifying in their vehemence, and the wind raised such a swell that we could not venture to encounter it in our frail craft. Fortunately the country began to be more populated; and once, when we had lost our way and a storm came on, we were very glad to obtain refuge in a hut where we found several Indians. One of these was very ill, almost in *extremis*. I did what I could for him, but was struck by the utter indifference of a younger Indian, who was said to be the old man's son, and who would do nothing to second my efforts. He, however, set our Indians on the right course, and we arrived at Manoa's thoroughly worn out.

To show the wonderful endurance of the Indians I may say that they paddled at the last for thirty hours in succession without intermission, and without speaking.

After we had recruited, I thought I would try to get up the Rio Branco, an affluent of the Rio Negro, as I heard that a launch was to proceed to a place called Caracacai (which I cannot find marked on any map) for cattle, and would tow up several barges. I thought it might also tow a boat with my belongings and an Indian canoe. It was with great difficulty I obtained a reluctant permission to join the small string of boats which the steam-launch was towing; but no one would render me any assistance, not even Indians. I think labour must have been rather scarce, for the stoker of the rotten little launch was a half-caste woman, and the crews of the launch and the other boats were mostly Indians and half-breeds. We left on August 12th, and passed an old settlement, Santa Maria, but there were no inhabitants; all had died of fever. We had hardly entered the Rio Branco when we encountered a terrific storm in the wide part of the river, where again we could see no land. There was soon a sea as choppy as I have seen in the Channel. The launch lost some of her bulwarks,

and I could see that the captain and his men were terribly frightened.

Before we got to Caracacai several of our men became ill with fever, and one poor fellow died. We delayed our journey just long enough to bury him on the shore, but again had to stop to perform the same mournful office for another. By the time we reached Caracacai, on 21st August, nearly every member of the expedition was more or less ill. I will not weary the reader with details of the minor accidents—how the launch's cranky machinery kept going wrong, and the pilot, who had only been up once before, lost his way. I had to do all my own work, and as I began to feel very ill myself, became less and less able to do it. However, they found our destination eventually, and about fifty head of cattle were put on the lighters we towed. These appeared to have been driven from a healthier district, for in the distance we saw mountain ranges which do not appear on any map I have yet seen, and which I was told had never been visited by Europeans. On our return journey I had great demands made upon the surgical appliances I had taken with me. We had repeatedly to go ashore and cut wood for the launch; and on one of these occasions a branch fell on our pilot, smashing his face and cutting the poor fellow's nose off. He was knocked perfectly senseless, and but for the remedies and appliances I had brought would have bled to death. When he was down our voyage became still more exasperating, for we kept losing our way and getting aground.

The irritation caused by this, the illness, and want of proper food—for, the voyage having lasted longer than was anticipated, our stores began to give out—caused the crew to become sullen and mutinous. It was largely the captain's fault. He was a perfect brute, and hailed from Gibraltar. I called him the 'Rock Scorpion.' He had repeated fracas with the crew, one of whom eventually drew his knife, Portuguese fashion. They carved each other quite scientifically. Again demands were made upon my surgical-box, and I admit I begrudged my bandages in this case. Then the cattle on the lighters, which were rendered furious through lack of food and attention, gored an attendant who went to them, and nearly killed him; in fact he would have died but for my bandaging, &c.

All this time I was getting weaker and weaker, and the entries in my diary became few and far between. I can recall little of the last part of the journey; but we arrived at Manoa's on 2d September. I then found I was suffering from *berri-berri*, a disease in which the ankles first swell. As the disease creeps upwards it benumbs each part it attacks. There was no cure but change of climate, so I took the earliest opportunity of getting out of the horrible country; and it took me some time to recover my usual health.

when I eventually reached home. I shall never forget the irritation and suffering of that, to me, utterly useless voyage up the Rio Branco.

What struck me most was the vastness of the great river and its tributaries, and its resemblance to the sea; even porpoises are found in its waters, and a manatee peculiar to the river. Next was the scarcity of the population. I do not think we met half-a-dozen people—and they were Indians—all the way coming down from San

Iaabel, four hundred miles. The remains of settlements tell the cause, and testify to the unhealthiness of the region. Then, too, the awfulness of the tropical storms is vividly impressed on my memory; the terrific thunder and lightning, the groaning of the huge trees, and the crash when some monarch of the forest falls. On the whole, however, after my experience I am not surprised that travellers give the upper reaches of the Amazon and its tributaries a wide berth.

SWIFT'S LONDON LIFE.



It is hardly possible to exaggerate the debt which all who take an interest in social history owe to those keepers of diaries and writers of journals in days gone by, who by their notings of the trivial, everyday incidents of their lives have thus preserved for us the very atmosphere of the past, and have given lifelikeness and reality to all our imaginings of the sayings and doings of our forefathers.

Among the various records of this kind few are more interesting than the series of intimate and playful letters which the saturnine Dean of St Patrick's wrote to 'Stella' and her companion, Mrs Dingley, in Ireland, during his prolonged residence in London—before obtaining his deanery—in the days of Queen Anne. These letters are doubtless valuable material for political as well as for social history; but most readers nowadays are little interested in the details of Swift's intrigues, first with one political party and then with the other. These pullings of party wires, and fears and hopes regarding matters of foreign and domestic policy, are all dead and devoid of interest. But the thousand and one details of Swift's daily life, and the light which his sayings and doings throw on the everyday course of existence in London nearly two hundred years ago, are full of living interest.

We learn what lodgings cost in those days. Swift lodges for a while in Bury Street, and for a sitting-room and bedchamber on the first floor pays eight shillings a week. This he calls 'plaguy deep.' More than a year later, when he moves to Chelsea, he has to pay six shillings a week for what he describes as 'one silly room with confounded coarse sheets.' Swift had a keen eye for thrift. He turns his friends' tables to good account; for, after living nearly a month in London in the dead season, he is able to write that 'it has cost me but three shillings in meat and drink since I came here, as thin as the town is.' A few days later he invites himself to dine with a friend, but unfortunately finds him from home. Whereupon he complains that he was forced to go to a chop-house and dine for tenpence on 'gill ale, bad broth, and three chops of mutton.' The cost

of the then indispensable wig alarms him. He pays three guineas one day for a periwig, and exclaims 'I am undone!' He is amusingly parsimonious with his coals. Before going to bed he picks the unburned pieces off his fire; and one evening, when he comes home late and finds a large fire wasting its warmth on the desert room, he roundly abuses his manservant, Patrick, for his carelessness. Occasionally the economist gets 'let in,' as the modern colloquial phrase has it. He goes with a friend, Sir Andrew Fountaine, one evening to a tavern, where for two bottles of wine they have sixteen shillings to pay. 'But if ever he catches me so again,' says Swift emphatically, 'I will spend as many pounds.'

As we read we see much of the social life and intercourse of the town focussed in the taverns and coffee-houses. Swift goes into the City with a companion. They dine at a chop-house with a learned woollen-draper, then saunter in china and book shops, stroll into a tavern where they drink two pints of white wine, and do not separate till ten in the evening. In the earlier part of his stay in London, Swift spends many evenings with Addison and Steele, and others of their well-known circle, at the coffee and wine laden tables of Button's Coffee-house. His letters are addressed to the St James's Coffee-house, and are placed in the frame of the large glass behind the bar, where Harley, the Minister, espies them, and, struck by the resemblance of Stella's handwriting to Swift's own, asks his reverence how long he has had the trick of writing letters to himself. One evening Swift christens the child of Elliot, the St James's coffee-man, and after the ceremony attends a supper given by the father, when Steele and he sit with 'some scurvy company' over a bowl of punch until a late hour. Other times, other manners.

Twelfth Day was well observed in those times. Swift, going into the City on that day in 1711, says he was stopped by clusters of boys and girls 'buzzing about the cake-shops like flies.' The cakes were frothed with sugar and adorned with tinsel streamers. One day Swift good-naturedly conducts a party of country visitors to see the sights. They visit the lions in the Tower, go

to Bedlam (which then figured in the list of London entertainments), dine at a chop-house behind the Exchange, look in at Gresham College, and wind up the evening at the Puppet-show, a kind of glorified Punch and Judy. On another evening he goes with one or two members of the same party to Vauxhall, to hear the nightingales!

The ladies in Ireland entrust their correspondent with a variety of commissions, as ladies are still wont to do. Chocolate and handkerchiefs, palsy-water and spectacles, a petticoat and a microscope, tobacco (for Mrs Dingley, alas!) and books, aprons, pocket-books, and pounds of tea—all are duly bought at shops in Pall Mall, Paternoster Row, Ludgate Hill, and elsewhere, and are carefully packed and despatched to Ireland. When Swift buys books for himself he is by no means stingy. One day he goes into a shop kept by a bookseller named Bateman, and lays out forty-eight shillings. On another visit to the same shop he spends twenty-five shillings on a Strabo and an Aristophanes, and resolves to buy more. Raffling for books seems to have been then a common kind of amusement. Swift embarks in one speculation of this kind, but grumbles that though he laid out four pounds seven shillings, he only got half-a-dozen volumes.

The letters give us vivid little pictures of street life. Going home one evening along the Strand, Swift breaks his shin over a tub of sand left out in the pathway. He goes straight to bed, and applies goldbeater's skin, abusing his servant for being nearly an hour in bringing a rag from next door. A snowy day comes, and poor Swift has to spend two shillings in chair and coach hire, besides walking till he is dirty. Walking is dangerous because of the slippery state of the streets, and Swift notes that a baker's boy had broken his thigh by a fall the day before. He says that he himself takes care to walk slowly, takes short steps, and never treads on his heel. In support of this he quotes a Devonshire saying:

Walk fast in snow,
In frost walk slow;
And still as you go,
Tread on your toe.

When frost and snow are both together,
Sit by the fire and spare shoe-leather.

Here is a curious little picture. Walking to town from Chelsea one morning, Swift sees two old lame men standing at the door of a brandy-shop for a long time, 'complimenting who should go in first.' This was not much to tell, he says, but an admirable jest to see.

Swift is always grumbling at the price of wine. The basest, he remarks once, costs six shillings a bottle; but, on the other hand, fruit is cheap, for the finest oranges are twopence apiece, which does not strike the modern purchaser of oranges as remarkably cheap. At Pontack's, a famous

restaurant in the City, the proprietor assures his customers that although his wine is so good he asks only seven shillings a flask for it. 'Are not these pretty rates?' exclaims Swift. He confesses that when he hears of choice books for sale he itches to spend money on them; but the cost of wine is a continual trouble. Swift grumbles, too, at the cost of tipping great men's servants, especially at Christmas-time, when he makes a round of calls, dropping half-crowns with a lavishness which must have troubled him greatly.

The *Journal to Stella* is indeed, in modern literary slang, a very human document. It shows us aspects of the author of *Gulliver* and of the *Tale of a Tub*, and of many another biting satire, which but for these letters could hardly have been known to us. It records many a kindly deed as well as many a sharp saying; much playful humour as well as not a few grossnesses. Its chief recommendation and most valuable voucher is that, unlike some self-revelations of later date, it was obviously written without a thought of publication, and is therefore absolutely free from posing of any kind.

BALLADE OF A QUIET ROMANTICIST.

DAYLONG, for a scanty wage,
Caged, I drive a weary quill;
But at eve my head's a stage
Where a thousand actors drill.
Swords are glancing, fifers shrill,
Silks and jewels gleam and shine,
Flutter founce and ruff and frill—
And the hero's part is mine.

All for me the fair and sage
Juliet's at her window-sill;
Bold Sir Brian lifts my gage,
Whose false blood my sword shall spill;
O'er my body stiff and still
Enid tears her hair divine;
Bells are tolled and cities thrill—
And the hero's part is mine.

Gentle, simple, knight or page,
Every ruffler's skin I fill;
Yea, and charm this modern age
With sublime detective skill;
Wheresoever knaves plot ill,
Virtue sinks, fair maids repine,
There am I to help or kill—
And the hero's part is mine.

ENVOI.

Prince, I envy not your chill
State and ceremonial fine,
While Romance has all her will,
And the hero's part is mine.

WALTER HOGG.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



IN THE GARDEN OF THE GULF.

WHILE I am neither a Mexican ranchman, an American cowboy, nor a Canadian trapper, and while my experiences have not been of the blood-curdling character, I have probably seen and known enough in my time to furnish pleasant and restful reading to such as care nothing for the sensational novel on the one hand, or the able but heavy review on the other.

Perhaps a few words about myself may not be unacceptable. My father was a sergeant in the Ninety-third Highlanders, and at the time of my birth the regiment was stationed in Fort-George, Scotland. The regiment was sent to Canada to assist in putting down the Papineau and Mackenzie rebellion, and after the troubles were over we made Prince Edward Island our home.

This island, first known as Saint John, then as New Ireland, and now as above named, was so called in honour of the father of our good Queen Victoria; it is now frequently spoken of as 'The Garden of the Gulf,' and is indeed an isle of great beauty. From east to west the island measures about one hundred and forty-five miles, and varies in breadth from three to thirty miles; and it has a population of about one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants. Its agricultural capabilities are great; the soil is rich and productive, and is nearly all under cultivation. It was not so when I was a boy. Large portions of it were then covered with dense forests, in which the bear, the wild-cat, and the fox roamed in undisturbed security, and where the Indian was monarch of all he surveyed.

The educational advantages enjoyed by the youth of the island to-day are very far in advance of what they were in my boyhood's days. Under the free, non-sectarian system that now obtains, goodly buildings dot the land, in which well-trained teachers offer to all the blessings of a thorough common-school education. The teachers are paid out of the provincial treasury; and the child of the humblest has the same rights and

privileges with the child of the highest. It was not so in my time. Then the schoolhouse was a log structure, the light was dim if not religious, and the furnishings were of the most primitive character. Many of the teachers were young and inexperienced, poorly equipped for service, and poorly paid. My first teacher was a Scottish Highlander, a queer little fellow, full of airs, who never lost an opportunity to magnify his office. He taught both in English and in Gaelic, and had some original ideas concerning the training of children. When anything went wrong, he would require the whole school to stand, and, after delivering an harangue, in which big words would abound, he would whip us all, so as to be sure to punish the guilty ones. We often talked of mobbing him; but, as we were all little fellows, it always ended in talk. In this we differed from the boys of another school, the teacher of which was a very cruel man of the name of Coster.

In the neighbourhood of this man's schoolhouse was a steep hill extending about a quarter of a mile from the top to the level ground, and which in winter was the common coasting-ground for the neighbourhood. One day, when the teacher had been unusually severe, several of the taller lads took hold of him, hustled him outdoors, tied him securely to a sled, and sent him down the dangerous declivity, amid wild cheering, while one witty lassie cried out 'Good-bye, Mr Coaster.' It was a wonder he was not killed, for the way he went down that hill was enough to appal one; but he sustained no serious injury. That, however, ended his career as a teacher, and he soon took his departure from the scene of his inglorious adventure. While we did not use our dominion so badly, we did worry him not a little. However, he had his good points. He was interested in his work, was anxious to be helpful to us, and, to his credit be it spoken, awakened within the bosoms of some of these wild lads such a thirst for knowledge as led them to seek other and more capable instructors. Thus, before he joined

the great majority, several of those he proudly spoke of as 'My Boys' were filling important positions in Church and State.

Winter travelling on the island is sometimes very hazardous. This arises from the fact that all the rivers, bays, and the sea itself for miles from the shore, are solidly frozen over, and the ice is much resorted to by teamsters and travellers. As soon as it is considered sufficiently strong to bear heavy loads, holes are cut in the ice at certain points or crossings, in which are placed small fir-trees at short distances apart, as guides to those who travel that way. It is a great temptation to take to the smooth ice, and cross over from point to point instead of wading through the snowdrifts for perhaps three times the distance, around by a bridge. I have driven for a whole day, with the green salt-water under me, at from two to three miles from the shore, and on that route had to cross a bay fifteen miles wide. When the weather is fine, the ice smooth, and the traveller, with a good horse, is well wrapped up in furs, such a drive is delightful; a carriage-ride on a summer's day is not to be compared with it. But there is always more or less danger. In the very coldest weather there are what are called airholes, into which a careless Jehu may easily drive. There are cracks in the ice sometimes a mile long and sufficiently wide to let a team through; and to drop into one of these is no uncommon occurrence. When a horse goes through, the sleigh seldom follows, and if the driver has his wits about him he generally saves the animal. The first thing to be done is to draw a rope tightly around the horse's neck, when he will at once rise to the surface; and by a little skilful manœuvring he will be landed on the unbroken ice. I recall a case in which a man saved himself by his presence of mind. He had fallen through, and was in danger of being swept under the ice. His hands were encased in woollen mittens, which he dipped, first the one and then the other, in the water, and then laid them on the ice, to which they instantly froze, and by this he was enabled to sustain himself until his cries brought help. But the greatest danger to the traveller is when he is overtaken in a snow-storm, or when a fog settles down upon him. He is then absolutely without anything to guide him, and is liable to drive out to sea or into one of these dangerous airholes or cracks, and find a watery grave. More than once I have found myself in extreme peril. I have wandered for hours in the vicinity of open water, utterly bewildered, yet compelled to keep moving for fear of falling into the fatal sleep which intense cold produces. On one occasion, having mistaken the mark of an Indian's sled for that of an ordinary sleigh, I took the ice rather than the longer way round. I soon found the ice bending beneath our weight. I had a young lady friend with me, who, while realising our danger, kept perfectly

cool and self-possessed. The water was deep, we were about a quarter of a mile from the shore. To check our speed or try to turn was not to be entertained, so we did what the engineer does when he feels the bridge giving way: we sprang forward, and reached more solid footing as the water came rushing through the cracks behind us. And yet, considering the number of miles thus travelled, the many persons who daily pass to and fro upon the ice, and the large amount of business done in this way, there are indeed very few accidents.

As the island is thus ice-bound for about four months in the year, its people have had during that time comparatively little intercourse with those residing on the mainland. One of the conditions upon which they consented to connect themselves with the Dominion of Canada was the establishment of regular communication with the outer world during the winter. A steamer was specially built for the purpose, which was supposed to be able to break through the strongest ice, but she has not proved a success. The latest proposal is to construct a subway beneath 'the streak of silver sea' which separates the island from New Brunswick, and which at its narrowest part is only about nine miles across. Borings have been made in several places, estimates were laid before parliament, and the scheme has been pronounced a feasible one. In that case Jack Frost may do what he pleases with the surface of the waters; he will not be able to interfere with the passing of the iron horse underneath them.

In the meantime, the safest and the speediest means of communication is by what is known as the Ice-Boat Service. This has been in use a great many years, and every winter sees an increasing number of business men and others availing themselves of the opportunity thus afforded to reach the great outside world. Everything possible has been done to secure the safety and comfort of the voyagers; danger now is but little dreaded, and even women and children not infrequently take the risks. The distance between Cape Traverse on the island and Cape Tormentine in New Brunswick is only nine miles, and, when the weather is fine and the conditions favourable, the crossing can be made in three or four hours. The boats are furnished with both oars and runners, the first for use in open water, and the second for use on the ice. The shore-ice is usually good, in which case all may ride; but the serious part of the journey is when the boat has to be pushed or pulled through broken or floating ice. Then comes the exciting time. The managers with might and main work with oars and boathooks to force their way, or, with the passengers—women of course excepted—hold on to straps attached to the sides of the boat and seek to draw it along. Every now and then some one goes through and gets a cold bath but

is soon fished up by his travelling companions, who cannot afford to laugh at his misfortunes, as they may be in the same plight the next moment. Jumping from cake to cake of the floating ice, which may or may not be strong enough to sustain him, and slipping, scrambling, puffing like a porpoise or gasping with nervousness, the novice in such experiences furnishes good fun to those whose business has made all this an old story.

As already stated, the dangers attendant upon crossing the Straits have been so well provided against that accidents now are few in number and trivial in character. But, again to use an old man's phrase, such was not the case when I was a boy. I remember a very sad occurrence which took place in 1855. The ice-boat from Cape Tormentine, with three passengers on board, had almost reached the island shore when farther progress was rendered impossible by a blinding snowstorm. For five days and nights they drifted helplessly about, vainly endeavouring to reach land. During these dreary days and drearier nights all the food they had was the flesh of a little dog belonging to one of the passengers, and which they had killed and eaten. One of the passengers died from exhaustion on the fourth day, and all were badly frozen; had they not been rescued when they were they would all have perished in a few hours.

Owing to its exposed position, the northern and eastern coasts of the island are sometimes swept by tremendous storms. I have a very distinct recollection of one of these. It was away back in the fifties, during the period of the Reciprocity Treaty between the United States and Great Britain, when at certain seasons of the year the waters would be dotted over with American fishing vessels. The coast is a dangerous one. For miles and miles there is nothing like a safe harbour, and a reef of sunken rocks runs out into the sea for some ten miles, with scarcely water enough over it to float a canoe.

The day referred to was a wild one; the wind blew furiously, the sea ran high, and a drenching rain added to the gloom and discomfort of the occasion. All through that dismal day the poor fishermen laboured hard to keep off-shore, but many failed to do so. Vessel after vessel drifted by—sails, spars, all gone, and their crews perfectly helpless in the presence of the angry elements. Every now and then some boat would be driven upon the rocks, the waves would sweep over her, and the poor fellows on board be swept into the boiling flood. Towards evening one of the largest of the vessels was seen approaching the place of peril. Finding it impossible to bring her about, they let go her anchors in the hope of being able to outlive the storm; but the hope was vain. She, too, was driven ashore, and soon went to pieces. It was supposed all had perished, when those who were on the beach were thrilled by the

cry: 'There's a man with a woman in his arms.' Yes, sure enough, there he was, struggling with the wild waves, evidently determined to save her or perish in the attempt. 'Sure, thin, an' I can't shtand that,' said a brawny Irishman who was intently gazing at the man in the water. 'Indade, I can't. No doubt the poor craythur is his wife; and I'll try and help him, so I will.' Fastening a rope around him, and giving such directions as he deemed necessary, he plunged into the water, and for a time was lost sight of. Ere long he reached the heavily-burdened man, and after almost superhuman efforts succeeded in bringing him safely to land. Poor Pat was badly bruised, and to the end of life was a cripple as the result of his adventure; but he felt more than repaid when he learned all he had done. Carefully wrapped up and bound to the woman's bosom was a tender infant of a few months old. The husband had sustained comparatively little injury; but the wife was to all appearance dead. She was promptly cared for, and after some time gave signs of returning consciousness. Her first words were—'Winthrop—Eva.' Strange to say, the babe was unharmed—a beautiful blue-eyed creature—her sweet young face reminded one of what Moses must have been when rescued by the daughter of Pharaoh. Pat was not uncared for. He was taken by those he had befriended to their Massachusetts home, and spent the rest of his days in comfort, living long enough to see the child, his 'darlint Eva,' happy in a home of her own.

But here, as elsewhere, disaster sometimes comes to other than fishing vessels. I remember one case of shipwreck, the circumstances connected with which aroused a widespread feeling of grief and indignation. The regular steamer, with mails and passengers, was crossing the Straits from the island to the mainland, when, through some derangement of the machinery, the vessel became unmanageable, and was abandoned by the captain and a part of the crew. By clinging to portions of the wreck some of the passengers were finally rescued, but several found a watery grave; and among those lost was a young lady who had been visiting friends on the island previous to leaving for the Old Country, where she was to have been married. Her affianced had been pastor of a church in one of our cities by the sea, but had received and accepted a call to a church in the Motherland. Pressing duties had prevented his returning for his bride, and it had been arranged that he should meet her in Liverpool; instead of this he met the sad news that her body lay sleeping beneath the cold waters. The shock was too great for him, and for a time reason gave way. After his recovery from a long illness, he resigned his charge, sought rest and change in travel, and looked for death on the battlefields of the Crimea. He returned to his native land, recrossed the Atlantic; and the

last I heard of him he was preaching doctrines very unlike those which he had been wont so eloquently to proclaim to interested audiences—doctrines that neither Luther, Knox, nor Wesley would have endorsed.

In the days to which I refer farming was in its infancy, and men had in other ways to provide for their immediate needs. While the mother and younger children would care for the cattle and look after things around home, the father and grown-up boys would hire out for the winter with some 'lumber operator.' They would go to the woods in November, and, unless called home for some special reason, would remain there until the middle of March. In company with a few friends, I spent several days in camp, and never enjoyed an outing so much. There was certainly something wild and weird-like in the surroundings. Stretching away for miles in every direction was the unbroken forest, no human habitation near, and no sound to disturb the quiet of the night but the hooting of the owl or the barking of the fox. In the daytime the silence was broken by the ringing blows of the woodman's axe, the crash of falling trees, or the stentorian tones of the teamster as he warily guided his horses down some dangerous roadway. After the day's work was done, the horses cared for, and sundry other matters attended to, supper would be served, which was the principal meal of the day. This usually consisted of pork and beans baked in a pot buried in the fire, potatoes, bread and butter, and tea, without milk of course, sweetened with molasses. My! what appetites these woodmen had. The speedy disappearance of such piles of food was enough to make a miser groan, and furnished pretty conclusive evidence that lumbering had to pay well to cover the expenses of the commissariat department. Supper over, the men, fifty or sixty in number, would lie around the huge fire, smoking, telling stories, singing songs, or patching their garments.

As one of our party was a clergyman, during our stay we had a sermon and a lecture, notice having been sent to other crews in the neighbourhood. It was rather a picturesque gathering. A huge fire blazed away in the centre, the smoke from which found its way to the outer world through an opening in the roof. Around us were scores of rough-looking, unshaven men, clad in attire befitting their calling. The attention paid to the speaker was all that could have been desired, and the heartiness with which they joined in the singing showed they had not wholly neglected the gift of song.

During our stay we visited 'The Brows,' and saw how the lumber was 'yarded.' The brows are places on the banks of the streams from which the trees have been removed, the ground levelled, and made to slope away to the water's edge. To these places the logs are hauled, piled in heaps running parallel with the stream, and left there

until spring, when they are rolled into the water and floated down to the mills. This log-rolling is wild work. Skids are laid down from the pile along the descent, and on these the logs go bounding at a fearful rate. Sometimes several of these will start together, and then woe betide the man who is unfortunately a little slow in his movements, or who fails to get out of the way of the moving mass. Sometimes a man gets wedged in between two logs whose progress has been arrested, and, when perhaps after tons of timber have rolled over him, and his fellow-workmen believe he has been crushed to death, he is found almost without a scratch. Occasionally, however, a leg or an arm is broken or the body bruised, and now and then a life is lost; but the men know so well what to do under such circumstances that serious accidents occur but rarely.

Stream-driving takes place later in the season. On some of the brooks and streams dams are built, so that a sufficiency of water may be had if the snowfall has been light or the spring-rains not up to the average. When the time arrives to begin operations, the logs are rolled into the streams as above stated, and then run into the booms. The dam gates are then opened, the booms broken, and the cry is, 'Let her drive.' For a time everything goes well; log after log shoots away down the stream as swift as an arrow, each seeming anxious to out-distance the other. But the scene may suddenly change—a log gets caught on a rock or a sunken piece of timber, and then occurs what no pen-and-ink description can give any adequate idea of. Urged on by the force of the current, which grows stronger and stronger by this temporary check, the logs get piled up in enormous heaps, some lengthwise, some crosswise, and some standing erect or perpendicular. Then comes the tug of war. Like the keystone of an arch, one of these logs controls the situation, and by hook or by crook that one has to be dislodged. Courage is not so much needed as coolness—a sharp eye, steady nerves, and a sure and fleet foot are what are now required. Armed with handspikes (or, as they are termed, peevies), the workmen go out upon the logs and cautiously search for the one or ones on which so much rests. By the judicious use of these formidable tools, or by the cutting away of the obstructionist logs, the jam is broken, and to get out of harm's way as quickly as possible is the one thought of the drivers. As they leap from log to log, over this one and around that one, slipping, scrambling, and dodging such as threaten to harm them, an onlooker becomes greatly excited, and is terrified at the risks the poor fellows have to run. It is indeed alarming, and once seen is never forgotten. The rush and roar of the waters, the pounding and grinding of the logs against each other and against the rocks, the tearing away of the banks, and the uprooting of trees, and the shouts of the men

combine to produce a scene at once unique and indescribable.

There are other matters about which I might write, illustrative of the occupations, habits, and character of the people of this lovely little

island; but I must guard against an old man's weakness, and not weary the reader by overdoing my subject. I now, therefore, conclude my recollections of what has been done in 'The Garden of the Gulf.'

TREGAVIS THE CHEMIST.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.

T WAS a night of miracles, Roscorla afterwards declared. When the two men bobbed up on the lumpy water, there was the great steamer plain enough, with its long hull and funnel and masts dimly outlined. The mist had suddenly cleared—the fringe of it was driving northward—and presently a glimmer of a moon made its brief appearance in the watery sky. There was much shouting on the big vessel, and a timely flinging of life-belts. The fishing-boat had not been sighted until a collision was inevitable; it sprang out from the mist like a phantom under the very bows of the steamer. The engines were stopped, and a boat was lowered to the heavy sea; then the vessel moved slowly astern. In three minutes the Langissack men were picked up, and were soon on the deck of the steamer, the objects of rough but kindly ministrations.

Strangely enough, the chemist was the better swimmer, and seemed little the worse for his immersion; but Johnny Roscorla was exhausted, and would have gone under but for a life-belt that floated to his grasp. The skipper came forward and greeted the rescued men. He was a little, corpulent man, with a red-whiskered face half-fierce and half-comic. He had been roused from his berth, and had come hurriedly on deck, grotesquely clad in dirty pyjamas and a pea-jacket. There was a leer of coarse humour at his mouth, and he had the look of a man not altogether sober.

'Fishing-boat?' he asked gruffly of Roscorla.

'Iss,' answered Johnny, shuddering, for he had swallowed a gallon of Channel water; '*Gilliflower* o' Langissack.'

'All picked up?'

'Ias—there's only the two of us.'

'Insured?'

'I believe so; but I can't tell 'ee, for ted'n my boat.'

'Well, I'm sorry enough for this bad job; but it's a mercy we fished ye up,' said the skipper. 'I'm Cap'n Bunker, at your service, and this coal-scuttle is the *Nautilus* o' Shields. You're not altogether unwelcome, for we're bound to Valparaiso, short-handed. 'Tain't exactly a pleasure-yacht, and the cargo's dirty, but I'll pay ye in clean money.' Then, as a light fell full upon Tregavis, the skipper cried in astonishment, 'What in the name of Glory have we here?'

Tregavis was standing by the mast like a man dazed. He had refused all invitations to go below. The anguish of his position seemed to have numbed his faculties. He had no feeling for himself, no sense of satisfaction at his near escape from death; he thought only of his hopeless errand, and for the moment despair paralysed him. He looked almost abject in his misery—his thin hair and beard hung in wet wisps, his saturated black garments clung to his lean frame and gave him a spectral gauntness, and his woe-begone eyes, half-useless in the loss of his spectacles, blinked feebly at an alien world.

'Tis Mr Tregavis the chemist,' explained Johnny.

'Chemist!' roared the skipper. 'By Jeremy! this beats all! I never carried a chemist before. It's as good as a doctor; and, by all that's blue! Doctor we'll call him, and this smutty old tramp'll fancy herself a liner. Doctor Triggeravis; that's the ticket! He shall have the key of the drug locker in the morning; and if any of ye feel poorly for want of exercise—he! he! he!—the doctor shall prescribe for ye in gallipot Latin.'

Tregavis swallowed a gulp of brandy that was pressed upon him, and instantly his energy revived, and his agony of mind found vent in a wild outburst—'The child, the poor child!'

'What child?' asked the bewildered captain. 'I understood ye were all aboard.'

Clutching the skipper by the arm, Tregavis poured into him the story of the night's errand and misadventure, and told it with such feverish emotion that it penetrated the husk of the callous, besotted mariner, and awakened the sympathy of the man.

'I'll give you fifty pounds, captain, if you'll land me at Polveen!'

The skipper shook his head. 'It can't be done; any minute the fog might drift down upon us again. It's too risky. Our berth is in the open Channel.'

'A hundred pounds, captain!' cried Tregavis frantically. It takes a long time to make a hundred pounds in a chemist's shop at Langissack, where every old woman is a compounder of panaceas.

'No, no; it can't be done. I'm mortal afraid of this ugly coast of yours; it's peppered a darned sight too freely on the wreck-chart. The

best I can do is to put back, and land ye at Falmouth to-morrow.'

To-morrow! To the mind of the chemist there was tragedy in the very word.

The steamer was now abreast of the light on Penzele, which gleamed steadily enough in the clearer night. Tregavis looked toward the light, and knew that behind the shoulder of the promontory lay the little village of Polveen in its sheltered cove. Even yet there might be time. Yes! there was still hope; and with hope the spirit of the man grew Titanic.

'Take me in as near as you dare, captain, and I'll swim ashore!'

The skipper looked at the man in amazed admiration. Then he turned to Roscorla and asked, 'Is there any depth o' water to the lee of the Point?'

'Oceans of water,' answered Johnny; 'fathoms and fathoms! I've seed a big ironclad hug the Point so close as courtin'.'

The captain was sober enough now, and his manner was free of his jibing humour born of liquor. 'I'll risk it,' he cried heartily, 'though my plain duty in such dirty weather is to keep the open Channel. As for swimming—good Lord! no man could live in such water; and I reckon you've had enough for one night. I've an old boat I'll lend ye, and ye can send it along to Plymouth any time, and I'll pick it up, maybe, when we come back.'

The heart of Tregavis leapt at the words. 'God bless you, captain!' he cried; 'the money'—

'I'll be blistered if I touch a penny of your money,' said the skipper gruffly. 'Fisherman, stand by the helm.'

So Johnny Roscorla, knowing the coast, stood by the man at the wheel and piloted the big vessel. Meanwhile he was relieved of his wet clothes, and rubbed down, and invested with spare garments, dry but grimy; and his own sodden raiment was tied in a bundle. But Tregavis declined all such ministrations; he stood in the bow, staring ahead in the hope of seeing the light of the coastguard's boat; but there was nothing visible on the black water.

Captain Bunker, now fitly attired, paced the bridge with his mate, and grimly watched the weather. It still looked dirty enough to the windward, and the blur might at any moment encompass them. There was little risk in the open sea, but it was a vastly different matter between the ragged promontories of this indented coast in waters strewn with rocks.

'This is an awkward business,' said the skipper; 'it looks like a coroner's job, and I'm sorry for the poor fellow. I reckon a druggist's shop is as bad as a river full o' shipping; it's as simple as sin to give a wrong turn to the wheel or put your hand on the wrong bottle. Then, where's your certificate?'

The waves that had been perilous enough to the little *Gilliflower* washed impotently against the huge sides of the steamer, and as they rounded the Point the turbulence of the waters perceptibly diminished. They were soon to the leeward of Penzele, and in the shelter of that mighty headland the sea was comparatively calm. There was a twinkle of lights ahead, where Polveen nestled in its cove, but no sign of a boat.

The steamer stopped in deep water at the very foot of the cliff, which rose—a vast screen of granite—nearly perpendicularly from the sea.

'I'm sorry I can't set ye ashore,' said the captain warmly; 'but this is a death-trap of a place, and I'm anxious to get out of it.'

So they lowered the little boat—it was old and leaky—in the quiet water between the steamer and the wall of cliff, and the two men of Langissack clambered over the side.

'Send the boat round to Widdicombe's, Sutton Pool!' shouted the skipper as Roscorla took the oars. 'Good luck to ye!'

Then with a valedictory whistle, fierce and prolonged, that startled the Polveen folks and roused to shrill emulation a colony of sea-birds, the *Nautilus* steamed out into the Channel.

In twenty minutes Johnny Roscorla, who pulled desperately, brought the boat to Polveen beach; and before it touched the shingle Tregavis leapt waist-deep into the water and struggled ashore through the surf, his legs swathed in ribbons of seaweed.

He ran across the heavy sand, and took the path up the cliff, dimly marked at intervals by chunks of whitened granite; and before him, on the brow of the hill, he could vaguely see against the sky the coastguard cottage, with a light in an upper window.

In the little chamber Richard Curtis, the coast-guard'sman, stood with his wife by the bedside of their sick child—a delicate, bright-eyed girl of five, with a pathetic cough.

'Come, my beauty!' he cried cheerily, 'an' take thy med'cine like a little woman. 'Tis brave physic—he held the phial of amber liquid to the lamp—'look, 'tis just like sherry wine, an' it smelleth—good!' He put the bottle to his nose, but the muscles of his face belied his words. 'What doth it say? "Shaake the bottle." Aw, ias; that explains it. I thought the weather had gone mazed, round the Point; but I b'lieve 'twas only shaakin' the bottle! What do 'ee think father hath for 'ee in the pocket of his greatcoat? 'Tis the queerest little image of a merryman that ivver thee seed. I bought 'en for 'ee to Langissack; an' when you pull the coord the legs of 'en jerkies so nat'ral as life. Hast thee got a nub o' sugar ready for her, mother?'

He took a wine-glass, and, with his broad thumb on the ridge of the marked bottle, he began carefully to measure out the pungent liquid, when

there was a heavy stumbling step upon the stair, and into the room burst a tall man, drenched, dishevelled, with terror in his face! With an inarticulate cry he crossed the chamber and grasped the arm of the petrified Curtis, and from the upturned bottle the liquid gurgled out upon the floor, filling the room with a strange odour.

Not a word was spoken, for Tregavis was beyond speech; but Curtis recognised the chemist, and something of the truth flashed upon his mind.

Then a spasm of agony contorted the face of

Tregavis; he clutched with convulsed fingers at the region of his heart, and fell forward upon the floor.

Richard Curtis, with a gasp of horror, bent over the fallen man, and the bewildered wife knelt beside him in helpless solicitude. They raised his head, and Tregavis gave a great sigh, and from his white lips came inaudible words that doubtless were 'Thank God!' Then the drawn features of the man relaxed into something like a smile—a smile of achievement.

The chemist was dead.

THE TRUE ENGLISH DEATH-RATE.

By ALFRED J. H. CRESPI, Wimborne, formerly Editor of the *Sanitary Review*.



At the annual meeting of the British Medical Association, at Clifton, in 1894, Sir Charles Cameron, the distinguished Medical Officer of Health for Dublin, in an address on Public Medicine remarkable for its clearness and vigour, handled, *inter alia*, the 'True English Death-rate for 1893,' a year conspicuous for bright skies and deficient rainfall. Sir Charles went very fully into some of the local causes raising or lowering the mortality. There died in England and Wales 19,170 persons per million—a rate comparing very favourably with that of a generation earlier, and perhaps lower than any other large, densely-peopled country can show; still a far higher rate than ought to satisfy us in our present state of knowledge. In the thirty-three very large towns of England and Wales, those with 100,000 and above, the deaths were per million 21,570; but when these towns were excluded, the rate in England and Wales fell to 17,900. The towns of the first order, be it noted, have a higher percentage of young people and of women than the country at large. Now, as women live considerably longer than men, and young people die (equal numbers being compared) in smaller proportion than older ones, important corrections must be made to ascertain the real death-rate of the great towns. When these corrections are made, the true death-rate in these thirty-three great towns is 23·32 per thousand, while in the rest of the country it is only 17·62; hence the mortality-rate of the great towns is 5·7 per thousand above that of the rest of the country. The difference between the lowest rural and the highest urban rate is absolutely enormous, and Liverpool shows an excess of 13·17 per thousand; indeed in that city there actually died in 1893 twice as many persons per thousand as in many other parts of England. In the outer ring of London, with a population of 1,543,296, the death-rate was only 15·4, and in certain metropolitan areas, like Hampstead, it was under 11, little more than one-third the Liverpool rate.

Life in towns can never be so healthy as in the open country—when, that is, there is a sufficiency of food, clothing, and shelter in the latter. The aggregation of many people on a limited area means bad air, greater liability to catch infectious disease, and less repose—the last a more important factor in the causation of ill-health than is generally supposed. The ceaseless roar of the traffic of London interferes with sleep and rest, and undoubtedly increases the liability to nervous ailments, and often leads to a premature breakdown. Nor can it be denied that the indigent, profligate, and degraded have a singular tendency to gravitate to the large towns. Now, these classes marry early, and are appallingly prolific. 'The poorer a man,' says Sir Charles, 'the more likely is he to marry, and it is a remarkable but undesirable fact that a man's desire for matrimony is in inverse ratio to his ability to maintain a family.' This is too well known to need any illustration.

In country villages there may be poverty, overcrowding, vice, and precarious employment; but there is better air, so that the pestiferous atmosphere of a great town slum is rarely found in a rural cottage. So notorious is it that the death-rate is lower among the well-to-do that Mr Sergeant, in a paper in the June issue of the *Journal of the Statistical Society* for 1864, argued that in any comparison between the death-rates of London and of Birmingham, an allowance of 1·5 per thousand should be given the latter to make up for the greater poverty of many of its inhabitants as compared with those of London generally.

There is hardly a surer test of the prosperity of a town than the number of domestic servants kept in it. Croydon had the lowest death-rate in 1893 of all the great towns—that is, those with at least 100,000 inhabitants; its corrected death-rate was 16·99. Now, it had, curiously enough, almost the highest percentage of servants—88 per thousand, or in the ratio of 4·4 per cent. to the heads of families. Bath and Hastings head the

sixty-two largest towns—those with a population between 50,000 and 100,000—in the number of their domestic servants, the former having 114 per thousand and the latter 111, while their respective birth-rates were, in 1893, 19·5 and 19·3, the death-rate being again 18·5 and 14·27 respectively; the large number of rich, elderly retired people in both those towns, but more particularly in Bath, accounting for a mortality heavier than one would look for in a health-resort.

In many manufacturing towns of the North the low percentage of servants is noteworthy: Liverpool has only 3·9, Manchester 3·1, Newcastle 4·7, Leeds 2·8, Sheffield 3·6, and Preston 2·4. Birmingham has 2·9 per cent. only. As a pendant to this, Dr Alfred Hill, the City Medical Officer of Health, recently told the magistrates that the Midland Metropolis contains 10,000 houses unfit for human habitation. Aston Manor, an important and most populous part of the town, has only 2·2 per cent. of servants—a quarter the Croydon ratio. The South of England shows far greater prosperity. Bristol has 5·7, Brighton 9·0, Plymouth 5·1, Portsmouth 4·5, and Devonport 3·4 per cent.

Another test of the prosperity of a town might seem to be the number of rooms in a tenement; but, strange to say, Sir Charles Cameron does not consider this test of any special value. Plymouth, a fairly healthy town, has 24·4 per cent. of one-room tenements, and 27 of two; while in Preston, infamous for nearly the highest death-rate in all England, one-room tenements are only 5 per cent. Devonport, a reasonably healthy town, has the largest proportion of one-room tenements—25·2; whereas Hanley, with its perpetual canopy of black smoke, its grimy houses, and general air of misery and dirt, has only one in a thousand. In other words, Devonport has two hundred and fifty-two times as many one-room tenements per thousand. In London 18·4 per cent. of the dwellings are one-room tenements. Kensington, royal parish though it is, suffers from poverty and overcrowding, as the last census sufficiently showed. At that time there were herded together 13,000 persons in 6400 single-room and 26,000 in 7000 double-room tenements. The death-rate does not invariably seem to be materially affected by this state of things, but the moral condition of the poorer classes must be; and in no direction can sanitary and social reform find greater scope than in providing more rooms per family, and, still better, more cottages.

As there is no way of increasing the number of houses in the heart of our great towns, where every foot of land is occupied, nor would the sanitary condition be materially improved were more people packed on an acre, the only remedy is to enable the working-classes to get out into the suburbs, where land is cheaper, and where, therefore, there is a better chance of finding cheaper cottages. Every factory removed into the suburbs,

every great school, hospital, or other public institution taken away, means so much the more room left for the many people compelled to remain. That the difficulty of removing factories cannot in all cases be insuperable is shown by the removal, some years ago, of Cadbury Brothers' cocoa factory from Broad Street, Birmingham, to Bournville, five miles from New Street Station, and the still more recent removal of Burroughs, Welcome, & Co.'s cod-liver oil and compressed drug works from Bell Street, Wandsworth, to Dartford. No special inconvenience was incurred in either case, the principals assure me, while ample space was found for the factories; and the workpeople were enabled to get better air, more elbow-room, and cheaper houses. The Cadburys have done wonders to help their people to build and buy bright, roomy cottages, and quite a large town of pretty, charming villas and modern houses is springing up round Bournville; while at King's-Norton, a little farther out, hundreds of good cottages, often owned by their occupiers, are being built. The late Mr Montague Williams, Q.C., attached great importance to the removal of large factories into the country as a good means of lessening the overcrowding in great towns. Where work can be got, there the workers must congregate.

At Hanley, the local authorities refuse to allow one-room tenements to be put up. It is a manufacturing town, the largest in the Potteries, and not the least smoky and unprepossessing. Many of the trades carried on in it are admittedly unhealthy; but, in spite of these drawbacks, the death-rate in 1893 was only 20·2. Is not this in part due to the absence of one-room dwellings?

In the great Scotch towns one-room houses, as they are called, are much more common than in England, and they have warm defenders among intelligent Scotchmen, who claim for them, among other advantages, greater cheapness. In 1873 they reached 32·8 per cent. of the total; but fortunately, according to the English sanitarians' opinion, the percentage is falling, and one may hope the time is not far distant when all towns, except the very largest, will see their way to follow the good example of Hanley, and forbid the erection of places which cannot be called houses, and which must be responsible for much of the vice, misery, and degradation of the working-classes. One can imagine the burst of public indignation were any of the great landowners of the South of England to sanction the building of one-room tenements on their estates. As it is, agitators sometimes allege that country cottages with three rooms should be closed as morally and hygienically objectionable, and yet in large towns there may be 20 per cent. of one-room dwellings and no constant supply of fresh air, as in the open country.

Dr Russell, of Glasgow, stated that in 1885 the death-rate of that huge city stood at 25; but in the one-room dwellings it was 27, in the two-

room 26, in the three-room 20, and it fell to 18 in the four-room. It is asserted, too, that in Berlin, in 1885, there were only 75,000 people out of 1,315,000 living in one-room dwellings, but that—*incredible dictu*—the former furnished half the deaths in that city. The statement is astounding, and surely needs confirmation; but, as it is accepted by Sir Charles Cameron—a most cautious and accurate statistician—one must assume that it is not absolutely impossible. After all, it is not merely the overcrowding in the poor tenements which accounts for the high death-rate among their occupiers. The poorest, most vicious, incapable, and unhealthy gravitate to the worst slums of our large towns. In other words, dwellers in the slums will always be the shortest lived and the most unhealthy and worthless, because they also are the poorest, most vicious, and least capable; and the great capitals of the world are unfortunate in attracting a large percentage of all these outcasts.

It is often contended that good class and sanitariously perfect cottage accommodation cannot be made to pay a reasonable return on the outlay. Sir Charles Cameron—and who can speak with greater authority?—tells us that in Dublin the Corporation has provided two-room tenements, with separate sanitary accommodation of the most modern kind, at two shillings a week, and this with no loss to the city treasury; in other words, the investment is sound, if not exactly profitable. But other authorities are now maintaining that these low rents do not pay any interest on capital.

According to Dr Hope, Medical Officer of Health for Liverpool, in the July part of *Public Health* for 1894, five hundred and seventy-eight houses were about to be demolished in that ill-omened city. These houses were filthy, dangerous, and falling to pieces. In the three streets in which they were situated the death-rates were respectively 63, 67, and 71 per thousand. What other proof is needed of the dependence of ill-health on bad house-accommodation? We began by saying that no other country showed such a low death-rate as England; in none, too, is the general standard of living higher, and in none are the comforts of life greater. So far so good; and yet we only seem to have begun the great work of sanitary reform as far as many of the poor are concerned. When, fifty years hence, every working-class family is decently housed, clothed, and fed, it is probable that the death-rate will not exceed eleven per thousand for the whole country. What a triumph that will be—an annual saving on the figures of last year of full six lives per thousand inhabitants.

Dr Tatham, the Superintendent of Statistics, in a paper on 'Changes in the Death-rates of England and Wales' in the supplement to the Registrar-General's Fifty-ninth Annual Report, 1895, has the following statements, which I have freely abridged.

Dr Tatham points out that in the decennium 1871-80 there was a mortality of 21·27 from all causes per thousand of the population. In the next ten years the mean annual rate fell to 19·08. This decline in the mortality at all ages was shared by both sexes in almost equal proportion; the rate among males falling 10·6 per cent. and that among females 10·0. The figures show a decreased mortality among females at every one of the age-groups into which the span of life has been divided for the purposes of the Registrar-General, and among males a decrease at all except the age-group sixty-five to seventy-five years. The experience of 1881-90, although agreeing in the main with that of the preceding decennium in showing a greater reduction of mortality at the earlier ages, differs from it in other important respects. For example, Dr Ogle, commenting in the previous decennial supplement on the varying incidence of mortality at different ages, showed that, while the rates had fallen at the earlier part of life, they had risen at the later. This was not the case in the decennium 1881-90, where a decrease was observed in both sexes at every age-group save one. Again, compared with the mortality in the preceding decennium, the rate among females in 1871-80 was found to have decreased more rapidly than among males; this inequality has now been redressed, for in 1881-90 the male rate actually decreased faster than the female. Perhaps the most significant difference between the two sets of figures lies in the fact that, whereas in 1871-80 there had been a considerable rise in the male mortality after the age of forty-five and in the female mortality after fifty-five, recent figures show that this rise has been almost completely stopped, the only rise of mortality, in the whole course of life, during 1881-90 having been the trivial one of less than 1 per cent. at the age-group sixty-five to sixty-seven among males.

In the last decennium, 1881-90, the mortality among infants under one, generally adopted as the most sensitive test of the health of a community, has declined. The rate of mortality among infants of both sexes under the age of twelve months was equal to 142 per thousand births registered, compared with 149 per thousand in the preceding decennium. In 1881-90 the infantile rate among males was 155 per thousand births, and among females 128 per thousand, the rates in 1871-80 having been 163 and 134 respectively. A considerable proportion of the diminution in the death-rate since 1870 is the direct result of 'improved sanitation;' but that the whole difference between the rates of the two most recent decennia cannot thus be accounted for is obvious. The published returns show that the birth-rate of England and Wales has in recent years been steadily decreasing. As recently as 1878 the birth-rate was 35·6 per thousand; since then the fall has been steady, and the rate at the end of

the last decennium did not exceed 30·2, and it is considerably lower now, and is still falling. It is obvious that this change in the birth-rate, continued as it has been for so many years, must affect the age constitution of the population; and, as the death-rate at different ages varies enormously, the aggregate rate of mortality must accordingly be modified. On comparing the mean age-distribution of the population in the decennia ending respectively in 1880 and 1890, it will be seen that the numbers both of males and females living between the ages of ten and forty-five years were respectively greater in 1881-90 than in the previous decennium. Sanitary conditions remaining unchanged, the effect of this variation in the age constitution of the population would reduce the mortality at all ages, and that this

has actually been the case may easily be shown. The *crude* or *uncorrected* death-rate at all ages in the decennium 1871-80 was 21·27 per thousand; but if the number of persons living in the several age-groups during that decennium had been in the same proportion as in 1881-90, the death-rate in the earlier decennium would have been, not 21·27 per thousand but 20·84. It is, therefore, the latter figure, not the former, that should be used for the purpose of showing the actual decrease in the death-rate since 1880.

Before the sanitary reformer there lies a great future; and one can say that, in spite of the hurry and turmoil of modern human life, the embittered competition—the unrest, in short—the prosperity of the United Kingdom is increasing, and premature deaths becoming rarer every year.

A DEMOCRATIC DECREE.

By ADAM R. THOMSON.

I.



EXACTLY at noon on the day before that fixed for the marriage of Queen Theresa of Nerumbia to her second cousin, Ernest, Hereditary Prince of Landberg, Captain Klunst, the chief of police of the capital city of Rosenstadt, was ushered into the private apartment of Count von Schönstein, the Queen's Principal Minister of State. He had come to Schönstein's residence in the Birnenstrasse by appointment; and the Count, though his furrowed countenance wore a look of deep gloom, received him graciously, and motioned him to a chair. Klunst sat down in silence, and waited with some impatience till the Minister, having carefully tied the papers on the table in front of him into a neat bundle, at length commenced the conversation.

'Well, I have seen the Queen,' he began in a low tone.

'Yes, your Lordship?'

'And it is useless trying to move her, worse than useless. She has thoroughly made up her mind, and is even prepared to accept my resignation if I persist in my refusal to have the monstrous decree I spoke to you about yesterday in readiness for her signature immediately after to-morrow's ceremony.'

'But,' said the other, 'it is madness—sheer madness.'

'So I represented to Her Majesty, Klunst, though not of course in those words. I pointed out that many of the prisoners she is so anxious to release are members of secret revolutionary societies—men and women who aim at the subversion of the constitution and the overthrow of the throne, whose freedom would even place Her Majesty in personal danger.'

'It is true, my Lord.'

The Count shrugged his shoulders. 'The Queen thinks not,' he said grimly.

'But what arguments did Her Majesty put forward?'

'None. She is a woman, and she does not argue. It almost makes one wish Nerumbia had adopted the Salic Law. I'll tell you what she did say, though. She hinted that my ideas are old-fashioned, and stated pretty plainly that, in her opinion, most of our political prisoners, as she pleases to call them, are the victims of police plots.'

'Monstrous!'

'Just so.'

'How can Her Majesty entertain such a notion?'

'I don't know, unless it is that she has been reading some of the French newspapers. But the origin of the evil is of no consequence. She dismissed me with an instruction to draft the decree, and to commence it with a preamble to the effect that Queen Theresa is—is—really I can hardly bring myself to speak the terrible words—is determined that her marriage shall inaugurate a new era.'

'A new era?'

'Yes, an era of—mark this, Klunst—absolute liberty to every one of her subjects.'

'Absolute liberty—in Nerumbia!' The captain laughed ironically.

Schönstein leaned back in his chair. 'I have explained the situation,' he said, 'and so far as I can see only a miracle can avert us from disaster.'

'Ah!' Klunst drew a long breath, then he remarked slowly: 'I have something startling to reveal to you, my Lord Count—something that perhaps—though not a miracle—may, after all, lead Her Majesty to reconsider the position.'

'What do you mean?' asked the Minister eagerly.

'I mean, your Lordship, that we have discovered the existence of the most diabolical plot ever conceived.'

'Yes, yes. What is it? Speak man—speak.' Schönstein half rose in his excitement.

'It is a plot to murder'—

'Not the Queen?'

'No; but the Prince, the bridegroom, to-morrow.'

'The Prince. Good heavens! Where? How?'

'In the Cathedral at the commencement of the marriage service.'

II.

'Details,' said Schönstein, after a brief, intense pause; 'details.'

Klunst bowed. 'They are precise, my Lord. Among those who have been given passes into the Cathedral is a certain Duchesse de Malville, who is supposed to be a member of the French nobility.'

'Yes; I recollect the name. She obtained her ticket through one of Her Majesty's ladies-in-waiting.'

'Whom we need not speak of, your Lordship, for she is merely an innocent dupe. She knows nothing of the supposed Duchesse's true character and antecedents.'

'You, Klunst, are better informed?'

'Yes,' said the other simply. 'This woman, whose real name is Adèle Lérout, is an anarchist of the most dangerous type, young, fascinating, and—worst of all—sincere. She is utterly careless of her life, and is no doubt gratified at having been chosen by her fellows for the deadly work projected for to-morrow.'

'When was she so chosen, Klunst?'

'At a meeting held last night, a meeting at which the police were represented. The scheme of the crime was then discussed; and, to put the matter shortly, it was decided that as the wedding party walked up the central aisle, the woman should spring forward and stab Prince Ernest to the heart.'

The Count received all these particulars with the utmost calmness, giving no further sign of emotion than an occasional bite of his iron-gray moustache. Now he merely asked meditatively:

'Why should they wish to assassinate the Prince rather than the Queen?'

'I cannot say, your Lordship, unless it is that the clothes worn by a man afford less protection to the heart than those of a woman. Or it may be that they think an attack on the Prince is less likely to be anticipated than one on the Queen.'

'Ah! well; in any case the effect would be the same. There is of course an international organisation, and it is only the rank of the victim they care about. The Prince is a ruler of a larger

country than ours, and his murder could not fail to terrorise Europe. But, now, what do you propose to do?'

'To arrest this woman, my Lord.'

'And on what evidence?'

'The evidence of my officer; Sauber his name is. He obtained admission to the meeting disguised as a'—

'Never mind that, Klunst; I am quite aware of your methods. But have you no other witnesses?'

'No; though we can trace this woman's history for some years past, and prove that she has been in the habit of expressing the most revolutionary opinions.'

Schönstein was silent for a moment. Then he said decisively:

'The case is not strong enough.'

'Not strong enough, your Lordship?' The captain looked surprised. 'Why, any court'—

'Not strong enough for the Queen, I mean. She will simply believe the whole affair to be an invention of the police; and so far from abandoning her projected folly, will actually glory the more in its accomplishment. I know Her Majesty's disposition, Klunst.'

'What is to be done, then?'

'At present, so far as you are concerned, nothing—absolutely nothing.'

'I must not proceed with the arrest?'

'Certainly not.'

'But, my Lord'—

'I have no time for further discussion,' interrupted the Count. 'I wish to be alone now. I have much to occupy me. You have my instructions; if I find it necessary to vary them you shall be duly notified.'

With which he rose, and Captain Klunst, mystified and not a little annoyed, had no course but to take his departure.

III.

Left to himself, Count von Schönstein sat for several minutes trying to arrive at a solution of the most difficult problem with which he had ever been confronted. This was, briefly, how to utilise the plot revealed by the chief of police in such a way as to overrule the headstrong will of the young Queen. To arrest the would-be assassin, and endeavour to convict her on police evidence would, as he had at once seen and explained to Klunst, in all probability produce an exactly contrary effect on Her Majesty's mind to that he desired. What other action, then, could he take? For once the Minister felt nonplussed; he could not find an answer to the question. And yet on his finding an answer depended his future career, for he had taken up such a definite position in the matter of the suggested amnesty that he would be bound, should this be carried out, to resign his office. He was a patriot according to his lights, and he honestly believed the Queen's

design both foolish and dangerous. But he was also a strong and ambitious man, who hated to be thwarted, even by his royal mistress, and who could not contemplate with equanimity relinquishing the political power which was so dear to his soul.

What if he were to do nothing, beyond perhaps warning Prince Ernest at the last moment of his danger, and affording him police protection? If the Queen saw the man she loved actually attacked, and at such a time, she could hardly fail to experience an overwhelming revulsion of feeling. But the Count, daring as he was, hesitated to take a course fraught with so much risk, more especially as he liked Prince Ernest, and believed that later on, when love's first frenzy had somewhat abated, he would find in the Prince a powerful ally in opposing the democratic tendencies of Queen Theresa. No, no, the Prince's life must not be endangered.

He had come to this inevitable conclusion when his private secretary entered from an adjoining room, placed a budget of letters on the table, and retired. Schönstein opened one, two, three of these communications, and glanced at their contents without interest. Out of the fourth, however, fell a photograph, and he took it up with a half-start. It was not accompanied by any note, but was signed, 'Very truly yours, Arnold Farrington.' 'A remarkable resemblance,' murmured the Count, 'really remarkable.' He struck a small bell which stood on the table, and his secretary re-entered the room. The Count handed him the photograph, and began abruptly:

'Farrington, the leading actor in that English theatrical company which has been in Rosenstadt for the last fortnight, has sent me his photograph, Müller. You've seen him, of course?'

'I have, my Lord.'

'Good—isn't it?'

'Exceedingly.'

'Did it ever strike you, Müller—there was a hardly perceptible tremor in Schönstein's voice—that Farrington is extremely like some one we both know very well.'

The secretary looked at the photograph carefully for a few moments, saying at last:

'Well, my Lord, I never noticed it before; but I think you must refer to Prince Ernest.'

'Yes, yes; not only are the two astonishingly alike, but they are of the same height and build. I wonder now—he broke off abruptly—'when do these English actors leave us, Müller—do you know?'

'Their last performance is fixed for to-morrow evening, my Lord.'

'Ah! Well, Müller, I was present at the play they gave two nights since, and at its conclusion I sent for Mr Farrington and complimented him on his acting. It is, no doubt, in consequence of that interview that he has honoured me with his photograph. I should like to thank him for his

courtesy personally. Perhaps, too, I may give him some little souvenir—actors, I have heard, are fond of souvenirs; but, in any case, I want you to send a note to him—you can easily find out where he is stopping—and ask him to come here and see me after lunch, say at three o'clock. Let the note go at once by special messenger.'

Herr Müller bowed and left the room. The Count threw himself back in his chair, drew a deep breath, gave a low whistle, and muttered slowly to himself: 'At last I think I see a way, dangerous and difficult, too, not to say terribly expensive; but still a way. If only this English actor has sufficient pluck and impudence—and his countrymen generally are lacking in neither of these characteristics—then I—I believe I can give Her Majesty an object-lesson she will never forget, and at the same time save both Nerumbia and myself.'

IV.

That afternoon, probably for the first time in his life, Arnold Farrington was positively astounded. The Count made him a proposal so extraordinary that, but for the heavy monetary bribe with which it was accompanied, the actor would have esteemed the matter a huge joke. As it was, he hesitated, and raised one objection after another, to each of which, however, the Minister was ready with an answer. The upshot was that, having satisfied Schönstein, he left, taking with him, with many misgivings, a portrait of Prince Ernest of Landberg, a ribbon of the Order of the Gray Eagle, and a draft for a large sum on the Secret Service account of the Nerumbian treasury. Whatever happened, he could at least congratulate himself on having obtained payment in advance.

A little later Von Schönstein and the chief of police were again in conference.

'Klunst,' said the former, commencing the conversation, 'before we go any further, I want to be assured that what you told me this morning of the intended assassination of the Prince is absolutely true.'

'That is so, my Lord. I have questioned and cross-questioned my officer, and he is ready to swear to the accuracy of the most minute detail of his story.'

'There is no doubt, for instance, that the attack is planned to take place during the procession of the wedding-party up the aisle at the beginning of the service?'

'None whatever; on that point, as on all others, Sauber is quite positive.'

'Good! Then I have arranged this affair at last.'

'I am to arrest the Duchesse?'

'No, no; I told you before how futile such a step would be. Come, you shall hear everything; but, by heaven! Klunst, should a word ever pass your lips'—

'You may rely upon my discretion, my Lord.'

'Well, I suppose I may, especially since your interests, as well as mine, are involved. Let the Queen have her way, and unloose this disreputable horde of criminals, and there can be little doubt that, provided she is not meanwhile assassinated, her next step will be to abolish the police, which would abolish you, Captain Klunst.' The Count smiled grimly, and went on without waiting for a reply: 'On the other hand, let the Frenchwoman's attack be duly made, and Her Majesty dare not, simply dare not, outrage public opinion and—and my opinion—by proceeding with her ridiculous decree.'

'But I—I do not understand, my Lord. You cannot mean that we are to allow the attack to be made?'

'I do, though, Klunst.'

'I am lost in perplexity, your Lordship. Have you consulted Prince Ernest about this? Is he ready to take the risk?'

Schönstein twirled his moustache; he was quite enjoying the mystification of the chief of police.

'No,' he said slowly, 'I have not consulted the Prince, nor at this stage do I propose to do so. It is quite unnecessary.'

'Unnecessary?' The word came involuntarily from the captain's lips.

'Entirely. The Prince will not be exposed to any risk whatever.'

Klunst's face was a study; but he said nothing.

'Simply because,' the Count resumed, 'the attack will not be made on him at all.'

The chief of police fidgeted nervously in his chair, but speech was still beyond his powers.

'It will be made,' said the other, in a low voice, 'on a gentleman who has agreed to enact the part of bridegroom for the passage up the aisle only—Mr Arnold Farrington, the great English actor, who is visiting us just now.'

He paused, and at last Klunst managed by a gesture to signify his desire for further information. The Count was quite ready to gratify him.

'Briefly,' he explained, 'this is how matters stand: It has been arranged, as you know, that Prince Ernest is to wear to-morrow the uniform of a Captain of Hussars, with one decoration only, the ribbon of the Order of the Gray Eagle. Well, Farrington has in his theatrical wardrobe the requisite uniform, and I have lent him my decoration. Farrington bears a strong resemblance to the Prince, and, with a little make-up, it would be next to impossible in the dim light of the Cathedral to distinguish between the two men. You follow so far?'

'Ye—es,' gasped Klunst.

'H'm! It has also been arranged that Prince Ernest is to await the Queen immediately inside the great door at the west end of the Cathedral, when, after kissing his bride's hand, he, with the rest of the party, will at once move up the aisle. This part of the programme, however, the Prince will carry out by deputy, for his carriage—you

know he and I are to proceed to the Cathedral together—his carriage will be unavoidably delayed.'

The chief of police wiped his moist brow. 'But, my Lord,' he murmured, 'if this Englishman should be killed?'

'There is no fear of that. He is going to wear a coat of mail underneath his uniform. The only risk he runs is the really slight one of detection, for which he has been well paid. But now, Klunst, I wish you to note carefully your share in this transaction. First of all, the so-called Duchesse must be watched, and should she by any chance leave the city, the fact must be at once communicated to me.'

The captain bowed assent. 'Her movements are under observation,' he remarked.

'Now for yourself, then. You will post several officers in plain clothes near the central aisle of the Cathedral, and will, of course, be yourself among them. The moment the attack is made, Farrington will fall, and it will then be for you and those of your men who are not engaged in arresting the woman, to surround him before the Queen has time to intervene, and carry him quickly to the vestry at the south of the altar. There you must immediately get rid of the men, and an instant later the Prince and I will join you. The Prince, whom I shall have meanwhile taken into my confidence, will then himself go into the Cathedral, explain to the Queen in a hurried whisper that he was not wounded, but had merely fainted with excitement, and the interrupted ceremony will be proceeded with. So shall we save Nerumbia.'

'Your instructions are difficult to give effect to, my Lord,' said the chief of police, gazing at Schönstein admiringly; 'but I will do my best.'

'Till we meet to-morrow, then, Captain Klunst, farewell.'

'Farewell, my lord Count—till to-morrow.'

'We are to commence a new era then, you know,' added the Minister, with a laugh, as the other rose to go.

'Ha! ha! a new era!' echoed Klunst, closing the door behind him.

V.

It was the season of winter, and the next day proved cold and gloomy. Nevertheless, long before the hour of one, at which the wedding was to take place, the streets of Rosenstadt were gaily decorated with flags and bunting, and were thronged with crowds of merry-faced citizens who had turned out to do honour to the occasion. Arnold Farrington noted all this as he lay back among the cushions of a closed carriage, listening dreamily to the pealing bells, and wishing his adventure well over. It had been the publicly expressed desire of the Prince of Landberg to be permitted to proceed to the Cathedral quietly, so that Farrington was not worried by any inconvenient demonstrations *en route*. Arrived at his

destination, however, he grew somewhat anxious, for here he had to encounter the Burgomaster, explain that the Count von Schönstein had been detained for a few minutes, and submit to be escorted up the stone steps of the Cathedral, and so through the great door to the spot at which he was to await the coming of the Queen. He dismounted from the vehicle, and his fears were immediately set at rest. The hours he had devoted to his make-up had brought their reward; the obsequious officials who stood bowing before him had evidently not the slightest doubt as to his identity with the Prince. He entered the Cathedral just three minutes before one; and, as he gazed at the richly-dressed personages who thronged the vast nave, speculated calmly as to the precise position of the woman who was to attack him.

On the stroke of the hour, cheers from without announced the advent of the young monarch, and at the same moment the Count and the Prince of Landberg alighted unobserved at a small door at the other end of the building. Schönstein's only ground for uneasiness was over; he had told his story to the Prince in such a way as to gain His Serene Highness's assent to the steps taken for his safety, and for Nerumbia's safety, and for the safety of the Count. Together they entered an unoccupied vestry, and awaited events with confidence.

The mighty organ pealed forth; the procession must have started up the aisle. Another moment and—unemotional man as he was—the Count's heart began to beat wildly. If the deed should cause a panic? But no, no; Klunst was a reliable officer; he would prevent anything of that sort!

Some seconds passed; but nothing seemed to have happened. Then the organ ceased, and the two men in the vestry distinctly heard the resonant voice of the Archbishop beginning the marriage service.

Schönstein's brow grew moist, his lips parched; he had comprehended the terrible truth. The attack had not been made. The passage up the aisle had been accomplished in safety! He could find no words in which to reply to the dismayed look of inquiry cast upon him by the astonished Prince.

There was a noise at the outer door, and Captain Klunst, his face blanched, his limbs trembling, stood before them.

'My lord Count,' he panted, 'what is to be done? This woman Lèront, this anarchist, has failed us. She is not in the Cathedral.' He paused for breath.

'Go on,' muttered Schönstein feebly. 'She has escaped?'

'No, no; her lodging was too carefully watched for that to happen. But she must have found out

that we were watching her. She has simply kept indoors. That is all.'

'All!' echoed the Count.

'All!' cried the Prince excitedly. 'It is not all. Why—why, good heavens, Count!—while we three are standing here, Theresa—the Queen—my Queen—is—is being married to an English actor!'

The Count groaned; but could offer no suggestion. He and Klunst looked at one another blankly. The tension was becoming unbearable.

'Fire! Fire! Fire!'

The cry came from within the Cathedral, and was followed by a stampede, and the shouts of the excited people rushing for the great west door of the building. Another moment, and into the vestry burst the man who had raised the alarm—Mr Arnold Farrington.

'I—I had to do it,' he gasped, addressing the Count. 'Why, they were actually marrying me to the Queen, and I—I have a wife in England. There is nothing like a cry of fire to clear a place quickly; and, goodness knows, in this suit of mail I was hot enough to do the thing realistically. No one will be hurt, the exits are too good. By Jupiter!' he added, 'here comes Her Majesty!'

For answer, the Count, who, in the presence of a pressing danger, had recovered himself, seized Farrington by the arm and hustled him out of the vestry into the street. His carriage was still waiting, and the two men jumped in.

'I have failed to save Nerumbia,' said the Count hastily; 'but there is yet time to save myself.'

'And me, I hope,' remarked Farrington. 'I guess I'd better get away from this country of yours as soon as convenient, Count.'

'Like fury to the railway station,' cried Schönstein to the coachman.

Thus abruptly did the Count von Schönstein bring his political career to an end. A more pliant Minister was immediately appointed in his stead, who, at the conclusion of the deferred marriage-ceremony on the following day, presented for the Queen's signature a decree giving immediate liberty to all prisoners throughout the realm. Whether this will lead to the direful results anticipated by the Count time alone can show. It has since come to the knowledge of the chronicler of these events, however, that the Duchesse de Malville, *alias* Adèle Lèront, was allowed by the demoralised police to make good her escape, and also that at present Queen Theresa is well and happy. At the same time, there are said to be matters connected with Her Majesty's first attempt at matrimony as to which she in vain seeks enlightenment from her prudent and far-seeing spouse, Ernest, Hereditary Prince of Landberg.

'CLOSE CALLS' IN THE ROCKIES.



IN North-Western parlance a 'close call' means a narrow escape from some danger. Section-men—that is to say, the railroad navvies—on the Great Northern Railway in the Rocky Mountains often have exciting escapes from being run over by trains, from being crushed by rocks or falling trees, and from being buried under snow-slides.

There were four men on the western part of the 'Summit Section,' at the top of the Marias Pass, in the Rockies. The grade there was very steep, and there were also two or three small tunnels. It was difficult to tell of the approach of a train, owing to the crooked nature of the track and to the fact that a mountain river, the north fork of the Flathead, ran close to the rails, making a considerable noise by its pitching over rocks in a string of cascades and waterfalls. For these reasons we had several narrow escapes from being run over; but although we had orders to travel slowly on our hand-car (a flat car running on four wheels, and propelled by men standing on the car and alternately pulling and pushing a double-handled lever), we paid but little attention to orders if we were in a hurry; and often we would rattle down the mountain-side at the rate of thirty miles an hour, the car going by its own momentum, with one man standing on the brake as we rounded the curves. There was glorious sport in dashing down that mountain-track, through scenes of a grandeur which cannot be told, towering mountains on one side, a precipice and a roaring river on the other. Round the corners of rock-cuttings we would swing with a dash, fresh pictures leaping into view every moment.

The foreman, a burly Irishman, would suck at his dirty little black pipe, seemingly deaf and blind to all around him, but really keeping a sharp lookout ahead, and listening intently for sounds of trains. Often we would start out knowing that the passenger train was not far behind us, and then indeed we would have a wild, reckless run. And one day we came to grief.

We were at our old trick of running ahead of the passenger train, and merrily we bowled along. But we did not know that the passenger train had received orders to wait at a side-track, so that a fast 'special' coming from the west might have a clear track. Just as we came to tunnel No. 3, about one hundred yards long, we heard a whistle sounding from the west.

'My God, boys, there's an "extra" coming up the hill!' shouted the foreman.

We were at that moment dashing over a trestle bridge about sixty feet high; to jump safely was impossible. At the end of the bridge was the tunnel, and it was equally suicidal to think of jumping off while running through it. At the

other end of the tunnel there was a place where a daring man *might* not break his neck if he jumped off the car; but fast approaching that other end of the tunnel was the swift 'special.'

Unable to slacken our furious speed, we dashed into the tunnel, well knowing that we might meet death in that blackness. It seemed a terribly long tunnel, though we flashed through it in a few seconds of time; and right at the other end we met the 'special.' The last thing I remember seeing was the foreman, still holding the black pipe in his teeth, and staring in a dazed manner at the engine bearing down upon him. Then there was a crash. I suppose I must have jumped or been thrown to one side; I soon picked myself up, nothing the worse, except for a few bruises.

The 'special' stopped, and the superintendent of the road, who was on board, got down and began to make inquiries. 'Who was the foreman of this gang?' But the Irishman had been smashed into a horrible, unrecognisable mass. So too had another of the men, a genial, light-hearted Highlander. Poor chap! I used to write letters for him to a girl he loved, 'back east, in God's country.' The third man, a Norwegian, had both legs broken. Now, that was a 'close call' for me.

I used to think that the mountains frowned upon us for daring to bring into their domains the smoke and rattle of our miserable railway, for sometimes they would hurl monstrous boulders at our trains; and in these acts they would often show a cunning that seemed more than human. The track-walker, on the lookout for fallen rocks, would pass along the track a few minutes ahead of a train; and, as soon as he had turned a corner of the road, down would come a huge rock weighing several tons. Then messages would flash along the wires: 'Freight No. 15 in the ditch at Bad Rock Canyon. Broken rail caused by falling rock. Send wrecking crew.' But more than once it was the passenger train which was the object of the spite of the mountains. The engineer, leaning out of his cab window, would round a curve and see, a few yards ahead of him, a great block of stone resting wickedly on the track. Instinctively his hand would fly to the air-brake, he would shut off steam and let out sand (engineers seldom use the reverse lever in such cases); but crash into the rock the engine would go, rear up, roll over and over, snapping the trunks of the pine trees on its way into the river, some hundreds of feet below the track. Then the Chief Despatcher, sitting in his office at the end of the division, would hear the sounder click out the words: 'No. 2 ran into rock eight miles east of summit. Engine, baggage, mail-car, and day-coach ditched. Engineer, fireman, mail-clerk, and one passenger killed; several injured. Send wrecking outfit and doctors.'

And upon one occasion the special train, consisting of the Wrecker (a machine for raising overturned cars and picking up wrecks) and a coach with doctors and railroad officials, were steaming quickly to the scene of an accident when an evil-minded mountain threw a stone with such good aim that it struck the engine and toppled it over, and the wrecking crew, the doctors, and the railroad officials were piled up in a heap. Now, that mountain could have thrown stones at that place at any other time during any of the days in any of the centuries of years that had gone before, and probably no harm would have been done. But no! With a diabolical cunning he chose just the second of time in which he could do the most mischief.

Yet the snow-slides are even more to be dreaded than falling rocks. If you pass through the mountains in the summer-time you will notice broad pathways cleared through the forests on some mountain-side. These are the tracks of the snow-slides; for a snow-slide clears a way for itself, and cuts off trees in its path like a man shaving himself with a sharp razor.

On the 31st December 1892 the passenger train was stuck in a snowdrift at Bear Creek, in the heart of the mountains. A snow-plough, engine, and train-load of 'dagors' (Italian navvies) were despatched to the place, with orders to dig out the 'stalled' train. I went with the party, as the men on our section were also impressed into the work. But we could do little or nothing, and just before noon we started on our way to the section-house for dinner and to get reinforcements of men.

The train was backing down the hill—that is to say, the cars were being pushed by the engine. I was riding on the engine, sitting on the fireman's side of the cab, and talking to the fireman. The engineer pulled the whistle cord, as usual, just before rounding the curve on the side of Mount Donnington; and that whistle was probably the cause of the trouble which followed. Under certain conditions of snow, temperature, and atmosphere it takes very little persuasion to start a snow-slide. Perhaps it was our whistle which stirred the snow at the top of Mount Donnington, nearly a mile above us.

At first the loosened mass was a small one; but it rapidly gathered immense force and volume, and swept like a torrent, some hundred yards wide and sixty feet deep, bringing with it rocks and trees, down the mountain-side, straight towards us. The brakeman, who was standing on the top of a car, saw it coming, and gave a wild, inarticulate cry. We on the engine saw it; the engineer gave one glance, then threw the throttle wide open, putting on full steam in the hope of pushing his train past the worst of the slide, even though it were at the sacrifice of his own life. It was a brave deed, a noble deed; and by it he saved the lives of thirty men who were in

the car farthest removed from the engine. That car was overturned, it is true, but no one in it was seriously hurt. But the rest of the train?

A snow-slide travels with a terrible roaring, hissing quickness, and in an instant that great wall of snow was upon us. As though they had been toys, our train and engine were swept off the rails, turned over and over, and buried fifty feet deep in hard-packed snow. The fireman and I sat like dazed men and watched the slide coming at us, for we could do nothing. The front wave of the slide poured into the cab window, swept us through the window on the opposite side; and, incredible as it may sound, we were borne on the crest of that slide some three or four hundred feet into the river valley beneath the track.

I knew nothing from the moment the slide struck us until I saw the fireman, with a bleeding face, bending over me and trying to drag me out of the snow. We were badly cut by broken glass; I had also a scalded hand, caused, no doubt, by snatching at and breaking the water-gauge glass as I was being swept through the cab of the engine.

The engineer and four other men were killed by that fearful slide. Late that night, after much hard digging, their bodies were recovered, crushed out of all likeness to human beings. But the fireman and I were all right again in a week or so.

Now, two years later that same fireman fell downstairs in his own house, broke his neck, and died. Fell downstairs a few feet in a little, one-story wooden house, and died. Yet this man had ridden on a murdering avalanche. Queer— isn't it?

RECONCILIATION.

THE West glows softer and the breeze blows mild,
Each flower is nodding like a sleepy child.

I come to you, O Love! to make my prayer—
Let us be reconciled.

Say that the words we had to-day were wild,
Unmeaning, thoughtless, written in the air,
To be destroyed by dusk beyond repair.

Who was to blame? Must we go back to find
The grain we fought for? Nay; mine eyes are blind
I swear all search is vain so late, my dear:
And I am quite resigned.

'Tis past!' the West declares; and in the wind
There breathes a sigh, 'Forget!' and I can hear
The flowerets lip 'Forgive!' O Love, draw near.

We, who did quarrel on this summer day,
Are met together when its eve grows gray.

And surely, sweet, in this last little light
Your heart shall bid me stay.

I know we said 'good-bye,' and turned away
When all the world beneath the sun was bright...
But now, it seems, we cannot say 'good-night!'

J. J. BELL.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SALMON FOR FOOD AND SALMON FOR SPORT.

By AUGUSTUS GRIMBLE, Author of *Highland Sport*.

FOR the last ten years the supply of Scotch salmon has been steadily decreasing. What are the causes of this decay? What remedies are wanted not only to arrest it but to turn the falling off into a yearly increasing yield? The causes are quite clear: they are over-netting by too numerous bag-nets, the non-observance of the weekly close-time by very many of them, the poaching of scringers and steam-trawlers, badly-marked estuary lines, and absurdly-dated yearly close-times. These are the main points to be dealt with; but undoubtedly the large increase in the number of bag-nets is the prime cause of the decay.

Before going further, it may be well to define the difference between a 'bag' and a 'stake' or 'fly' net. In each the principle is the same: a net stretched taut from the shore, against which coasting fish will strike; and, in following it up to pass round it, they are guided into a box-shaped bag at the end, out of which they seldom find their way, although the opening by which they went in is, of course, always available. The stake or fly net is used in shallow water, and fixed to stakes driven into the ground; the bag-nets are used for deeper water, and are floating nets fixed to buoys moored to anchors. In some places they are used singly, in others they are put out one beyond the other seaward from the shore.

During the last thirty years the numbers of these nets—or 'fixed engines,' as they are also called—have been doubled, until now there are close on two thousand of them working on the whole of the Scotch coasts, of which about three-quarters are on the east and north coasts. They are by no means evenly distributed, as in certain parts long distances are to be met with in which there are no nets; but wherever experience has shown that salmon may be captured, there are the nets clustered together as thick as they well can be. In the hundred miles of coast between

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Fife Ness and Peterhead there are fully nine hundred bag-nets at work, or one in less than every two hundred yards. Here, with a vengeance, is an example of the abuse of netting rights crying loudly for legal interference; and if that does not come shortly the jealousies of the rival tacksmen netting against each other will lead to a still further increase in even this enormous number. Nets which are worked between the mouths of two rivers running into the sea near to each other should be entirely done away with—as, for instance, those working on the three to four miles of sandy shore lying between the mouths of the Dee and the Don; for there can be no doubt that the presence of an unlimited number of bag-nets between the mouths of these two rivers is most unfair to the chartered rights of the river-owners.

On all the remote and inaccessible parts of the coasts the bulk of the bag-nets do not observe the weekly close-time; and, though the fact is well known to the Fishery Board, prosecutions are few and far between. 'Surprise' visits are occasionally made; but the carrying of them out is too often entrusted to the relations or friends of the men to be surprised, so a hint reaches the netters before the visit takes place, and of course everything is found in order. Give me a smooth sea and (so that the netters' plea of 'rough weather' may not be available) a fast steam-launch, and, starting at six o'clock on Saturday evening from a small port that shall be nameless, by six o'clock on the Monday morning following I would undertake to have detected from forty to a hundred bag-nets all fishing through the weekly close-time!

The Fishery Board Report of 1884 says on this subject: 'With regard to the non-observance of the weekly close-time by the bag-nets it ought to be stated that it is in some measure owing to the system by which the men who work the nets are paid. These men, besides their regular wages, are paid to a certain extent by results, and the more fish they catch the more money they receive. The natural and inevitable consequence of this

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system is to induce and encourage breaches of the weekly close-time wherever any pretence for its non-observance can be founded on stress of weather, or where the district where the bag-nets are worked is so remote as to be seldom visited by the river watchers.' Though this report was issued fifteen years ago, the lawlessness has increased instead of decreased. One more case of illegal fishing can be mentioned that may serve as a warning to anglers. Some few years ago I stayed at a Highland hotel with a salmon river attached to it, let by the day, week, or month at a pretty stiff rate. For four days I fished it for one fish, in the meanwhile hardly seeing another. So, as the water and the time of year were both right, I gave up, as it happened, on a Saturday evening; and, not being able to depart on Sunday, I took a stroll of some six miles to the nearest bag-net station. The sea was like a mirror, but the whole of the nets—eight of them in all—were fishing just as if no such thing as a close-time existed. Returning to the hotel, I sent for the landlord and told him of the discovery, and put it to him that he was not acting fairly in advertising his river and inducing anglers to come and spend their money with him while he was probably well aware that the bag-nets habitually disregarded the weekly close-time, and were thus each week robbing his river of a certain number of fish. He admitted the justice of the complaint, but excused himself by saying I was the first gentleman who had found it out, and that he 'dared not interfere.' That river still continues to be advertised; and, as it once had a reputation, fresh anglers go to it each year, while the nets still continue to fish the whole of the weekly close-time!

I could multiply instances without end of this habitual law-breaking and disregard of the weekly close-time; and there are but few tacksman who have not been fined for the offence. Many of them complain that it is hard to make them responsible for the acts of their servants, whose unlawful operations have been carried out in defiance of the strictest orders to the contrary. They claim, in fact, an exemption from the law of *Qui facit per alium facit per se*, which governs all relations between master and man throughout the kingdom. What would the tacksman say if the servants of the railway company that carried their fish-boxes to Billingsgate stole their salmon *en route*? Would they be content if the railway company answered their just complaints by stating that such act of their servants was strictly against orders, and that, therefore, it was hard to hold them responsible? The two cases are on all-fours, and it is surprising that such a plea should have been seriously put forward.

To obtain convictions requires an altogether different method of going to work than is at present in use. The local water-bailiffs are nearly always friends or relations of the men they are

employed to watch; blood is thicker than water, and hence the rarity of prosecutions. I know of one case where two English bailiffs were put on a Scotch district; they were fearless men, strangers to all around, did their duty boldly, undeterred by threats; and in two seasons they effectually extinguished close-time fishing, as well as a good deal of poaching.

Personally I have always considered it would prevent all this illegal work if the owners of the netting-rights worked them for their own profit, instead of letting them for small rents, to be worked by outsiders, who make very large profits, amounting to sums which most proprietors would be glad to have in their own pockets. If they owned land farms that would pay them from sixty to a hundred per cent. profit on their outlay for working them, it is quite certain they would not let them for less than they were worth; but they seem to think water farms are too troublesome to manage, though they will undoubtedly yield the large profits I have named; and thus there are very few owners who work their own nets or realise what they lose by letting them. If owners netted for themselves the fact would be a guarantee that it would be done fairly—for owners are mostly gentlemen, and gentlemen are not poachers.

I will take now some nettings I know of on about twenty miles of coast, on which there are fish to be netted from the 11th of February, the opening day of the season. On this stretch of shore there are just fifty bag-nets—not evenly distributed, but bunched together thickly on the best fishing-grounds. These fifty nets are leased to a tacksman for £250 a year. Let us look at his other expenses, and try to make an approximate estimate of his profit or loss.

Each bag-net will cost him about £20. Every seven, often every five, of them will require a visiting boat costing £17. Each boat will want a crew of five men at £1, 2s. a week—the lowest estimate of wages; there will be ice to purchase, carriage to pay, fish-boxes to buy, and repairs of plant. Here we have as capital:

Fifty nets at £20	£1000	0	0
Seven boats at £17.....	119	0	0
Purchase of fish-boxes, anchors, &c.....	131	0	0
	£1250	0	0

This is for a plant specially liable to be damaged and to wear out quickly; probably every three years it would require nearly entire renewing, so let us add £400 a year and call the capital £1650.

Next there are the working expenses. Probably the whole of the fifty nets would not be fished from the 11th of February. Say that but twenty-one nets are worked for the first eight weeks of the season, requiring three boats of five men each at £1, 2s. a week, or £132. At the end of the eight weeks the whole fifty nets would be put on for the remaining twenty weeks of the season, entailing

a further expenditure of £770, or a total of £902 for wages. To this add the cost of ice, railway freight, &c.—say £98; to which must be added £250 for rental.

So here is a capital of £1650 requiring an outlay of £1250 to work it. How is the tacksman to recover his outlay and make a profit?

Let us suppose that each net catches a fish a day during the season. Then, the twenty-one nets fishing for the first eight weeks will take 1008 fish; for the next twenty weeks the whole fifty will get 6000 more, or a total of 7008 fish, of an average weight of 10 lb.—equal to 70,080 lb., which will be sold at an average of 1s. 2d. per lb., and so realise £4088. Thus the tacksman will have paid all his expenses, recovered his outlay, have £400 in hand against depreciation of plant, and yet have a clear profit of £1188!

I have the best of reasons for saying this estimate is not very far out for the cost of working any fifty nets between Berwick-on-Tweed and Duncansby Head. If the cost of the plant has been slightly underestimated, the capture of fish per net per week has certainly been taken at less than it really is; at any rate, if I am anywhere nearly correct, here is a nice profit that owners might just as well put in their own pockets instead of handing it over to a tacksman.

To turn now to *messieurs les assassins*; the space at my disposal compels me to dismiss all the race of river gentry, from the shepherd who takes a single fish for his family dinner to the large and lawless gangs of night-poachers. The river-sneaks, however undesirable they may be, cannot, however, do one-hundredth part of the harm that is wrought by a crew of scringers, or a steam-trawler, or the poaching captain of a yacht. We will take the scringers first. Their homes and their hunting grounds are almost entirely on the west coast, the great numbers of burns and rivers running into the sea offering them opportunities which are lacking in the estuaries of the larger rivers and less indented coasts of the east of Scotland. Oban is notoriously the headquarters of the fraternity. From that town alone there are fully six boats of six men to each living entirely by poaching; to the north and south there are other minor resorts; and between these gangs the sea-trout are already nearly exterminated, while in due course the salmon will follow. The poachers use a herring or mackerel net with a deep bag, at times fishing from the shore in the usual method, at others fishing in deep waters, having the net between two boats, which make a wide sweep and then come together. They are a lawless, reckless lot, prepared to offer violence to any one, and keeping the lessees of the bag-net fishings at bay by threats of cutting their nets adrift if they interfere; and the evil has now got to such a pitch that only vigorous action and severer penalties can stamp it out. At Oban they openly land their fish and sell

it under price; and this continues for fully a month after the commencement of the annual close-time on the 26th of August.

There is not a single proprietor on the west coast who does not complain of this abominable poaching. Government interference seems to be hopeless, and no Scotch member of Parliament is apparently willing to take the matter up. The question then arises: Would it not well pay the whole of the west coast proprietors if they entered into a combination—say from the Inver River on the north to the Add on the south? On this stretch of coast there are fully a hundred rivers and burns that are being ruined, and quite fifty proprietors who are interested in them; if they would combine and subscribe, say, £25 each, there would be funds sufficient to hire for three months two fast steam-launches, provided with search-lights, and captained and manned properly. If two such boats were well handled they should not only make short work of the scringers, but would also be able to detect the greater part of the bag-nets fishing during the weekly close-time; while the proprietors would speedily recoup themselves by increased rents or increased sport. The steam-trawler poacher, I am glad to say, is already attracting the notice of Parliament. Why? Because the scringers themselves complain of their depredations to the gentlemen who represent them there!

There is another class of scringer meriting the most severe punishment—namely, the poaching skipper of a hired yacht. Every season large sums are made—as much as £300 one skipper owned to—by keeping the poached fish on ice and sending them to market as opportunity offers; and a yacht on a west coast trip presents this every two or three days.

The estuaries of most rivers have been made too small, and fixed entirely in favour of the nets, and never in the interests of the salmon or the rivers. Most of the estuary limits would be better for revision. The description of many of them is also very difficult to understand; here, for instance, is a common form of delineation. The estuary of the Findhorn reads as follows—and what could be more vague or more puzzling even to the oldest fisherman on the spot?—‘A line drawn due north from the outermost of the two shipping piers of the town of Findhorn as extends from high-water mark outwards to two hundred yards below low-water of equinoctial spring-tides; on the west a line parallel with and one and a half miles distant from the foregoing described line, and also extending outwards from high-water mark to two hundred yards below low-water of equinoctial spring-tides; and on the north a line of two hundred yards out from low-water of equinoctial spring-tides, and connecting the outer ends of the two lines herein-before described.’

It is equally hard to understand the close-times

fixed for some rivers. Take the Hope, for instance, which opens for the rod on the 11th of January, but in which no clean fish has ever been caught or even seen until the middle of June! There are also plenty of rivers which open on the 11th of February, and yet contain no clean fish till two or three months later. Why, then, should they be 'opened' by law so long before they are 'opened' by nature? Again, the Helmsdale opens for the rod on the 11th of January, but the Brora, only a few miles distant, cannot be fished till the 11th of February; and yet on the 11th of January there are probably more fresh-run fish in the latter river than in the former. It is discrepancies like these, which could be multiplied indefinitely, that show in what a slipshod and happy-go-lucky way our salmon-fishery laws have been framed.

Members of Parliament talk grandly about salmon as a 'food-supply.' What nonsense that is! A food supply means something that the masses can live on and enjoy at a price they can afford to pay. In February this year salmon was 5s. 6d. per lb.; at the end of May it was 3s. 6d.; and it is never less in price per lb. than the finest Southdown mutton. Food-supply, forsooth! How many working-men are there who can afford to buy salmon at even 10d. per lb.? To be worthy of the name, salmon should be sold at 1s. per lb. in February, and 4d. per lb. in May. This could be done—easily done—by legislation and proper protection; and, in spite of the cheapness, the owners of the rivers and the tacksman would both make heavier profits than they do at present. The angling values would increase enormously, while the tacksman might have to work harder for a shorter time, but it would pay him much better to catch 100,000 fish of 10 lb. each and sell them at 3d. per lb. than to catch 10,000 fish of the same weight and sell them at 1s. per lb. To arrive at a millennium of this sort every available means must be used; and this brings us to the matter of hatcheries, and the question as to whether they really help.

There is some difference of opinion on this point; and in several instances the small returns obtained have set both proprietors, tacksman, and anglers against them. Where, however, the return of fry to the river nearly equals the number of eggs taken from the fish, then surely it must in the long-run far exceed the yield of nature. Floods, frosts, and droughts are powerless to destroy the ova in a hatchery, which is also protected from the ravages of birds and fishes. Moreover, if the burn into which the fry are eventually turned be previously dammed back until the bed is nearly dry, and all trout and eels removed; and if it be further protected by netting (wire or other) from the overhead attacks of gulls, &c., then it can safely be asserted

that the artificial method will be much more productive than the natural one. Of course there must come a period when the fry have to be turned into the river, and once there they will have to take their chance with the naturally-hatched fry; and I have met with those who maintain that the artificially-reared fry are not so sharp as the natural fry in protecting themselves from the attacks of gulls, &c., and that these latter fry will instantly seek shelter under stones at the sight of a hovering gull, while the former do not recognise the enemy until too late.

Many hatcheries are kept up by private enterprise, as those of Lord Abinger, on the Spean; the Marquis of Ailsa's, at Culzean; the Marquis of Breadalbane's, at Taymouth; Lord Burton's, at Glen Quoich; Sir John Fowler's, at Braemore; Mr Pilkington's, at Sandside; the Duke of Richmond's, at Fochabers, from which 840,000 fry were turned into the Spey in 1898; and the Duke of Sutherland's, at Torrish, on the Helmsdale, which I had the advantage of seeing under the guidance of Mr Macfarlan and his keeper, Mackay, who superintends it. Other hatcheries are at Alness, Brora, Loch Buie, Canon Bridge, Dupplin, Durris, Howietoun, Stormontfield, Tongueland (on the Kirkcudbright Dee), and last, but not least, that of Mr Armistead, on the Solway. Some of these belong to the district fishery boards, as those of Dupplin and Durris; others, like those of Howietoun and Mr Armistead's, breed to sell. In the few places in which hatcheries have been abandoned, bad management has been the cause; but, as a rule, when once started they have been kept up on account of the benefits that were derived.

The following rivers have no hatcheries: Annan, Awe, Ayr, Cassley, Carron, Cree, Deveron, North Esk, South Esk, Findhorn, Forth, Ness, Nairn, Oykel, Shin; also, nearly all the small rivers of the west coast are in the same plight. Now, if there is any good at all in hatcheries, each river should certainly have one, if not two, attached to it, each capable of hatching out 500,000 ova; and the district boards should have power to order their erection and be able to provide for their cost and maintenance by a *pro rata* tax on every one deriving profit or pleasure from the river or its coast fishings. Of course, hatcheries of themselves will not do everything that is necessary to restore and improve to the utmost our salmon-fisheries, yet they will go a long way if backed up by better protection against poaching, by the prevention of netting during the weekly close-time, and by judicious alterations in some of the annual close-times and estuary lines. In my humble opinion, it is only parliamentary interference that will do these things, and effectually bring salmon-eating and salmon-catching within the reach of the multitude.

THE BEGGAR OF THE BLUE PAGODA.

By CARLTON DAWE.



It is often the unexpected that happens, so the unsuspected are invariably worthy of suspicion; and this unique theory was never better exemplified than in the case of Meng-Hi, or, as he was commonly called, the Beggar of the Blue Pagoda. This pagoda was an unpretentious one, which was fast falling to decay, and it stood on a little eminence to the north of the Great Wall. Once, no doubt, it was looked upon as the *fung-shui*, or good luck of the place; but of late it had lost its reputation, and the authorities had allowed it to fall into neglect. In its roofless upper stories the birds built their nests, while weeds and shrubs grew round and out of its dilapidated windows. It was said that these windows had once been painted blue, hence its name; but the woodwork was all weather-stained and rotten, and the whole structure presented a sad picture of dreariness and decay.

Many and many a time I had passed the pagoda, and always with a certain amount of interest; for rumour had been rife with its reputation, and it bore a name that was anything but honoured. Though the road that ran by it was much frequented through the day, at night the people gave it a wide berth. Most of them believed that it was haunted. Many had actually seen the presiding ghost, as it peered out at them from the ruined windows; others had heard cries as of men in agony. In fact, so vile had become the reputation of this particular pagoda that many of the people had petitioned the Government to have it demolished, a petition which was duly considered, and might have been acceded to had not the superstitious element been introduced into the controversy. If an evil spirit had taken up his abode in the pagoda, it were as well to leave him alone. There was no knowing what form his wrath might take if he were deprived of his habitation.

How I came to be associated with the Blue Pagoda, and of Meng the Beggar, I will set forth as succinctly as possible. Be it understood that I was a person of some official importance in Peking—what matters not; but, as I was seated in my office one day, a card was brought to me bearing the inscription of Tong-Che-Li. Tong was one of the most magnificent officials of the Tsung-li-Yamen, and as such I gave him an immediate audience. He entered, looking most dejected, and with a grave bow gave me salutation. I offered him a cigar, lighting one myself. He took it, but he did not light it. I saw that his long fingers were unconsciously squeezing it out of all recognisable shape.

'You will pardon the liberty I have taken in obtruding upon your illustrious privacy,' he began; 'but a matter of moment has forced me to dispense with the more honourable formalities. Behold a father plunged in grief for the loss of a beloved son—a son in whom was the light and the wisdom of the world. I know not what has befallen him; but I fear that he is gone, and that my name shall be known no more on earth.'

'Please tell me what has happened.'

'Sorry am I to say that my knowledge is meagre in the extreme. Three days ago he left his home. He has not returned.'

'You have traced him?'

'From house to house, through the city to the North Wall. He was last seen in the vicinity of the Blue Pagoda. For miles the surrounding country has been searched, but without the least success.'

'And you have come to me?'

'To bring the superiority of your honourable brains into action.'

I shrugged my shoulders.

'Name your own reward,' he continued eagerly. 'Though I am a poor man, I would willingly impoverish myself for him who is the flower of his race.'

'You are all alike,' I said. 'You wait until the scent is cold, or the enemy has a long start, and then you come asking me to catch him up. It is impossible. Am I a magician, that I should succeed where other men fail—men who are greater than I?'

'I would have come long since,' he answered frankly; 'but people said, "Who is this foreigner that you should go to him? His vanity is great; it will be greater if he thinks he is indispensable!" So I came not, much to my great sorrow. But all else having failed, I now come to you in my despair, and beg that you will use your illustrious intelligence in my unworthy cause.'

It seemed to me that there was little honour or profit to be got out of this quest; but, taking compassion on the father, I promised to do all that lay within my power, though I warned him of the folly of harbouring any too sanguine expectations. Then, when he was gone, I sat once more, lit a fresh cigar, and began to think. In ten minutes I had decided upon my plan of action. Looking at my watch, I found it was about an hour after midday. Time enough for *tiffin*. After the meal I dressed myself so as to look like a respectable business man, and stole quietly from the house, my objective being the Blue Pagoda. Here Lowan, the son of Tong-Che-Li, was last seen; and from here I intended to

begin my investigations. It was, as I have said, an expedition holding out little prospect of success; but I had promised to go on with it, and I had too much faith in my star to let an unpropitious outlook thwart me.

The Blue Pagoda stood on a slight eminence a little way back from the road, and was approached by a path which led to a considerable village on the other side of the hill. As I entered this path, my eyes fixed on the pagoda, a voice imploring alms fell on my ear. Turning sharply to the right, I saw, seated on the ground by the wayside, one of the most extraordinary figures imaginable. Clothed in rags, and gaunt and dirty, the beggar had doubled himself up in a way that made him seem all arms and legs. He looked up at me with queer, twisted eyes; and then I saw that his face was ghastly with hunger or pain. In one hand he held a crutch, in the other a little tin receptacle for *cash*. Seeing me stand to watch him, he began to whine and supplicate in the most approved fashion, and with the aid of his crutch painfully dragged himself to his feet. If, sitting, he was a pitiable object, standing up he was infinitely worse. His legs seemed to overlap each other in some extraordinary fashion, and had it not been for the support of his crutch they would probably have collapsed altogether.

So this was Meng, the notorious Beggar of the Blue Pagoda. Some said he was rich, though it was difficult to associate riches with such filth and rags; that he was most cruelly afflicted was patent to the least observant. Yet the air was rife with many strange stories of him—stories which did not always redound to his credit. Thus it was said that, while he cringed to the dauntless, he almost demanded alms of the timid, a malicious glance of his twisted eyes being quite enough to extract a small donation. Nervous people, if alone, did their best to elude him in their comings and goings. To pass him without a bribe was an ordeal which few of them had the courage to undergo. Every child who came within reach of his crutch felt the weight of it.

To his earnest solicitations I gave him a few *cash*, and tried my best to enter into a conversation with him; but to all my questions he replied with the one whine, 'Alms, master; alms for the poor cripple.' For a few more *cash* he overwhelmed me with objectionable blessings; but it was not to be blessed by him that I had come. I thought that I could not apply to one more likely to give me the information required. Lowan had last been seen near the Blue Pagoda. The Beggar might remember him, might even recollect if he had been alone or not. It was a very slender chance, but I had learned not to slight the meanest opportunity. Yet when I looked at him I paused as if by intuition; looking close, I found him less satisfactory. Truly his eyes were hideous in their deformity, but I was not sure that I had not seen people twist their eyes in a somewhat

similar manner. Moreover, twisted as they were, it was absolutely impossible for him to see. Yet I had never heard that he was blind. So I began to think, and thought bred considerable doubt. It is probable that never before had Meng been subjected to so close a scrutiny.

'You seem in a pitiable condition,' I said. 'How came your honourable eyes to possess such an extraordinary twist?'

'The gods frowned at my birth,' he answered, turning his face up to me.

I did not wonder at nervous people fleeing from him. He was painfully, frightfully hideous.

Then he began once more the old whine, 'Alms, master; alms for the poor cripple.'

'Why don't you say poor blind cripple?'

'Because Heaven has still left me some consolation. I am not blind.'

'But I say you are. I am a doctor, and I say that it is impossible for you to see with your eyes twisted in this fashion. Liar, thief, cheat! You are not blind, you rogue. Look at me;' and I gripped him by the shoulder with a suddenness which completely threw him off his guard. As if to confirm my suspicion, his eyes opened naturally and he glared furiously at me. I flung him aside, forgetting for the moment his crippled state, and he fell with a whining cry like that of a feeble old man. But I was too angry with him to feel any remorse, so I marched off promising him a visit from the law, while he continued feebly to jabber curses.

However, heeding him not, I passed the pagoda and made my way across the hill to the village of which I have already spoken. Here I spent some time in making inquiries; but of Lowan I secured not one scrap of valuable information, though the people had many strange tales to tell of the Beggar with the twisted eyes.

It was almost dark when I set out from the village; and as I approached the pagoda I saw the fluttering figure of Meng-Hi blocking the path before me. Doubting not that I was seen, I felt at once for my revolver. But a few paces farther on I instinctively came to a halt, for I saw that the man's back was to me. In my soft shoes I had approached so noiselessly that he was unaware of my presence. Hesitating not a moment, I crouched in the grass by the wayside, and almost immediately after the Beggar disappeared in the shadow of the pagoda. Wondering what this could mean, I knelt for some little time, a prey to not a few very curious sensations. But presently I perceived the glimmering of a lantern far down the path, which proclaimed the coming of travellers. Immediately I retreated some paces farther back into the grass.

Certainly I did not know what to expect; but kneeling there, waiting for something to happen, had a most singular effect upon my nerves. I gazed at the pagoda towering ghost-like in the gloom, and something of the awe of the place

made itself felt. I did not wonder at the superstitious folk peopling that strange edifice with evil spirits. But presently, where the path widened by the foot of the pagoda, I beheld the lantern come quivering towards me, though it was too dark to see who carried it. Indeed, strain my ears as I would, I caught no patter of feet; but just then a groan, followed by a piercing shriek, came from the region of the pagoda and wailed away in the darkness. It was a ghostly sound—awesome enough to make a strong-nerved person shudder. Therefore its influence upon the superstitious travellers was no cause for surprise. He who bore the lantern dropped it with a terrified shriek and sprang forward; those who accompanied him also screamed with terror; and presently some half-dozen forms flitted by me, rushing as if for dear life. There would be some strange tales told in the village that night, and many men and women would creep tremblingly to bed.

I sat upon the grass and thought; and thought gave birth to some strange sensations. Fancy assumed the cloak of reality, and Meng, the ghost, and the mystery of the pagoda, became living entities. I was now quite willing to believe most of the tales told of the doings of the supernatural inhabitant. Indeed, had I not heard the shriek and the groan with my own ears?—a pair of witnesses in whom I had implicit confidence. It was no sighing of the wind or screaming of a wandering night-bird, but a ghostly shriek, calculated to make the soul jump from a superstitious body. About it being the cry of a disembodied spirit I had some doubt. Then, what was it? One answer only was obvious. It must be the work of the Beggar, Meng. Hiding behind the pagoda, he had played off his practical joke on the ignorant travellers, who, believing that the place was haunted, wanted but little convincing. I could imagine the ugly wretch revelling in the terror he had awakened; for a fellow with a twisted body could hardly escape a twisted soul. And yet the shriek had come from far up the pagoda; of that I had no doubt whatever. Certainly it is extremely difficult to locate sound; but nevertheless it can be located, and I would venture my oath upon the accuracy of my judgment. Then it was equally obvious that if the sound came from high up the pagoda, somebody must be there to produce it. Was it the Beggar, Meng-Hi?

At any rate, the matter was worth investigating, and I accordingly resolved to investigate it. I therefore began a stealthy advance through the grass on my hands and knees, my ears alert for any suspicious sound, my eyes glued to the windows of the pagoda. But I neither saw nor heard anything calculated to throw light upon my doubts, and I reached the base of the edifice without mishap. Fortunately for me the night was dark, so that once I crept into the shadow

of the projecting base of the lower story I was enabled to stand upright. Instinctively I made for the side where I had seen the Beggar disappear; but in the darkness I could scarcely distinguish one stone from another. However, I quietly made the circuit of the structure, blaming myself all the time for not examining it more closely when I had daylight and the opportunity.

When I say that I had completed the circuit, I mean that I was under the impression I had returned to my starting-place, but that was evidently not so; for, still moving forward, and groping with my hands as before, my fingers suddenly encountered the end of a rope. Startled at the sudden impact, I at once let go, at first scarcely realising what it was I had touched. But a moment's reflection reassured me. I put up my hand again; the thing was still there. A rope undoubtedly, which my fingers instantly encircled. Fancy now assumed a more definite shape; and, as I carefully tested the rope, I found that it was strong enough to bear my weight. Again I thought of the Beggar, though it was impossible to connect him with any acrobatic feat. Yet there was evidently somebody in the pagoda, the entrance to which had been attained by means of this rope. But I could not comprehend the utter carelessness of leaving the rope dangling; unless, in the man's anxiety to reach the upper part of the building before the travellers passed, the thing had been forgotten.

For a time I remained undecided what to do. Reason bade me wait and seize the culprit as he came forth; but rashness, a thing I loathe because it masters me so often, advocated no less daring an enterprise than that of mounting by the rope and exploring the pagoda. But this suggestion was coldly received. I was not going to walk into the lion's den when, by waiting, the lion would most probably walk into my trap. Therefore I clutched the rope and waited—and waited.

I don't know how long I stood there straining intently for every sound. Not many minutes, perhaps; but in my impatience it seemed like an eternity. Then a thought assailed me which made me still more impatient. What if the rascal had gone to roost? I must confess this annoyed me consumedly. I might have to watch through the whole night. True, said reason, but you will catch him in the morning. Yes, indeed; but the morning was a long way off. Moreover, he might draw up his rope and decide to take up his quarters in the pagoda for a month. Then I should be perfectly helpless, as the authorities had too much respect for sacred things to admit of a desecration of the edifice. But when I called in reason to my aid I knew that rashness would gain the day. It was but a petty subterfuge of mine, a sort of conscience-easer. Instinctively my hands gripped the rope

tightly, and my feet began to grope along the masonry for a hold.

This first story, which might be called the foundation of the pagoda, was some twelve or fifteen feet high; and by the time I reached the top I felt that I had gone twice that distance. However, I dragged myself on to the platform, and there rested for a moment to regain my breath. Then, following the line of the rope, I found that it was hooked to a broken stanchion which had been one of the supports of the little balcony that had once run round the edifice, dilapidated fragments of which still remained. It required but little skill for a person standing on the ground to fling the hook round the stanchion. After I had fully regained my breath I crawled carefully to the nearest window, and, parting the weeds which flourished on the sill and in the corners, looked in. Nothing but darkness met my eyes, stillness my ears. I waited patiently, scarcely daring to breathe, yet nevertheless cogitating deeply within myself. The fact is, I was in an extremely awkward predicament. The darkness was so intense that I could not see to move, while to strike a light would have rendered me a rather conspicuous mark. Therefore I hung pendulous, as it were, in the grip of hesitancy, my ingenuity entirely at fault. I leant through the window as far as I could, and felt carefully so as not to dislodge any loose stones or plaster. Still, it must be remembered that I was groping blindly, and the result was that two or three pellets went clattering to the bottom; but, as they made only a slight noise, I was in hopes that little attention would be paid to the occurrence. Nevertheless I drew back and listened and waited.

Five, ten minutes I knelt thus, but no sound came to warn me of any watchfulness within. Then, once more, I gradually protruded my head into the aperture, and was about to light a bit of candle which I found in one of my pockets, when suddenly something whizzed past my ear and caught me a fearful blow on the left shoulder. Though for the moment it paralysed that side, I instinctively shot up my right hand, which immediately came in contact with a man's clothes. With a howl, the fellow struck another blow at me; but here at last the darkness stood my friend, and I escaped any grievous injury.

The momentary paralysis passing away, I seized my assailant with both hands, and immediately he flung himself upon me with the fury of a fiend. Of course, not seeing my danger, I could not tell exactly what he aimed for; but presently I felt myself lurch forward, and the next moment he and I went flying down into the inner darkness of the pagoda. Fortunately the fall was broken by something in the form of a roof or awning, which gave way beneath our weight; otherwise there is no knowing what would have happened, for we next struck the bottom with a force which shook the wind out of me, and

necessitated a loosening of our grip. Instinctively we both rolled away from each other.

Still as death I sat, holding my breath, listening intently, a revolver in my hand. But he gave no sound, and I tried to delude myself into the belief that he was knocked senseless; and yet I dared not put that belief to the test by lighting a match, for fear that he might shoot me, or spring upon me with his knife before I could defend myself. So for some minutes I sat quite still, until the darkness and the strain became intolerable; and during the whole of that time my mysterious assailant gave no sign of life. A dozen times I was tempted to strike a light; but some instinct which would not be gainsaid forbade the dangerous experiment. Still, I could no longer endure the terrible strain; so, as noiselessly as possible, I rose to my feet and carefully began to feel my way about, and the first thing my hand touched was a *human face*. I drew back with a shudder, while the owner of the face uttered a gasping shriek, which sounded singularly awesome in the uncanny darkness. After that we seemed instinctively to give each other more breathing space. Occasionally I heard him moving in the darkness; but for many minutes at a time no sound broke the awful stillness. I, backing a little, had come in contact with the wall, and there I meant to stay. It might be a long vigil, but daylight would come. With its first ray we should see who was to be master.

It now struck me as somewhat curious that he, who must have known so well every inch of the ground, had made no effort to escape in the darkness; and, the more I thought of this, the more valuable I believed my present position to be. Moreover, what meant the noise he was making over yonder if not to attract me thither? I believed, and not without reason, that I guarded the exit, and I pressed my back still more firmly against the wall, and vainly sought to penetrate the awful gloom. It may be difficult to convey the horror of such a situation; it certainly was one I have no wish a second time to experience. Indeed, it gradually grew so unbearable that I knew that it was exhausting my patience; and, had he not fortunately forestalled me in a forward movement, I might have been led to perpetrate some act of indiscretion.

I had remained so abnormally quiet, so immovable, that he could no longer endure the intolerable uncertainty. The warnings of his whereabouts had proved ineffective. I believed I guarded the exit, and no temptation would remove me from my post. But he, finding that the strain was no longer to be borne, and no doubt hoping that I had moved, began to creep forward, and I felt his outstretched fingers suddenly encircle my neck. It was a fearful shock; but, realising that the time had come, I instantly gripped him with my left hand, and with the other hurriedly raised the revolver. But before I

could fire, he, aiming at my head no doubt, hit me across the knuckles with a blunt instrument of some description, knocking the weapon from my hand. As it fell to the ground it exploded.

And now began a fierce struggle between me and my unknown assailant, he trying his hardest to choke me, I striving to return the compliment. He kicked, bit, scratched, fumed; he was like a hell-cat, a fiend let loose from the bottomless pit. A dozen times I thought I had him at my mercy, and as often he escaped me. I tried to throw him, but he was like a cat on his legs. His fury and his strength were equally remarkable, his attack being of the most venomous and savage nature. But at last I got a grip on him; and, forcing him back against the wall, I pressed my knee into his stomach, and presently he hung limp in my hands. I touched his head. It fell without resistance from side to side. The man was either dead or unconscious. Of that there could no longer be the slightest doubt.

Carefully laying him on the floor, and kneeling upon him for fear that he was shamming, I lit a match and held it low down, and I was not a little astonished to see the face of the Beggar, Meng; for, though I had believed him to be the culprit, his agility in the fight was not such as one would associate with a cripple. Indeed, the deformity of Mr Meng was but a clever assumption.

Well, I lit my candle and secured him, and I found that I was right in my conjecture respecting

the exit. Above me dangled a rope, by the aid of which Meng drew himself up and let himself down into the well of the pagoda, which he had transformed into a living apartment. It was the roof of this dwelling which had broken our fall.

Having no wish to spend the remainder of the night in such company, I once more examined my victim; and, finding that his breath came regularly, and that he was securely bound, I felt no scruple in leaving him. With the aid of the rope I easily swung myself up out of the dismal hole, and glad was I once more to feel the fresh air play about my heated face.

Little remains to be told. I hastened to the city, through the gates of which I had permission to pass at any hour; and, returning with my assistants, we soon had Mr Meng-Hi hoisted out of his retreat. An investigation of the pagoda resulted in our discovering, among many other things, the personal effects of the missing Lowan. Meng-Hi had murdered him, and his body, with the bodies of several others, was buried in the pagoda.

Not long after this the old edifice was struck by lightning and partly demolished, an incident which proved beyond doubt the anger Heaven entertained towards the accursed place. The authorities consequently had it razed to the ground. But the old people still pass the spot with a shudder, though the earth is no longer encumbered with the Beggar of the Blue Pagoda.

PICTORIAL POST-CARDS.

By NORMAN ALLISTON.



WHEN, some years ago, an astute photographer in Passau, Germany, chemically sensitised an ordinary postal card, and subsequently printed a view of his native town upon it, he little thought that he had thereby given birth to a craze absolutely unparalleled in the history of souvenir cards. The extraordinarily rapid development and wide diffusion of the craze is generally little known or imperfectly realised in this country. A few figures, gleaned from the report of the British Consul at Frankfort, should convince the sceptical that the pictorial post-card, having outlived the faddy stage and become a separate and distinct art, must be taken seriously.

A trade-paper estimates the number of workmen who find employment solely by the manufacture of illustrated post-cards at twelve thousand. It has been stated that at present about one hundred new post-cards are published daily in Germany. Calculating on the average of one thousand copies per design—a low estimate according to experts—this gives a daily total of one

hundred thousand cards, or six hundred thousand per week, which equals a yearly issue of over thirty million. As the German postal authorities report an increase of twelve million on the number of postal cards despatched yearly as compared with the number posted before the growth of the craze, it follows that Germany must export a large number of the same. This is indeed the case, for Germany exports more than half of the total number of cards that she makes, the principal recipients being South America, Australia, Austria, France, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, and Sweden.

We would remind those who may fancy that the above estimate of an average issue of one thousand copies per design appears an excessive one, that during a single season one hundred and forty-eight thousand postal cards of the national Niederwald Monument of Germania were sent through the post. This beautifully situated memorial, erected to commemorate the success of the Fatherland in the Franco-German war, is annually visited by a large number of patriots and foreign tourists, which fact no doubt accounts for the extraordinary figures above. This, of

course, also applies to the Kyfhauser Monument, for which exactly the same numbers are given. The old tower of the castle at Heidelberg figured on no less than thirty-six thousand cards in one season. Again, more than one million illustrated pasteboards were despatched from an industrial exhibition which has lately concluded at Berlin; while at the Horticultural Exhibition at Hamburg the number mailed is officially given as five hundred and seventy-two thousand.

From the above it may be seen how acute Germany's cartomania is. If further proof were needed, one has only to peruse the numerous cartophilic press. There exist no fewer than from forty to fifty journals entirely devoted to cartography in this sense.* About one-half of these are published in Germany; while Austria, Italy, Hungary, France, Belgium, and Switzerland each possess one or several journals—mostly monthly ones. A large percentage of these are the official organs of souvenir post-card clubs; others are designed to cater for the unattached collector.

These few statistics should at least compel respect for the insidious souvenir post-card, which threatens to become a dangerous rival to the postage-stamp, so far as collecting is concerned. Indeed, it is almost bound to become more widely popular. It is complete in itself: on one card you have the foreign stamp and postmark, the greeting or notice of safe arrival of your friend, and, lastly, the presentment of his present surroundings—a picture of some far-off land, a lasting and pleasant souvenir. Thus the illustrated post-card admirably fulfils its mission in a handy form, conveying more than the verbose four-page letter in a fraction of its space. Add to this the fact that neat post-card albums are obtainable at very moderate prices, and it will be acknowledged that post-card collecting is at once an amusing and convenient hobby.

Some of the albums hold two, others four, cards on a page; but the method of inserting the post-card is common to all, the card being slipped under small slits in the paper in such a manner that it is held by the tips of its four corners, thus obviating the necessity of using adhesives. In this connection an example of our English conservatism and insularity may be noted—namely, that, among all the European countries, our post-cards alone differ in size and shape from those which are almost universally adopted. It follows that English souvenir cards are looked upon with disfavour among foreign collectors, because they do not fit into albums that hold post-cards of the more general size.

Concerning the illustrated cards themselves, it is most difficult to give any idea of the extreme

diversity of their style; but they may perhaps be divided into two classes—namely, photographic reproductions and others. At first the post-cards reproducing photographic views exhibited very crude workmanship, similar to the penny view-books sold in the London streets. A very different order of things now prevails, and the general excellence of the make-up of souvenir cards having been considerably perfected, several German firms are able to place upon the market, at the old prices, photographic post-cards which for finish and clearness of detail surpass the illustrations of our best monthly magazines. The same may be said of the lithographed reproductions of water-colour drawings, some of which are by noted artists. Topical post-cards are in great request—such, for instance, as the 'Dreyfus Affair' card, with a photo of the disgraced soldier sandwiched between Zola and Picquart; or the 'Peace Conference' card, with photos of half-a-dozen of the principal delegates. So-called 'art' post-cards are enjoying a fashionable vogue at present; abstract subjects are usually fantastically handled in line or monochrome by clever artists, and some of the designs may lay claim to lasting value. In others of these 'art' post-cards the artist's daring exceeds his discretion, sometimes as regards the subject dealt with, at other times in the inartistic execution, in which latter case the result is often a flaming, meretricious miniature poster, depicting vermilion cows against a background of purple trees, or the like.

In this, as in other industries, novelties will always command a ready sale, and are consequently brought out in large numbers. Among the minor novelties may be counted the partially transparent picture post-cards; these, when held up to the light, reveal some unexpected distortion of the real picture, as in some Christmas cards.

A post-card, measuring twelve inches by ten with a panoramic view of the town from which it is to be sent is certainly something new. This Brobdingnagian post-card, which could easily be cut up into half-a-dozen English court-shape post-cards, is of course far above the size allowed by the post-office regulations, and is therefore mailed as *Drucksache*, or printed matter.

A fragile and costly novelty to send through the post is a thin strip of wood (!) of regulation post-card size, with some sylvan scene hand-painted in oils on the back.

The 'secret-code card is a very ingenious conception; it consists of a numbered card perforated at regular intervals. This is placed over an ordinary post-card, and the blank spaces written in; the code-card must now be turned, leaving other spaces to be filled in. A post-card written in this manner will be practically indecipherable except to the recipient, who has beforehand been supplied with the corresponding key-card.

Some pictorial post-cards have their views in relief, yet leaving the side reserved for the address

* The little barbarisms, 'cartomania,' 'cartophilic,' 'cartography,' are hardly distinctive enough; but they have been used for the sake of brevity. 'Cartography' till of late meant only the much more important 'science' of map-making.

perfectly flat. Others have facings of silk—that is to say, views woven in silk; these clever works of art emanate from Crefeld, the home and centre of the German silk-weaving manufactories, and are comparatively cheap.

The very latest, and a very interesting novelty, are the metachrome cards. The pictures, coloured or otherwise printed, are coated with a thin layer of white oil paint, making the view underneath look misty, but at the same time rendering it possible to use the whole surface for writing. On receiving the card thus written on, the message should be duly noted, and the post-card laid in water; in a moment—hey, presto!—the writing and mist have entirely disappeared, leaving a charming view, or what not, ready for insertion in the album.

As in stamp collecting, certain post-cards possess greater value for the collector than others. The more remote the locality from which the illustrated card is mailed the rarer it becomes. Of course, money will bring together a fine collection, for by means of existing post-card societies it is possible to have rare post-cards mailed to any address from all sorts of out-of-the-way places, in return for so much money. These societies have correspondents practically all over the world, and have a fixed scale of charges. They advertise cards in series, and agree to post, for instance, an American series (say five cards from five important cities in the United States) to your address within a certain time for the sum of two shillings. A series depicting the royal residences at London, Berlin, Paris, Moscow, and Constantinople costs the same amount, each one being posted from its respective capital. In this manner a large and varied collection of souvenir post-cards might be formed, but many prefer to keep such only as have been forwarded to them by friends.

Private post-card agents also undertake to keep the moneyed collector well supplied by making special journeys to a neighbouring country, where they agree to mail to subscribers a pictorial card from every town of importance they visit.

Reverting for a moment to rare post-cards, news is just to hand of a set of illustrated cards that has gone up a hundred per cent. in value under peculiar circumstances. These particular cards contained a copy of a photograph taken in Posen; and, Posen being a fortified town of the first rank, the authorities objected to a certain strategic secret being given to the world on the back of an illustrated post-card. Thirty-two stationers and retail merchants were therefore summoned for selling such wares, were fined, and ordered to deliver up their stock of this particular set of cards and the blocks from which they were printed. Some one or two hundred copies of the condemned print are nevertheless reported to be in circulation.

At the time of writing, two important illustrated post-card exhibitions are being held: the

one at Ostend (this is the first that has ever been held in Belgium), the other at Berlin. Some twenty to thirty thousand specimens of the new industry are on view at the German capital. Visitors to Paris next year will also have an opportunity of marking the progress made in France in the publishing of embellished post-cards, as there will be a national exhibition at Versailles. It is a sign of the times that a cartophilic congress has lately been held at Prague.

How, then, is this post-card industry progressing in our own country? Very indifferently, it must be admitted. There are several reasons to account for this state of affairs, the chief among which is no doubt the innate conservatism of our merchants and manufacturers. English illustrated post-cards compare very favourably with those of foreign make as regards the price; but as regards artistic effect, fine finish, and general excellence of get up, our cards are absolutely 'not in it,' as the schoolboy would say. 'No,' say the English postal authorities; 'we have got a certain shape for post-cards, and we're not going to alter that for anybody.' 'No,' likewise says the English printer; 'we use a certain process which gives a wood-block, smudgy appearance to photogravures, and we're not going to alter that for anybody, either. None of your new-fangled, made-in-Germany notions here. I print the card as I want to; you can take it or leave it, as you like!' Result: the public leaves it. The inadaptability of the home merchant to new conditions is apparent in his mode of selling the finished cards. Generally speaking, you cannot get a card singly; they are all put up in packets. This is obviously bad policy, for who wants to send off a dozen post-cards to herald a few hours' stay in a strange town? A welcome exception to this absurd custom are the penny-in-the-slot illustrated post-card machines to be seen at some of the more important railway termini. The only thing that prevents these from becoming more widely patronised is the fact that the cards which they supply are not sufficiently attractive.

Our fine art publishers would seem to be quite blind to the possibilities of the pictorial post-card, and are seemingly ignorant of the commercial profit to be reaped from the speedy sale of novel and original art productions. Illustrated Christmas cards are no longer fashionable; birthday cards and valentines are things of the past. Now, if ever, then, is surely the time for novel pictorial post-cards to be placed on the market, the time to commission original designs by capable British artists, to expend sufficient care over their printing and finish, and, finally, to widely distribute them. This latter essential—the distribution—is very badly managed in England; stationers seem to be the only retail tradesmen who sell cards. In Germany they can be obtained at every café, restaurant, or hotel; tobacconists, barbers, toy-vendors, and, naturally, book-shops and stationers retail them; hawkers sell them in the

street, at the railway stations, on steamboats and trains, anywhere and everywhere. While not advocating quite such an ubiquitous distribution as obtains in Germany and other parts of the Continent (where, it must be remembered, they are passing through the crisis of cartomania), we think that it should be possible to obtain single illustrated cards at tobacconists, at railway newspaper stalls, and at hotels.

The illustrated post-card is bound to become immensely popular in England, if only our apathetic designers, printers, and retail shop-keepers awake to the fact that profits will follow adequate commercial exploitation.

Pictorial post-card collecting forms an interesting and fascinating hobby, and the filled album will make an agreeable diversion, at once artistic, reminiscent, and instructive. It is perhaps not generally known that Her Majesty the Queen has taken great interest in the development of the picture post-card, and has requested a royal relative to form a collection on her behalf. This should give considerable stimulus to the awakening interest felt in England in the illustrated post-card, and bring the boom within measurable distance. Let us hope that the latter will produce many miniature artistic masterpieces, and not merely result in an unintelligent, evanescent craze.

IRISH INDUSTRIES.

THE MARBLES OF IRELAND.

By MARY GORGES.



NE of the many difficulties with which Irish industries have had to contend has been the want of interest shown by the Irish themselves during past years, when the tide of fashion was adverse to Ireland and her products; when in fact, if not in word, the feeling existed—among a certain section at least—that no good thing could come out of the country. In *The Absentee* Miss Edgeworth has faithfully depicted this, in the character of Lady Clonbrony, with her affectation of what she supposes to be the true English accent, her 'ree'lly' and 'cawnt,' her horror of being supposed to be Irish. It would be interesting to trace the causes which produced an idea so prevalent; but here I only mention it as a powerful factor in the failure of former attempts to turn the natural advantages of the country to account. The reaction has come; strangers are recognising the resources which Ireland possesses, and are directing the world's attention to them; and therefore some which have never quite died out are receiving a fresh impetus, while others yet in their infancy begin to look forward to a great future.

The Irish marbles and granites are instances in point. It is strange how little is generally known about an Irish industry which cannot be regarded as new—the quarrying and manufacture of marble. Many hundred years ago, as remarked recently, 'the ecclesiastical architecture of Ireland bore splendid testimony to the skill of native workmen in forming beautiful designs from the various marbles found in the country.'

The marbles of Kilkenny are the first mentioned in ancient records. Mr G. H. Kinahan, late of the Geological Survey, writes: 'The black marbles of Kilkenny are historic. Although we have in very ancient structures—such as

those of Askeaton, County Limerick, and Clonmacnoise, King's County, samples of very ancient marble, yet the first written record of Irish marble seems to be that of Gerrard Boate, written in 1652, in which he mentions: "Beside the freestone which is in every part of the land, there is marble found in many places, but more about Kilkenny, where not only many houses are built of the same, but whole streets are paved with it. . . . This marble, while it is rude as it cometh out of the ground, looketh grayish, but being polished it getteth a fine brownish colour, drawing somewhat towards the black."

The marble-works at Kilkenny were the first direct endeavour to utilise this product of the soil in modern times. They were founded in 1730, or perhaps a little earlier, by Mr William Colles, the son of a physician and surgeon who settled in Kilkenny in the latter end of the seventeenth century. The business has remained ever since in his family—that is, for five generations. William Colles is remarkable for having been the first person, in modern times at least, who applied power to the manufacture of marble, the various processes before his time having all been performed by hand. The following is an extract taken from an account of him and his mill in Tighe's *Survey of the County Kilkenny*, published in 1802:

'The mill is admirable for the simplicity of its structure and for the power it exerts. A wheel gives motion by a crank at one end of its axis to a frame containing twelve saws, which do the work of about twenty men. By a crank at the other end it moves a frame of five polishers; at this end Mr Colles has lately fitted a frame beneath the polishers with eight saws. The mill may fairly be said to do the duty of forty-two men daily. Water is never wanting; and from the goodness of its structure it is

scarce ever stopped on account of repairs. . . . The machinery of the mill was the invention of Alderman Colles, grandfather of the present proprietor. He was, to use the words of an ingenious communication, a man of great mechanical abilities, and abounding in a variety of those eccentric schemes which mark original genius; one of which was an attempt to make dogs weave linen by turning wheels; another, the supplying the Corporation of Dublin with bored marble tubes as pipes for distributing water through the city, was defeated only by a combination of pump-borers and other mechanics, who rose in a mob and destroyed them on their arrival. While he amused the populace by various devices, such as that of a musical instrument which played by itself and floated on the stream of the river, and many others, he applied himself to the construction of machinery for different purposes, and invented a water-mill and an engine for dressing flax, simple and efficacious. He applied his marble to the construction of a vast variety of articles.'

In a *Tour in Ireland*, published in London in 1748, by Two Englishmen, it is said: 'Near the mill are apartments called warehouses, where you may see such a diversity of chimney-pieces, cisterns, buffets, vases, punch-bowls, frames for looking-glasses and pictures, &c., that they would employ the eye the longest day, and yet find something to admire. The marble is full as durable and bears as high a polish as any brought from Italy. I am informed that this ingenious gentleman sends yearly several shiploads to England, which gives me a particular satisfaction, that they may find a native of Ireland has outdone all they have hitherto seen.'

The marble referred to here is the black fossil marble of Kilkenny; but there are many others, beautiful specimens of some of which lie before me.

The Kilkenny marble-mills are situated on the banks of the beautiful river Nore, and are about two miles south of the town of Kilkenny. The machinery is driven by five large water-mills, and every stage of the process may here be seen, from the hewing and raising the marble blocks at the quarries to the cutting, sawing, chiselling, moulding, turning, rubbing, gritting, and polishing.

The Kilkenny black marble is of two kinds: one a jet black, of shining depth, which recalls the derivation of marble from the Greek *mar-mairein*—to shine or glitter; the other is richly marked with fossil formations. Kilkenny also produces marble of dark steel-gray, flecked with a lighter shade, and each of these blends beautifully with the green marble from Connemara, and the red, pink, and dove-coloured from County Cork. Two of these marbles bear the poetic names of 'Gray Sunset' and 'Pink Sunset,' the light-gray ground of the first being shaded

with pink, through which run veins of deeper colour; while the other has a redder tinge and darker veinings—just such difference as is between the sunsets of early spring, with their pink flush and delicate tintings, and the vivid reds and stormy grays of a later season. Two extremely handsome red marbles are called respectively 'Acres' and 'Victoria' or 'Cork Red'—it seems to have both names—in order to distinguish them, as they come from the same district, and resemble each other, though the 'Victoria Red' is darker, being, indeed, of rich claret or maroon colour. This comes from Little Island in Queenstown Harbour, and other parts of County Cork. The limestone of these quarries is, moreover, very valuable, for it bears the brunt of centuries of wear, and still retains its colouring, which is beautiful, taking the most delicate traceries, and under skilful hands a high polish, showing fossil formations. The Cathedral of St Finn Barre, Cork, is of this material, and the pillars in the nave are of the 'Cork Red' marble, as are the pillars of the large Catholic church at Queenstown. The Cathedral is a magnificent building, standing on the site of the ancient monastery of St Finn Barre, first Bishop of Cork.

It was Mr Martin of Ballinahinch—the famous Dick Martin, who owned nearly all the countryside between Galway and Clifden, whose avenue was forty miles long, and whose exertions caused the passing of the 'Act for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals' in days when the subject was scarce thought of—he it was who first polished the green marble of Lissoughter, Connemara. A mantelpiece of this marble which was presented by him to George IV. is now in the Carlton Club, London. An American company is working the quarry at Lissoughter now, and sending large blocks to America; while the quarry belonging to the Irish Marble Company is at Streamstown, near Clifden.

About thirty years ago the town of Galway was the seat of fairly prosperous marble-works; and as tourists were then beginning to find their way to beautiful Connemara, some trade was done in ornaments which they could carry away as souvenirs of the country, such as brooches in designs of shamrock clusters, or harps, crosses, links, pendants, and charms of various kinds—all pretty and effective, and showing wonderfully in small compass the many tints of the green, from aquamarine to deep myrtle, sometimes in veins sharply contrasting with the colour of the ground, sometimes in delicate shadings, like those produced by the effect of light on green waves. So it came to pass that Connemara marble was a little better known to the outside world than were others; indeed, by many it was thought the only Irish marble of any consideration, and quite unique in colour. But green marbles are found in Italy and other countries, though, as a rule, their colour is darker than that of the Irish green. In a

highly-polished specimen from the Kilkenny marble-mills this is moss-green, the vivid green of moss that grows in the shade, at once soft and bright, and thrown out by a gray-blue ground, seen between the green which, as it were, clusters over it. Contrasting it with a duller, more opaque specimen of the same, coming from another source, I can understand how wonderful must be the process of polishing in the Kilkenny marble-mills of which I have heard. The Galway works failed, and lay idle until about fourteen years ago, when a Galway resident, Mr J. Miller, determined to try if the trade could not be revived. He reopened the works, and with no small success began to draw marble from the quarries of Connemara, and turn it to various uses. He also worked the black marble quarry, about three miles from the town of Galway, the product of which is highly esteemed. At his works are some very beautiful mantelpieces of this black marble, with artistic insets of Galway granite, executed most effectively by Galway men, who are found admirable subjects for training to this craft.

To properly appreciate the Galway green marble it should be seen in pillars, slabs, staircases, the architraves to doors, and dados, in all of which it is now employed, as well as in the mantelpieces, which from the first have been prized. It forms a beautiful contrast to the red and other Irish marbles, as was strikingly shown lately in a pulpit executed by Messrs Sharpe & Emery, of Dublin, the gift of an Irish gentleman to a newly-erected church in Jerusalem, the sides of which are panels of these various marbles. So the Isle of Saints sends forth of her treasures to the Mother of Christendom!

Messrs P. J. Neill & Co., Dublin, showed me several designs of Celtic crosses and ornaments, for which the firm was awarded the gold medal at Chicago. One in particular, an adaptation of the Royal Cross of Cong, in which Sicilian marble was used with Victoria red and Connemara green, promised a beautiful effect when finished. Messrs Neill & Co. do a large business in ecclesiastical work, and speak hopefully of the prospects of our Irish marble industry, as they find that the home product gives as much satisfaction as the imported article, and the demand for it has greatly increased within recent years. This is pleasant to hear from the senior establishment of sculptors in Dublin, and the more satisfactory, because, as a rule, only very beautiful materials are used in church work, and the test by comparison is therefore great.

There is a movement on foot with the purpose of arranging for an exhibit of Irish marbles at the forthcoming Paris Exhibition. Even if this led to no appreciable extension of trade abroad, in view of the cost of freightage, the heavy import duties charged, and the fact that marbles are plentiful in most foreign countries, yet indirectly this exhibit would probably be of great advantage by spreading the knowledge of our

Irish marbles among those who, as Lady Cadogan recently pointed out, scarcely know of their existence; but principally by calling attention to them on the part of the Irish themselves, who are often too ready to conclude that what comes from a distance must necessarily be superior to that which can be got at home. Yet the foreign marbles, equally with our own, do not bear long exposure to weather without losing their lustre, and both are therefore better fitted for internal than for external decorations, and inferior in this respect to our native granite, which is rapidly growing in importance.

For the reasons already given, there is little trade with the continent of Europe, but the Irish Marble Company do a very fair business with the United States in marble and monumental work, the latter in unpolished gray marble, which is of a uniform pleasing shade and very durable, bearing well the severe test of American winters, to which white marble soon succumbs. The trade with the United States might be much larger but for the very high duties which are levied there on imported marbles, both in a rough and polished state. On polished marble the duty is fifty per cent. *ad valorem*.

A monument of Kilkenny stone in memory of the late Cyrus W. Field, projector of the Atlantic telegraph, has recently been worked at the Kilkenny marble-mills, and sent to the United States for erection there. It consists of a massive double headstone and moulded base, the headstone sloped on top and moulded on edges, with carved palm-branches crossing each other, and surmounted by a Latin cross, all in high relief on the front, with the inscription in raised polished letters underneath.

The Irish Marble Company have also supplied the slab from their quarries at Kilkenny for a very interesting memorial tombstone erected in Peterborough Cathedral to Queen Catharine of Aragon, the cost having been defrayed by the 'Catharines' of England, Scotland, Ireland, and America; Mrs Clayton, the wife of Canon Clayton, being one of the originators of the movement. It is a beautiful specimen of Irish gray fossil marble, and consists of a solid slab weighing nearly a ton. The face is highly polished. In the centre is the true coat-of-arms of Catharine of Aragon, containing representations of castles, lions, and eagles, and rich ornamental lines delicately carved. The only other enrichment is an incised wheel-cross surmounted by fleurs-de-lis. The lettering forms the border between incised lines, the groundwork being 'sparrow-pecked.' The work has been carried out from the design of Mr Pearson, R.A., the Cathedral architect.

H.R.H. the Duchess of York, while in Ireland during the spring of 1899, paid a visit to the ancient cathedral of St Canice, Kilkenny, and on seeing the new marble pavement in the chancel, which consists exclusively of choice Irish marbles

from the quarries of the Irish Marble Company, Kilkenny, she made the remark that it was certainly the most beautiful pavement she had ever seen—a remark, need it be said, eagerly listened to and remembered.

The Irish marble industry has been able to hold its ground through all its difficulties, and what is really wanted to enable it to do much more is a very simple matter—namely, that persons

of wealth and position who contemplate or have entered on building operations should *require* their architects to specify native coloured marbles (both British and Irish) instead of the foreign varieties which architects are so fond of. This suggestion, if adopted, will do more to help our native marbles than anything else; and it is to be hoped that some influential person may soon set the good example.

SOME STAGE CONTRATEMPS.



NE of those unrehearsed incidents which call for extra smartness on the part of the performer if he wishes to avoid appearing ridiculous occurred at a performance of *The Shop Girl* during October 1895.

The French Count, at a sally of wit from Appleby anent his feet, retorts sarcastically, 'I reserve my foot for you, sare,' at the same time raising it as if in the act of kicking. On this occasion his boot unfortunately flew off into the wings, displaying a large hole in his sock. The ready-witted comedian who played the part was, however, equal to the occasion. 'Farewell, sare!' he exclaimed tragically, limping round the stage. 'Farewell! We shall meet again! I go—to mend my socks!' The house literally roared with laughter.

Miss Sarah Thorne tells a good story of how, when she was playing in *The Colleen Bawn* at a provincial theatre, the gun loaded with powder to shoot Danny Mann was missing from the wing just before it was required, and could not be found. At the last moment one of the actors, eating from a paper bag, emptied out the biscuits, inflated the bag, and bursting it with a sudden blow, Danny rolled over into the water, killed by the report of a paper bag as effectually as he would have been by a real gun.

Miss Marie Wainwright narrates an absurd instance that nearly threw her off her balance during a first night: 'Perhaps you remember that as Dame Hannah, in *Ruddigore*, I had to go on with a small dagger, with which to threaten the wicked Baronet's wife. When my turn came round the dagger was nowhere to be found. Nothing would induce me to go on without my property, and although Mr Barrington implored me to appear without it, I was resolute. There was a terrible stage wait, and at last Mr Barrington grew desperate, and forcing something into my hand, absolutely pushed me on to the stage. And what do you think it was? A large gas key. I continued to conceal the absurd makeshift from the audience; but when I had to hand my supposed dagger to Mr Grossmith, he most unkindly gave me away. 'How can I kill myself with this thing?' he said, holding up the gas key in its

entirety, which produced a perfect howl of laughter, and for some minutes we were unable to continue.'

One of those extraordinary lapses of memory which sometimes affects actors once occurred to Mrs Patrick Campbell when acting at the St James's Theatre. 'My most painful experience since being on the stage,' says that lady, 'occurred one evening when, two minutes after my entrance in the first act of *The Second Mrs Tanqueray*, an absolute blank of memory came over me. I had played Mrs Tanqueray more than a hundred times; but every word had left me for the moment, and I had to read the part from the prompt book; yet I heard from friends and professionals in front that I never played better.'

When Charles Kean was playing 'Richard III.,' his fearful grimaces in character paralysed all the other actors with fright, much to his amusement. On one occasion a new man had to take the part of the sentinel who awoke Richard. When asked 'Who is there?' he had to say, 'Tis I, my lord: the village cock hath twice proclaimed the hour of morn.' But as Kean was making such fearful grimaces and scowling at him, the poor fellow lost his head, and could only stammer, 'Tis I, my lord; 'tis I, my lord; the—village cock! 'Tis I, my lord; the—village cock!' By this time there was a decided titter all over the theatre, and Kean then said, 'Then why the mischief don't you crow?' which, needless to say, brought down the house.

Jefferson while playing 'Rip Van Winkle' went to the theatre one evening tired out after a long day's fishing. When the curtain rose on the third act it disclosed the white-haired Rip still deep in his twenty years' nap. Five, ten, twenty minutes passed, and he did not wake. The fact was that all the time he was really sleeping. Finally, the patience of the gods became exhausted, and one called out, 'Is there going to be nineteen years more of this snooze business?' At this point Jefferson began to snore, which decided the prompter, who, opening a small trap, began to prod him from below. The much-travelled comedian began to fumble in his pocket for an imaginary railway-ticket, and muttered, 'Going right through, collector,' which transfixed the audience with amazement. An instant later Jefferson sat up, with a loud shriek, evidently in

agony. The exasperated prompter had 'jabbed' him with a pin.

The audience is sometimes responsible for interruptions which give performers an opportunity of displaying their ready wit. Barry Sullivan, the Irish tragedian, was playing in *Richard III.* some years ago at Shrewsbury. When the actor came to the lines, 'A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse!' some one in the pit called out, 'Wouldn't a donkey suit you, Mr Sullivan?' 'Yes,' responded the tragedian, turning quickly on the interrupter; 'please come round to the stage door.'

Many years back, when Toole was playing at the Hull theatre, a man in the stage-box suddenly inquired if he might ask him a question. Toole seemed surprised, and answered, 'After the play.' But the man persisted, whereat the audience roared, 'Turn him out.' Toole calmed them, saying, 'We are Englishmen; let every man have his say;' adding to the man, 'Go on, sir.' 'I want,' said he, 'to ask your advice. Having a little more money than I knew what to do with'—here Toole pricked up his ears—'I invested it with the Khedive of Egypt, and now I can't get my interest. What would you do?' 'I think,' said the actor, 'I should *sue his canal.*' There was never a laugh. A London audience would have fully appreciated such a sally; but it fell quite flat on the ears of the north-country folk, who went home growling in a mystified way that Mr Toole had been fooling them somehow.

Signor Foli some years since took part in a concert at St Helens, where he sang 'The Raft.' He had just finished the first verse when an infant in arms made the hall resound with its cries. Foli commenced the second verse, the first line of which runs, 'Hark! what sound is that which greets the mother's ear?' He could get no farther than the end of the line by reason of a fit of uncontrollable laughter. The audience at first failed to see the cause of his mirth, but presently it dawned upon them, and they all laughed heartily with him. He left the stage, but soon returned smiling, and rendered in his inimitable style, 'Out on the Deep.'

This calls to mind an absurd blunder related in Tom Moore's *Diary* concerning John Kemble. He was performing one of his favourite parts at some country theatre, and was interrupted from time to time by the squalling of a child in the gallery, until at length, angered by this rival performance, Kemble walked with solemn steps to the front of the stage, and exclaimed in his most tragic tones, 'Ladies and gentlemen, unless the play is stopped the child cannot possibly go on!'

It was not often that Charles Mathews was nonplussed; but one night at the Olympic a swell in a front stall got up in the middle of one of the scenes to put on his coat for the purpose of leaving; whereupon Charles, with a cool manner

which in any one else would have been impertinent, said, 'You had better wait a little, sir; there's more to come.' 'That's just the reason I am going,' said the swell; and Charles said afterwards that he had never felt so sat upon in his life.

Like all else, this subject has its tragic side. Once at the Surrey Theatre the harlequin slipped as he leaped through a clock-face, and his leg stuck in the scene. Harry Payne, who was playing clown, thinking to cover a bad retreat with a laugh, took hold of the leg, and shaking it violently, roared out, 'Oh, there's a clumsy man!' The harlequin was pulled through, and the scene proceeded; but as he did not put in an appearance again, Harry asked the prompter what was the matter. 'Poor fellow! he has broken his leg,' was the reply. It was the leg that Harry Payne had shaken. When he heard what he had done it was too much for his big, tender heart, and he fainted dead away.

THE MORN'S MEANING.

HERE in the height I sit awhile;
Down in the vale the river leaps and sings,
And all ephemeral exultant things
Sun themselves in God's smile.

My heart, attuned and answering,
Feels the grave passion of an autumn day
Beat, like the music of a pulse at play,
In blade and leaf and wing.

My spirit mystically hears
The intense, innumerable, murmurous sound,
The audible silence of Earth's endless round
That comes not in the ears;

And the strong sense of life divine
Diffused through golden Nature's happy mood
Makes a communion of the solitude,
And all the world a shrine.

It is a chapter hard to con.
Sages are fain to read it, seers have sought
To scan its page, and all has come to nought:
And the great scene goes on.

For who his daring skill would prove
On such a theme, must spare both lore and wit,
Leave the blind sophist to his chains, and sit
In the sweet school of Love.

There I—born blind—have sat, and see:
And solve the enigma well, and understand
This thing, that in the touch of one small hand
Lies all the world for me.

And I, Love's scholar, reading true,
This bright morn's lesson do declare, and say
To you, my dear, my loved one, far away,
That I, you love, love you.

T. H. PASSMORE



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

DIFFERENT WAYS OF LOOKING AT THINGS.

STAY-AT-HOME people in England are rather apt to get into the way of looking at things from one particular standpoint; and it is only when we go abroad that we find others—and especially those of a different religion to ourselves—who may be most excellent characters and good citizens in every way, taking exactly the opposite view to ourselves. For instance, it is considered a laudable ambition with us for a father to wish that his son should rise in the world and reach a higher social position. But a good Hindu, owing to the caste system, never dreams of making his son in any way different from himself; and if a groom or a farrier, for instance, had twenty sons, they would all be brought up to the father's trade. In the same way, they never dispute the superiority of a man of a higher caste than themselves; and, conversely, a high-caste man never considers it necessary to disguise his contempt for a man of a lower caste.

I remember that once when I was having my lesson in Hindustani from my high-caste *munshi*, whom I employed on first arriving in India, he dilated with great bitterness on the arrogance of Europeans. Presently, wishing to give some orders to my low-caste sweeper about my dogs, I asked the *munshi* to interpret for me, and, among other things, to hand the sweeper two rupees, and to give my directions as to certain purchases. Instead of placing the money in the man's hand, the *munshi* threw it on the ground, and the sweeper quite contentedly gathered up the coins, saluted respectfully, and withdrew. I asked the *munshi* how it was that he, who resented the arrogance of Europeans so much, was so insulting in his behaviour to the poor sweeper; and he explained that the latter quite understood their respective positions, and did not expect a high-caste man to run any risk of touching him, well knowing the penalty of fine and troublesome purification which would be thereby entailed.

On the railways alone, where no provision is made for different castes, does the Brahmin run the risk of encountering such contamination rather than pay the extra charge for a first-class ticket, with which he would probably have little difficulty in getting a compartment to himself. The old story will bear repeating of how a great observer, on observing the following incident, prophesied the breakdown of the caste system by the railways when first opened in India: A Brahmin was standing at the door of a carriage filled with low-caste men, gesticulating and trying to persuade them to leave the compartment, when along came the European guard, anxious to get his train off, and inquired into the cause of dispute. Cutting short the Brahmin's explanation with 'Hang your caste!' or something like it, he pushed him into the carriage, banged the door, and started the train.

In these days of religious controversy, conscientious objections to vaccination, and reluctance to kissing the book, it is refreshing to recall the broad-minded views of John Chinaman on the last-named subject as expressed in the court at Singapore. In that colony natives of southern India generally take an oath by killing a fowl, Chinamen by breaking a saucer, Englishmen on the Testament as at home. Our friend John, however, on being asked how he would be sworn, replied: 'Kill im cock, break im saucer, smell im book—all the same!'

With us it is considered the height of bad breeding to hint in any way that you are tired of the society of a caller, and wish to cut short his visit; but in India when a native calls upon a European he expects to be told when he may go; in fact, he waits till he is told '*Ruksut hai*'—that is, 'You have my permission to withdraw.' Once I had a call from a native doctor, a highly-educated and superior man; but I was not aware of the etiquette on the subject, and the poor man sat on for two hours, looking most uncomfortable, while I wanted to go to attend to various matters; and it was only when my

visitor saw the preparations for my dinner nearly completed that he managed to go away. An officer once called upon a petty rajah, who, assuming a rank above that of his visitor, tried to dismiss him with a '*ruksut*,' when the officer naturally became very angry, and, after giving free utterance to his sentiments, declared his intention of staying as long as he chose.

We are rather proud of the beauty of our wives, and like our friends to admire them; but in India a rich man when travelling, and obliged to let his wives out of the zenana, to prevent any other man seeing them has them carried about, even in the hottest weather, in completely closed sedan-chairs, and with their entire heads and bodies covered with a thick cotton garment, only peep-holes for the eyes being left. If a low-caste Hindu finds his wife given to flirting, he cuts off her nose to render her less attractive; while, until lately, as soon as a Japanese woman got married she had her pretty white teeth blackened with some corrosive preparation of iron, which, however lively she might be, did away with the likelihood of any man wishing to make love to her.

I was once talking to a native in India, who informed me he had two wives. I remarked that they would probably be jealous of each other; and, on his assenting, I asked him how he managed when they quarrelled. He replied without hesitation or embarrassment that he then gave them a real good thrashing. I could not help admiring the virtue of such a method of treatment; for, as 'a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind,' the ladies no doubt, when they became companions in misfortune, would feel drawn together and inclined to forget their little differences.

With us a large family is generally considered somewhat of a misfortune, and a man is anxious to save money to leave to his children; but in the East it is still true that 'blessed is the man that hath his quiver full of them.' A man in work will always support not only his parents but all his poor relations. In the vast continent of India, with its teeming population, mostly miserably poor, so that it is considered affluence to be able to afford to eat twice a day—where there are millions who never know what it is not to be hungry—there is no such thing as poor-law relief. One's poorest servants, who live and keep a family on from six to ten shillings a month, always have some poor relations hanging on to them, who lie doing nothing all day, but are always welcome to a share of the scanty dinner when it is ready. Once, talking to a Japanese, I asked him how he would do when he got too old to work; when he pointed with pride to his happy children running about, and intimated that he had sons whose privilege it would be to keep him in his old age. Of course it is well known that in China

this feeling is carried still further, so that the son worships his father. Thus it is of the greatest importance for a Chinaman to have a son to carry out the proper rites for him on his death; he only values his wife if she gives him a son, while daughters are very often cast out to perish at birth, or sold to be brought up to a life of degradation and shame.

An incident once happened showing a curious way of looking at things on the part of several people. A doctor was summoned hurriedly to visit the child of a native soldier in Ceylon. Before he could reach the 'lines' he was met by some one who said he need not go, as the child was dead. Some days afterwards he received an anonymous letter to say that the child had been murdered, and was buried under the hut of its parents, while a mock funeral had been held, and a doll buried in the usual burial-ground. The doctor took the letter to the magistrate, who pooh-poohed the thing, but told his police-sergeant to make some inquiries. This latter official found that a doll had actually been buried; and, on approaching the hut of the parents of the child, surprised an old woman running away with something which, on examination, proved to be the decomposed body of the infant, which she had evidently just extracted from a hole in the floor of the hut. When the matter was thoroughly sifted it was proved that there was a company of strolling jugglers in the place at the time, and that these people were always anxious to get hold of the skull of a first-born son for their tricks and incantations. Now, this child was a first-born son; and when it was likely to die, the parents heard that the jugglers proposed to exhume the body and steal the skull. Instead of invoking the protection of the law, the poor father and mother of the child tried to prevent the mutilation of its body by the subterfuge above described, while the jugglers, in revenge, wrote the anonymous letter in the hope of getting the infant's parents into trouble. The distrust in the power of the law to protect them is very general among the inhabitants of India, and is due partly to the race having lived for many generations under alien and oppressive conquerors, and partly to the corruption and extortions of the subordinate (native) officers of the law at the present time.

Another incident occurs to me as illustrating this point. A friend, an officer in a native regiment, was obliged to march with his sepoy through standing crops during some manoeuvres. He observed the owner of the field wringing his hands, and evidently in great distress at the damage done to his corn; he kindly spoke to the man, and told him he could get full compensation for any damage by applying to the proper official. 'Ah, sahib,' said the peasant, 'your men may have done five rupees' worth of damage; but it

will cost me ten rupees in bribes before I can come before the Commissioner Sahib to state my complaint.'

These few anecdotes may serve to show that we must not always think our way of acting and

looking at things is necessarily the only one or the best; and that, before condemning others as uncivilised or ignorant, we must remember that their circumstances and education are very different to ours.

THE SILVER LINING IN THE CLOUD.



HE paused for a moment, holding the bonnet at arm's-length and regarding it critically. The old woman at work at her knitting stopped too, and eyed the girl half-sadly.

'Doesn't seem much improved—does it, Annie, my lamb? The ribbon's terrible stained inside as well as out.'

The girl smiled as she answered, 'Oh, never mind, aunty dear; it will do well enough this dull weather. Besides, who is to care except you and John; and you'll love me no matter how shabby my clothes are?'

The old woman muttered.

'What's that you say, aunty?' The girl's tones had sharpened: there was suspicion in them.

The old woman looked frightened; nevertheless she stood her ground firmly. 'I say men are finicky folk; you never know when you have them. They set a deal o' store by clothes'—

'But not John!—oh, not John! Why, aunty, are you forgetting how long it is since we became engaged? We're almost like old married folk now.'

'Love doesn't always grow warmer through keeping,' sighed the old woman.

'Doesn't it? You cross old woman! You've risen on your wrong side to-day.' And the bonnet was tossed aside, and the young arms thrown lovingly around the wrinkled old throat, and kisses showered on the hard-lined face. 'As if you could possibly know anything about it—you!—an old maid! Oh yes, all very fine—*kept them at a distance*—and, indeed, he would need to have been a brave lad who would have approached you!'

Then the light-hearted mockery left her tones, whilst her face settled to its usual gravity.

'It's true I'm but a poor working-girl, but some day I shall be a lady—and that day's not very far distant now; for lately there's a something come over John—he's not quite the same—seems preoccupied like, and asks what would I do were he to go away—would I follow him, or remain as I am? *Follow him!* I'd follow him to the ends of the earth and count it no hardship! No, aunty; John's not always to remain a poor doctor's drudge, doing all the hard and uninteresting work—out late at nights and early in the mornings, whilst Dr Spence takes his rest! No, he means to set up for himself; and he'll

earn his due. He has such a way with him, aunty. I saw him once when a lady fainted away at the studio. I never can think how a poor village lad has learned the trick! You'd never imagine but he was gentleman born. I'm trying hard to be like him. I watch the ladies as they come and go—the real ones—and copy their ways. Oh no, aunty, 'tis not *vanity*; 'tis that he may have no cause to feel ashamed of me.'

In spite of herself the old woman laughed, then sighed. 'You're just your mother's image, Annie! But please God your life may be a happier one than hers! Sometimes I wish we were back in the wee cottage again, though we worked hard and money was scarce. I'll never get used to Edinburgh ways, nor living like this cocked up in the skies!'

'It's the long stairs, and my being away so much!' sympathised the girl. 'You fret when you're alone. And we might easily have a better house; but you're so dreadfully stingy—though it's not for yourself, you dear old soul, you save, save, save! And John as would love me though I came to him in rags and with never a penny to my purse!'

Annie Baillie was an orphan, the child of a village girl who died in giving birth to her. The father's name remained obscure—at least to the village folk—for the poor girl had returned home only to die. It was then that the child's aunt came—a plain, hard-featured woman—leaving an excellent post she had held for years as housekeeper to a bachelor gentleman to mother the helpless babe. None save herself ever knew how hard was the fight waged betwixt her love for the dead and the pride of a righteous woman who ever kept herself respectable, ere the sacrifice was made. But memory, working back to dear dead days, conjuring up visions of a golden-haired sister, years her junior, who clung to her skirts as to a mother's, won the day, and from thenceforward the little stranger gained a place in her heart never to lose it.

All the woman's life was dedicated to the child's. From morning till night she slaved, without murmur, that her darling might lack for nothing, doing any job that came to her hand so long as it brought money. There was scarcely a lad in the village boasting a Sunday shirt but owed its purity and glaze to her.

But it was hard work! Not only was the

burden of the child on herself alone, but also that of its old grandfather too; for ever since his daughter's loss the fingers once so nimble at basket-work seemed to lose their cunning. Vain were it to lay before him his materials; he would only gaze stupidly at them, then turn his weary eyes away and stare morbidly into vacancy. For hours at a stretch he would sit thus, uttering no sound save for a chronic asthmatic wheeze which never left him till released by death.

But the child grew and flourished. In all that country-side there was not a prettier maid nor a merrier. An Edinburgh photographer journeying that way espied the girl in all the glory of her budding womanhood, and, keeping her in mind, later offered her a situation in his studio as attendant on his customers. It was accepted. Together, aunt and niece, with their humble effects, removed from the little home which had witnessed so many vicissitudes to take up their abode on the topmost story of a 'common stair' in the picturesque Old Town of Edinburgh, a locality once fashionable, but now gone down in the world, and relegated to humble folk like themselves. How lonely it was at first in the great town after the simple village life, where they were known and esteemed by all! For they knew no friend save one—a poor medical student fighting his way like themselves. He was the son of a small poultry-farmer in their village at home. Boy and girl he and Annie had been together, attending the same school and keeping abreast in their studies, till the boy leapt beyond her by gaining a bursary, which sent him to an Edinburgh school and later to the university.

John Haggart surpassed even his friends' highest anticipations, and not a few who watched his college course predicted the lad would yet make his mark. He had not long to wait for employment. A leading medical practitioner, in whose class he had been, gave him the refusal of an assistantship, which was only too thankfully accepted. Then it was that unspoken thoughts were clothed in words, and Annie Baillie received an offer of marriage—in the future. She was a good girl, and though loving the lad with all the warmth of an affectionate, generous nature, she nevertheless felt it her duty to point out, now that his foot was seemingly firmly planted on the high-road to success, that she was no fit mate for him. But the young man would not listen. Would she blight all his future, he asked, for ideas so purely chimerical? No other woman had ever been in his thoughts, nor ever should! Did she persist in saying him nay, then indeed would life stretch before him a vista of hopelessness. To do him justice, at the time he believed his words; small wonder, then, that Annie should do so also. That was four years ago, and yet John Haggart was still a bachelor; and Annie, as of old, going to and fro at her daily vocation at the photog-

rapher's—with how heavy a heart not even the old relative, whose pride she was, ever guessed, for the girl bravely hid her feelings under a smiling exterior. But the old woman was growing anxious; the young man was earning enough to set up in a modest way, and Annie had no extravagant tastes; indeed, if anything, erred on the side of an over-carefulness.

One day she secured her opportunity. The doctor had called, and—Annie happening to be out—she took advantage of her absence and spoke out what was in her mind. He feigned surprise that she should doubt him, and seemed hurt thereat. His love, he assured her, was warm as ever; only, a doctor's career depending, as it did, so much on external circumstances, he deemed it wiser not to marry until he could set up for himself and maintain an establishment befitting a well-to-do physician; and surely she would be the last to urge him into a position he could not uphold.

The argument seemed to have weight, and the old woman's words forsook her before his greater fluency of speech; but no sooner had he left that humble apartment than the old doubts rose again, and with even greater intensity; and, amid them all, the face of her dead sister, as she saw it in that last sleep, deaf to the wailing of the poor little unwelcome babe. To-night the old dread was with her again as she looked at Annie, for the face in repose had lost its look of youth, and the girl seemed dull and fagged, as with listless fingers she stitched at her bonnet.

It was striking nine from the church tower at the end of the street. If John were coming he would be soon now, and he had written Annie to expect him.

'Is the parlour redd up?' she asked of the girl, who had lapsed into thought.

'Yes.'

'An' the kettle on the hob? Maybe John will fancy a cup of tea this cold night; the wind's gey high.'

'He never takes tea here now, aunty; 'tisn't good for him, he says. But listen!—yes, 'tis John's step!' As she spoke the bell pealed out, and the girl sprang to open the door.

'John!—how wet you are!—such a night!'

'Annie, for goodness' sake shut the door. You'll rouse the whole stair.'

The girl's face fell; a chill was at her heart. Never had he spoken to her so impatiently before. Something must be troubling him. Silently she led the way to the parlour. He halted on the threshold. 'Is the old woman there?' he whispered.

'No; she is in the kitchen.'

'Keep her there, then, Annie—a bit,' he said. 'I've something of importance to speak to you about.'

After all, perhaps she had been mistaken. An opening might have turned up—the long waiting

and the doubts which would come sometimes were maybe to end. She could almost hear her heart beat; her head throbbed and her throat seemed like to burst. She left him a moment and entered the kitchen.

'Leave us alone a bit, aunty,' she said to the old woman. 'John has some news for me.'

'Bless the bairn!' fervently ejaculated the elder woman. 'An' it's to be hoped the news is good.'

But Annie had disappeared. John Haggart still stood by the fireplace, his arm on the chimney-piece. As she came close beside him he turned to her a troubled-looking countenance. The news was not good, then.

'What is it, John?' she whispered. 'Don't be afraid to tell me. Remember the old days when you used to say troubles only wanted telling to become lighter. You said my sympathy helped you. Things have not changed, dear—not with me anyway.'

'Annie, Dr Spence's brother is dead—away down south, you know?'

'Yes?' she whispered.

'He's been ill some time, you know; but they were not prepared for this. The practice is a good one. Dr Spence says he can work it for me. The other fellow there is not popular. My being with Spence gives me a pull over the other. But it is a case of deciding *now* or *never*.'

'And why should there be delay, John? Or is it you feel a country town practice is shelving yourself?'

'Oh no, Annie. I'd only be too glad to step into a ready-made thing like that. It's the conditions. They're hard, Annie—very hard.'

She knew it now. Barbara—Barbara Spence. She had known it all along; but in the hopelessness of despair tried, though vainly, to blind herself to a fact only too apparent. Barbara—the dead doctor's only child—a sentimental, wilful girl, who, on a visit to her uncle, had given—yes, *given* unsought: Annie was sure of that—her heart. It required but a word from John, dropped every now and again, though he was scarce aware of it, to show how matters stood. The poor silly girl remained faithful to her fancy, even though hurried from place to place. Change of scene was of no avail; they had tried all—gay watering-place, Swiss mountain and chalet—and still she fretted and pined. But Annie might triumph still, for John was not dead to all sense of honour, and she could hold him to his word. But then where should they be?—blighted prospects, disappointed hopes, Dr Spence's influence gone, and she the millstone around his neck. Her resolution was taken. As she spoke, it seemed to her she tolled her own death-knell.

'I can guess the conditions, John. But are they so hard to you? Are there no advantages?'

She could not command her countenance; she turned from the flickering jet of gas that he might not see her pain.

After all, he thought, she did not care so very much; he was relieved, yet half-disappointed.

'Of course there's an advantageous side as far as worldly wealth goes—as men count success. But it's not what we pictured, Annie—not like the old days!'

'Oh John!' she wailed, 'be merciful. I cannot bear it!'

'Annie, my poor girl!' and now he was kneeling beside her, as she sat buried in the old arm-chair, her face hidden in its faded chintz. 'It was none of my seeking—nor his—her father. He looked higher—he had other views; but we were thrown together, and she was his idol. There are conditions in the will. She is light, Annie; not a sober girl like you. He feared she might meet, when he was gone, some fellow who would marry her for her money. I—even I—was preferable to that. You see how I'm placed, Annie. It isn't the practice, Annie. I only started with that. It was so hard to tell you. We shan't, probably, land there at all. Loudon Spence talks of the "top of the tree," and all that nonsense. No, Annie, don't turn from me! Say you forgive me, if only in memory of what has gone!'

Her voice sounded strange and unlike her own as she answered him, facing round with drawn, pallid features, and eyes from which all hope and light had fled.

'I can understand it all, John. You are free. And maybe, had not even she come between us, things could never have been as once we imagined. We were both poor and unknown then, but you've grown beyond me; a poor girl can't rise as a man does. I'm just where you left me in those old days, only older and sadder, a poor broken thing with no spirit left in me. We could never have mated; you'd have been ashamed of me. No, no, don't blame yourself, John; it's life—we're of an unlucky stock—poor mother! It's aunt as will feel it hardest; if she'd died last winter, when she'd the bad attack, I could feel thankful now.'

'I'm a brute, Annie—a cruel, heartless brute! But say the word and I'll stand by you for ever.'

'The word, John, must be Go. The hardest word of all—good-bye. It's come to that, and we'd best get it over.'

'I can't, Annie; indeed I can't.'

But she stood up and bravely held out her hand.

'Not like that, Annie. One kiss, dear?'

'No, John; all that is past and done with for ever. You belong to Barbara now. And apart from that, I owe it to myself—to keep still a little self-respect—to feel when the days are dreary and empty, that anyway I haven't got the heart-ache, too, of having parted with all maiden modesty. But I wish, John, you'd treated me fairer. Even in the telling of this you couldn't start fair, but must needs make-believe it was on account of the

business—and stepping into the dead man's shoes. You're overcome now, seeing me like this; but it'll pass, John, it'll pass, and you'll be happier with your Barbara than ever you'd have been with poor Annie.'

She gently pushed him outside the door as she finished speaking, and left him no further chance of justifying himself. Like a felon from the dock he slunk away with downcast head; the girl had risen in his estimation higher than ever she was, even in those old days when his love was at its hottest.

In the kitchen the old woman sat by the fire; as Annie entered she looked up interrogatively. One glance at the girl's face was enough; it needed not the broken words to tell her the end had come. 'It's all over, aunty; I'm a poor forsaken woman, of no account to any one!'

'But all the world to your poor old aunty. God help you, Annie, my bairn! It's a cruel, unjust world. It's the wicked as flourishes in it!'

'We'd best get to bed, aunty. To-morrow's a busy day at the studio.'

Silently they crept away—two forlorn-looking women. Scotch to the backbone, chary of speech and reticent of thought where their hearts were most affected, no other words passed between them that night; only, as the hours slipped by, and even till the dawn broke, the elder woman heard every now and again the girl's pitiful sobbing and low moaning.

It seemed but the wraith of the old Annie who presented herself at the studio next morning. At a glance the photographer saw the bomb had fallen. He had been expecting it for long; it came upon him with no surprise. For the girl, as the years went by and she stood higher in her master's confidence, felt it was but honest she should tell him something of her history and how affairs stood betwixt her and John. Later inquiries made by himself showed him but too plainly how frail was the foundation the poor girl had built her hopes on. Many a day he had pictured the shattering of them, and rehearsed the words he would use to comfort her. And now the day had come, and he could only remain silent. The look of patient suffering on her face was harder to witness in its quiet resignation than would have been open rebellion, and made him dumb too.

The forenoon passed. It had been a busy one, and now came an interval, the hour she usually ate her dinner; but to-day the little basket was forgotten—she had no appetite for food. Instead, she sat idly by the window watching the passers-by on the crowded thoroughfare below. Her heart was no longer with her work; she had no sympathy with the gay butterflies of fashion whom it was her duty to attend to, to arrange artistically or wait patiently beside them

as they gazed at themselves in the glass altering and realtering their locks ere their vanity was satisfied. Once she had enjoyed it, when she was happy herself and full of hope in the future. But that time had passed long since, and now had come a stage when she positively loathed her duties; she was too out of touch with her surroundings to dissemble her feelings, try as she would. She did not hear the door open, nor the photographer's step till he stood beside her; and then with a start she arose, knocking over, with the movement, a vase of greenery. 'I'm very clumsy to-day, sir,' she humbly apologised. 'I don't feel quite myself.'

'You've had bad news, perhaps?' ventured the photographer.

'Ay; the worst.'

'The worst, my girl, has been known sometimes to turn out the best.'

'For the one party, maybe, sir; I'd wish it might be so. But for me—no. I'd built too much on the future, sir; it frightens me now to look ahead. I don't know how the days are to be lived through!'

'Don't think of them, Annie. Try to bear your sufferings nobly. It's half the battle. After the storm there must come a calm. It's too soon to talk of "coming into port" yet; but there's a haven waiting for you any day you choose to seek it—a sure haven, Annie.'

'What sort of a *haven* will that be, sir—the other world?'

'Well, no, Annie; although I hope we are all journeying there. It's the earthly home I allude to. I had not meant to speak so soon—for it's ill work pressing a poor girl when she's down. But by-and-by, Annie, perhaps you'll think it over? You'll find me always the same; and a home ready for the old woman too. It's a bonny wee house, and the train passes handy; almost like the country, Annie; and you'd like tending on the flowers.'

'It's not my loss that I fret after, sir, and the prospect you hold out is a tempting one; and I haven't worked under you these four years and more not to know I may trust your word and you'd treat me fair. It's—well, it's just this way, sir: I'd only be taking a false advantage of your good nature coming to you a poor heart-broke creature with nothing to offer in exchange'—

'The balance will be equal enough, Annie.'

'Oh, no, sir!—a poor feckless creature—a piece of goods you'd best keep clear of, for our family's been none too lucky. I'll bring you no good. I must just pull myself together and ask you to be kind enough to help me to some employment away from here.'

'I'm willing to risk the ill-luck, Annie; I'd risk more than that. And I'll find you employment too for a bit—a poor farmer's wife that wants a "mother's help" to tide her over

a period of delicate health, and to look after the children. You're just the woman for that, Annie. There's nought like witnessing the sufferings of others to lighten our own. The country sights and sounds will do you good, and bodily toil will leave little time for mental. Just put me out of your mind and leave your poor brain alone.'

'I'm grateful, sir—very grateful! And I'll promise to work hard and try to give satisfaction. But to *forget* you, sir—that won't be so easy; kindness such as you've shown does not come every day; only, if I accept the one, it seems but fair'—

'No, no; we'll put that on one side just

now. We'll not court trouble. And I'm not the man to reproach you if, later, you can't see your way to acting as I'd like.'

'You're a good man,' she sobbed—'a very good man! If the world held more of your kind there would be fewer broken-hearted women. There's been dust in my eyes, sir—I've not seen clear. It's true what you said, our troubles are often our blessings in disguise. It's like poor aunty when she had the cataract. The operation was cruel hard; but she sees clearly now—better than she's done this many a day. My cure's a hard one, sir. I'm not through with it yet; but in the distance I see the light—the silver lining to the cloud.'

INKLESS PRINTING: ITS ADVANTAGES AND POSSIBILITIES.



REFERENCE has previously been made in *Chambers's Journal* to the process employed by the Electrical Inkless Printing Syndicate, Brixton, by means of which a print is obtained by electricity on a special chemically-treated paper, the type and machinery being identical with that used in ordinary printing, with the exception of the inking mechanism, which is in this case dispensed with. Although the process has only been before the public for a short time, great interest has been manifested in it by many of the leading journalists and printers throughout the country; and a considerable amount of capital has already been sunk with a view to more extensive developments. Exhibitions of the machinery in operation have been given to the printing trades in London, and have been attended by representatives of the London and provincial newspapers. While it has been claimed by the exhibitors that the results obtained only represented the initial stages, rather than the finality of the process, many of those present agreed that there were great possibilities in the application of electricity to printing purposes. Many misleading statements, however, have been published from time to time regarding the process; and it is proposed in this article to give a brief outline of the methods employed, and to institute a comparison between the new and old modes of printing, from the standpoints of efficiency and economy.

The patents connected with inkless printing were taken out in 1898 by Mr W. Friese-Greene, a well-known inventor, whose name is associated with the biograph and many photographic processes. Although the principle upon which the process depends is by no means new, its application to printing is highly ingenious and decidedly novel. In the main, inkless printing depends

upon the fact—discovered in the early part of the present century—that certain substances are broken up into their constituents by the electric current. For example, if we place the wires from the terminals of a battery in a solution of blue vitriol, a current of electricity will pass through the liquid, and a deposit of metallic copper will make its appearance upon the wire connected with the zinc or negative end of the battery. Under similar circumstances nitrate of silver will yield metallic silver, salts of gold deposit metallic gold, and so on. It is this effect of the electric current which is utilised in electroplating, the article to be coated being connected with the zinc end of the battery and immersed in a solution of the metal it is desired to deposit.

Let us now endeavour to follow the splitting-up of a substance by electricity as applied to printing. If a piece of paper be steeped for a short time in a solution of nitrate of silver, and placed while still damp upon a flat metal plate which is connected to the carbon or positive end of a battery, we shall find that on touching the upper surface of the paper with the wire from the zinc or negative end a black spot will appear. If the wire be drawn along the paper its path will be marked by a black line; and in this way so-called 'electric writing' may be executed. If a coin be taken and pressed down on the paper, and touched for a short time with the wire, a black impression of the coin will be formed; and similarly type or blocks yield an impression. The explanation of these results is simple. Where the wire or type touches the paper an electric current passes from the plate below through the paper, and in its passage splits up the nitrate of silver. A small deposit of metallic silver—as in electroplating—makes its appearance at the surface of the type, but clings to the paper upon which the type

is impressed. No current passes through the portions of the paper where the type is not in actual contact; these portions therefore remain clean, and a sharp black outline of the type or block is consequently formed. The under side of the paper is also unaffected. To those who are only acquainted with silver as the white metal used in coinage, &c., it should be explained that most metals when in a fine state of division are black—hence the black print obtained. The application of this experiment to printing by machinery is not difficult. The inking rollers are removed, the frame containing the type is connected to the negative end of a battery or other source of electricity, and the bed of the machine upon which the paper is placed is connected to the positive wire. The impression is regulated by packing the bed of the machine, where required, with thin lead-foil. An ordinary printing-machine thus modified is all that is requisite for the inkless process.

The principle underlying electrical printing, therefore, depends upon the decomposition of substances by electricity, or what is known as 'electrolysis,' which will always be associated with the great name of Michael Faraday, who was the first to thoroughly investigate the subject. Viewed from a purely scientific standpoint, this application of electrolysis is highly interesting, and quite in keeping with the spirit of progress characteristic of the times. When we consider the commercial aspect of the question, however, the case is somewhat different, and the extent to which the new process is destined to supersede the old depends upon the considerations it is now proposed to discuss.

First and foremost, it may be safely assumed that electrical printing, to be successful, must be at least as cheap as the ordinary method. Whether this will be the case or not depends entirely upon the cost of the paper containing the requisite chemicals. All experiments point to the fact that a considerable quantity of the printing medium must be contained in the paper to yield prints of sufficient intensity; it therefore follows that this ingredient itself must be very cheap in order that the cost of paper may not be materially increased. We have mentioned nitrate of silver as a chemical which gives a black print for experimental purposes; as a commercial competitor to ink this substance would be entirely out of the question. Not only is it far too costly, but after a time it imparts an objectionable colour to the paper. Of the numerous substances tried very few indeed possess the combined qualities of cheapness and the production of a permanent black print without tinting the paper. At present a mixture of certain organic bodies known in photography as 'developers' with alkaline salts is used by the syndicate, the paper to be printed on being soaked in a solution of these substances, or they are incorporated in the pulp of a hand-made

paper. These chemicals yield a satisfactory, and to all appearance permanent, black print. The difficulty of producing a cheap paper, however, does not end with the discovery of suitable materials; for the introduction of these in sufficient quantity in the ordinary operations of a paper-mill presents almost insuperable difficulties; indeed, it is almost safe to assert that a special method of paper-making will have to be devised to meet the requirements of the new process. How these matters will work out from an economic standpoint time and experience alone can show; but unless this portion of the problem can be satisfactorily solved, inkless printing can never receive more than a limited application.

Another difficulty presents itself, however, in addition to the foregoing. In the vast majority of cases, if not in all, it has been found that, whilst a substance may print well when the paper containing it is damp, no satisfactory result has been obtained when perfectly dry. This is only to be expected, as dry paper serves almost completely to stop the passage of an electric current. Whilst the use of damp paper may be allowable for many purposes, it would obviously be a great drawback to the general adoption of inkless printing if a printer were compelled to damp his paper on every occasion he desired to print. If the new process is to compete commercially with ink, a cheap paper which may be printed upon quite dry is an absolute necessity.

Assuming, however, that such a paper will ultimately be forthcoming, what advantages are possessed by the electrical process over the ordinary method of printing? First of all, there would be a considerable saving in the prime cost of machines, which are much simplified when shorn of the inking mechanism. The process, in addition, is extremely clean; the cost of electricity used is no greater than that of the ink required for a given amount of printing; the type is always clean and ready for use, and the wear and tear it undergoes is less than when ink is used. The machinery could be driven at a greater speed, although it still remains to be demonstrated that extremely high speeds would yield dense prints by the electrical process.

Against these advantages we have to consider that inkless printing at present offers no substitute for printing in colours. It is true that brown, red, or blue prints may be obtained electrically from different chemicals, but a paper soaked in one kind yields one class of print only, and to produce two colours on the same paper would require a second soaking. This operation would absorb too much time and labour to be a successful rival to coloured inks; and it would appear, therefore, that the new process could never entirely supplant the old. Further, few printers have sufficient knowledge of electricity to be able to remedy the little breakdowns which are bound to occur even with the most perfect machinery.

And, lastly, evidence should be forthcoming that the prints will not fade, nor the paper show signs of deterioration, after the lapse of a number of years. Where the process, if successfully worked out, could be applied to advantage would be in the printing of newspapers and journals where only one colour is used. Printing-ink, however, is an old and well-tried servant, and printers will be well advised to make sure that the substitute is

equally efficient in all respects before abandoning that which satisfies their present requirements. The Electrical Inkless Printing Syndicate are sparing no expense in their endeavours to bring the process to perfection, and it is quite possible that careful and continuous scientific investigation may overcome the difficulties enumerated, just as, in the past, sustained effort has solved problems of apparently far greater complexity.

POTEEEN-HUNTING IN THE WILD WEST OF IRELAND.



HIS wild west of Ireland is the natural home of 'poteen' or illicit whisky. This is because the loneliness and remoteness of the spots chosen for making it, almost inaccessible through the mountains

and bogs save to those who know something about the country, are all in favour of the smugglers escaping detection; whilst its network of mountain-lakes and small running streams affords the necessary cold water for condensing the distilled fumes into spirit during the cooling process. The report of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue for 1896 shows that the number of detections of illicit distillation was 1399—5 in England, 6 in Scotland, and 1388 in Ireland.

Dear beyond any 'Parliament whisky'—by which expression he denotes that sort more usually met with by my gentle reader: that sort, in fine, which has paid the tax imposed by the brutal Saxon Government—is this fiery fluid to the heart of every true peasant son of Connaught—and daughter too, for that matter, for the fair sex, especially if at all up in years, takes its fair share. And, in the interests of truth, it must be added that those who inhabit the coast-counties from Kerry to Donegal inclusive are also fully alive to its seductive merits. Indeed, many doctors (local, of course) will tell you that well-made poteen is better in sickness than the adulterated whisky usually met with in the small public-houses in this region of poverty; for in the Connemara country at any rate the illicit whisky is made of pure malt; though rumour has it that the less particular palate of Donegal, for instance, is satisfied with a fire-water mainly made from molasses, potatoes—ay, sometimes from almost any other rubbish you please.

But to realise all the humour and wild, reckless spirit shown in prosecuting this precarious industry, one should take a hand in attempting to put down the traffic. Poteen-hunting is about as exciting as deer-stalking and fox-hunting combined, and there are great accompanying hardships to be endured. The best time to catch men making it is naturally about Christmas-tide or the New Year, when our northern winters are,

to say the least of it, inclement, and especially so, I think, in the mountainous west of Ireland, where rain seems to be the normal condition of affairs. Tremendous tramps through mountains and bogs (the latter often unsafe), and night trips of ten to twenty miles, with a snatch of sleep in an open boat, often in rain or frost, are generally necessary in order to reach suspected places undetected before dawn. I have seen a boat's crew after rowing in the darkness nearly all night, and striking on and shoving off from, one would think, nearly every submerged rock in the lake, find themselves at dawn near the spot where they first lost their bearings.

To begin with, I should like to give the reader a rough sketch of how the stuff is made: it is always called 'the stuff' in the trade. You first prepare your barrels of wash, or ground malt properly fermented, which you can test as to its fitness for distilling by throwing in a handful of dry oats, and seeing whether they sink or swim in the liquid. These barrels the police occasionally almost walk into, concealed on the islands by burying them nearly up to the top rim, and covering all with a few boards or poles, and with a layer of grass, &c., on the top. You fill your still with wash, and light a fire under it. The still is a huge round tin utensil, riveted and air-tight, with a convex bottom like a black bottle to concentrate the heat of the fire underneath, and narrowing at the neck, into which is fitted (and the joint also made quite air-tight) a worm. Now, a worm, which is worth three or four pounds merely as old copper, is a long pipe (spiral in shape to give as much surface as possible to the cold water outside), through which the fumes driven off by the heat from the confined liquor in the still must pass, and in which they are condensed by the external cold into liquid spirit, which is caught at the end of the pipe in a bucket, as it flows in a constant small stream. If this runs too freely the process is going on more rapidly than it should, and the fire must be lowered accordingly. This worm is submerged in a barrel of water, and a constant supply is necessary to keep the water in the barrel from heating, in which case, of course, the worm would

fail to do its work ; hence running water or a lake is necessary to the distiller. Tin worms flavour the stuff ; copper ones, which are expensive, do not. Once run through the still the liquor is called 'singlings ;' twice run through it is 'doublings,' or has been, as it is called, 'doubled,' and is the completed spirit. It is very raw and powerful, of course, much overproof, and has, especially when taken hot from the still, a very maddening effect. Some will tell you it has perhaps as much to answer for as the frequent intermarriage of cousins, and poverty, and hardship in causing the abnormal number of lunatics in the west of Ireland.

You can get poteen at about ten shillings to twelve shillings a gallon—that is, if you know your way about, and are not caught by the authorities. An idle scoffer once told me that the only two places where you could be really certain to find a drop of the best poteen in Ireland were the priests' house and police-barracks. Its flavour is smoky and indescribable, but not bad. The penalty for being in possession of it, making it, or being found at or near the place where it is being made, owning or having in possession any land or place where it is found, &c., is very heavy—one hundred pounds, which can be mitigated to six pounds, or three months' hard labour in lieu of payment. Also, everything concealing it, found packed with it (much, for instance, would go into Galway hidden in the middle of the loads of turf), or conveying it (as a horse or cart or boat) becomes forfeit, and if not sufficiently valuable to sell is destroyed on the spot. Every subsequent offence doubles the penalty on the previous convictions being proved ; so that a man twice convicted cannot be fined less than twelve pounds ; thrice, twenty-four pounds ; and so on. Consequently the places selected for its illicit manufacture are almost always on common land, little stony, barren islands, and such-like spots, useful to neither man nor beast for any other earthly purpose.

When made, men and women convey it to its destination in kegs containing several gallons each, carrying them on their backs by night across the bogs and through the unfrequented passes in the mountains ; and, in truth, it is wonderful how women can cross the rough country with such loads as are sometimes found on them. They avoid the main roads, a seemingly unnecessary precaution the casual visitor would say who drives mile after mile through wintry, forsaken Connemara without as a rule meeting a human being. Indeed, to realise the general desolation of the greater part of that portion of our empire you must remember the saying of the lady who remarked, when first the telegraph-poles were being put up there, that they would give the country quite a wooded appearance.

The poorest and most reckless of the peasantry

make the poteen, a middleman of some substance usually getting the lion's share of the profits, and paying for the materials and part of the fine that may be incurred ; the risk is borne mainly by those actually engaged in the manufacture, it being almost impossible to reach the real culprit who lures the poor folk into so much trouble.

Now that you know how to make this beverage, let us take a trip (for you, gentle reader, must come too), and see if we can find anything down a huge lake I wot of. It is some thirty miles long to travel, and at places nearly ten miles broad from the shore of one bay to that of the one opposite, and the whole is studded with rocky islands and submerged rocks—a lively place to navigate on a roughish night. These huge sheets of rocks have been perforated and eaten into holes by the water-action of ages, until they present a surface exactly resembling honey-comb. A few ragged cattle are ferried across to pick up a living on one or two islets where here and there grows a little rough grass, and to which the ownership or possession can perhaps be proved ; but the most are either bare rocks, or carry a rough growth of thorns, holly, or brushwood, which makes an excellent screen for concealing a still-fire or barrels of wash whilst fermenting.

We start off about ten or eleven at night, for there are ten miles to row before we get into the smugglers' happy hunting-grounds. The police have dropped out of barracks some time since, one or two at a time to escape any watch set on their movements, in their oldest uniform and any sort of ancient hat their fancy pleases—for the constabulary forage-cap would betray the boat to the smugglers before it got near enough for a dash at them. We have four men to row, a fifth for a change (indeed, we all take our turn at the oar), and a sixth in the bows with boat-hook, to look out for and to ward the boat off sunken rocks—often the place where there is most work of all to be done. Ten miles down, the lake narrows to half a mile and a ferry ; here a watch is often kept, so darkness and muffled oars are our best friends as we drop down, keeping well in mid-channel. A gun fired, or a galloping horseman, or a warning light flared across the water to the smugglers at work would spoil our chance ; and so we have previously told off a couple of police patrols at likely spots on the shore, so as to have a chance of arresting any one giving an alarm, or to intercept escaping poteen-makers, should we drive any ashore.

After searching a couple of bogs, unless we have some fixed destination, or get hopelessly entangled in miles of rocks, it is as well to get a sleep till dawn on some island near or in the boat, when all the police go under the sail, and keep pretty close together to keep warm, if it is freezing. Very little poteen, comparatively speaking, is made in summer.

Suddenly, however, we are on the alert for

a constable on the lookout has seen a suspicious light. It is a common custom in the west to burn a candle in peasants' cottages all night, partly from superstitious motives; and we can see some far off on shore. But the light we now watch is merely a very slight flare now and again. Some one has been stirring up the still-fire under the still, and is causing an occasional flash which can be seen in spite of the old sail, old sacks, or whatever other screen may have been used to hide the firelight. Now we row quickly and quietly up, then make a dash, as the smugglers, seeing or hearing our approach, rush to their boats and row like mad for the nearest shore. We strike into the track of one craft, which has perhaps been delayed by trying to hide a worm by sinking it, and on we go full speed through the rocks, sometimes right over a half-sunken ridge (and this is where real danger comes in), and gain rapidly with our four oars to their two. However, they know the bay, and we don't! Some of us shout and yell to imaginary police on shore to stop the pass, catch them at the point, or anything else we can think of to help to bewilder them, until at last, tired and confused, and possibly half-dazed with sampling the stuff they have been making, overboard they go to try and escape by swimming or wading ashore somewhere in the darkness, and getting off through the scrub. Overboard after them go a couple of the best of the police, with greatcoats, watches, and all on. One of them, who cannot swim, has a bad time, for the depth of water between the rocks is fifteen or twenty feet in places; and, missing the rocks, he is subsequently recovered with the boat-hook, having lost his quarry, who can swim. In the long-run we catch the father in the water; his son, we hear afterwards, was the man who was with him and escaped, and who, after spending most of a bitter January night wet through on a bare rock, went home to a rheumatic fever, which for months was near costing him his life.

Back to the still-fire and apparatus still working we row, and, raking up the fire again, make the singlings into doublings, and pour a little hot whisky (illicit) into the half-drowned smuggler and police, and dry their wet clothes as well as we can on the top of the hot still. No harm results. No arrests are made when men can be made amenable otherwise by summons; and after two more ordinary seizures next day, we row back again with a couple of captured boats or so in our wake, perhaps rowed part of the way back for us by the smugglers themselves. No resistance is offered, as the constabulary are men of splendid physique, and are also known to be armed on this duty. Indeed, in such a sportsman-like spirit do many of the poor peasants themselves take the game that they bear the

police little or no malice if the catch is a fair one; but woe to an informer should a country-side detect him! I have myself known a party of constables storm-bound in their boat, which they could neither leave nor get home, to be supplied with a cold goose and victuals by the very smugglers they came out to catch! Back we go, and I think that unless in the service, gentle reader, you will not go again; once is enough for pleasure merely.

The smoke and glare of the still-fire are usually the immediate cause of detection; and that reminds me that the neatest instance I know of an Irishman evading suspicion for a long time was by an unusually audacious plan. He took a house adjoining a police-barrack, and used an upstairs room as his distillery, knocking a flue into the police chimney. With water handy, and being on the best terms with the party, but naturally with a stand-off, distant manner towards them, he thus got rid of his smoke by their innocent and unsolicited assistance. The fire in a police kitchen in Ireland, you must know, is burning night and day, to warm and feed constant patrols going from and returning to barracks.

The Inland Revenue Department handsomely rewards poteen detections when prosecuted to a conviction, and thus adds an extra inducement to men to be always on the alert in the work.

Goat's-milk, fresh, mixed with poteen, is a highly invigorating beverage; but do not take too much of it! If you take a gun and lie behind rocks in the narrow mouth of a bay which is being searched in the early winter morning by the boat, you can get many a good shot at wild duck, teal, or widgeon, with which the waters teem, taking them as they fly out over your head when put up. In shooting-lodges on the indented Atlantic coast, indeed, you can hear sportsman speak of acres of teal or widgeon, and can see them too; but no cover may be available to get within shot for an ordinary gunner who has no duck-gun or punt. I have known a constable imitate and answer a seal's cry so well as to attract several of them round the boat in the semi-darkness near enough for a shot; but they sink in deep water, so we forbear from pulling the trigger.

Here is a funny poteen story, and then to bed. An Irish legal potentate, then Lord Chief-Justice, was entering his carriage at Galway railway station, and, tripping, dropped his black hand-bag. There followed a crash as of broken bottles, and a colourless fluid, gently trickling along the platform, revealed to the expert nostrils of his guard of honour of the Royal Irish Constabulary, drawn up in line and rigid at the 'present arms,' the unmistakable aroma of poteen. Tableau! What would you do in such a case, gentle reader, were you the police-officer in command?

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

THE PROGRESS OF SCIENCE.



HE British Association, meeting this year at Dover, have once more marked the world's progress in those matters which are commonly grouped under the word science. The President, in his opening address, drew an interesting comparison between the state of knowledge as it is now with that of one hundred years ago, and by way of illustration he pictured the town of Dover as it was in 1799, with its unlighted streets and its meagre cross-Channel service of sailing-vessels. He claimed that, although a most rapid advance had been made in the manufacture of weapons of precision, and in explosives, there was a deep undercurrent of influence sapping the very foundations of war, for the touch of science made the whole world kin. Even now arrangements were being made by which the leading academies of the world will, by representatives, meet at intervals to discuss questions in which the learned of all lands are interested, and he thought it probable that this first meeting would be held at Paris in connection with the World's Fair which is to be such a distinguishing feature of the close of the nineteenth century.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY.

At a time when the British Association have just been conducting experiments with Marconi's wireless system, and exchanging compliments with France, it is well to remember that as long ago as 1859 a Scotsman, by name James Bowman Lindsay, read a paper entitled 'On Telegraphing without Wires' before that same learned body. His system, it is true, differed from Marconi's, for he made water the conducting medium, and he actually suggested that it might be possible to speak to America by some such means. He conducted several experiments on the Tay and at Liverpool, and seems to have been the first in the field of wireless communication by electrical means.

GLASOGRAPHY.

The above title has been given to a German method of producing designs in transparent colours upon glass, which is said to be cheap and effective and eminently adapted to decorative purposes. It must be confessed that the common methods of imitating stained glass are not successful from an artistic point of view, while their durability is open to question. It is said that by the glasograph process an unlimited number of copies may be produced in one or more colours from any design, simple or elaborate, and that the tints do not lose their brightness through ex-

posure to light or by age. Glass tiles can be manufactured under the same process, and are said to retain their polish under all conditions.

AUTOMOBILES.

Mr Hiram Percy Maxim, writing in *Cassier's Magazine*, says that there are in New York about a hundred motor hansom and coupé cabs in public service, about twenty motor-wagons engaged in the delivery of merchandise, and between thirty and fifty private motor-carriages, usually carrying two passengers. In London it is calculated there are forty motor coupé cabs, and three times the number of private motor-carriages that there are in New York, and about as many motor delivery wagons. Paris has twelve public motor coupé cabs, many motor delivery wagons, and between three and four thousand of all types of motor vehicles. In London, Paris, and New York the public motor-hansoms are propelled by electricity, using electric storage batteries. In New York ninety-five per cent. of the private motor-carriages are so propelled. In Boston steam takes the place of gasoline. For short distances and light loads electricity more than holds its own; steam is found best for heavy weights and long distances; while for high speeds, long distances, and light weights the gasoline engine has proved the best. In America we find the lightest possible machine, carrying two people abreast. In Great Britain and the Continent one carrying four passengers is most common. The horse has long ago become accustomed to the cycle, but when suddenly confronted with a motor on a narrow road frequently attempts to bolt or jump over a hedge if not well held in hand.

STEEL FOR DECORATIVE PURPOSES.

Industrial strikes generally do far more harm than good, and represent a loss to the community which cannot be recovered. But occasionally a strike will lead to the introduction of new processes and methods which prove to be of value. The recent plasterers' strike in this country has, for example, called attention to a method of employing metal fronts to houses, and as a substitute for lath and plaster ceilings, which has already been employed successfully in America. Our consul at Philadelphia expresses the hope, in which all will concur, that this new application of steel will be taken up by manufacturers in our own country.

ARTIFICIAL INDIA-RUBBER.

No natural product has tempted artificial imitation more than india-rubber, and many fortunes have been spent in such enterprises. Rubber

substitutes have, it is true, been produced which have proved of commercial importance, but no artificial substance has yet been made which exhibits the valuable qualities of that obtained from the rubber-tree. The demand for the article has enormously increased since the invention of rubber tires for wheels, to say nothing of the wants of the electrician; hence any new source of supply is of great importance. There is, however, always the hope that the real rubber may some day be produced synthetically in the laboratory; indeed, it has already been prepared in small quantities. Some time ago a hydrocarbon known as isoprene was discovered among the products of the destructive distillation of india-rubber, and later on the same substance was produced from turpentine. It has recently been found that isoprene kept for several years gradually assumes the qualities and appearance of true rubber. Chemists have now to discover a means of effecting the change more quickly, and a great and useful problem will have been solved.

THE MECHANICAL RAT.

Under this title a useful contrivance is described in an American paper, *The Railway Review*. Its purpose is to carry a cord through a sunken pipe or conduit, and it is in reality a tiny auto-car fitted with three rubber-tired wheels, and capable of travelling four hundred yards with one winding up of its mainspring. When started on its mole-like journey it carries its cord to the goal, when a stronger line is pulled through, which in turn is attached to the electric cable which is to find a permanent resting-place in the conduit. The 'rat' is no larger than the animal from which it takes its name, and can be easily carried in the pocket.

SCOTTISH AGATES.

An interesting and useful guide to the collection of Scottish agates, numbering about one thousand, gathered by the late Dr Heddle, St Andrews, now in the Museum of Science and Art, Edinburgh, has been prepared by Mr J. G. Goodchild, curator of the collection of the Geological Survey of Scotland. As the development of agates is scarcely dealt with in text-books of mineralogy, this handbook is of the more importance. Agates, we are told, are found in what were originally vapour cavities in eruptive rocks of andesite composition, the materials of which they are composed being derived from the decomposition of these rocks. Water percolating downward has dissolved their constituents; the nature of the solution is weak, watery, 'or much-diluted jelly, which gradually coagulates, and eventually passes into the solid state as the liquid solvent escapes.' The different films deposited vary according to the nature of the solution. The growth, colouration, and shape of the agate are traced and described. The

chief locality for Scottish agates lies on the north-west side of a line joining Tillicoultry and St Andrews, and coincides with the outcrop of the Old Red Sandstone lava of the Ochils and the Sidlaws. They are also found in the Pentlands, and less commonly in the Cheviots; and the experienced eye can detect at once the quarry from which they come.

POTATO PULP.

A Dutchman, J. Knipers by name, has patented a method of utilising the residues of the manufacture of potato flour. After straining this raw material and separating from it portions of peel and other impurities, it is treated with glycerine and dilute acid. The resulting compound is a gummy, viscous mass, which is carefully dried and reduced to powder. The next operation is to moisten this powder with a certain percentage of water and to press it into blocks, with the help of moulds if desired, the finished product being a homogeneous, wood-like solid with a metallic ring, which can be cut, turned, bored with ease, and will take the finest screw thread. It is believed that the material will conveniently take the place of wood, vulcanite, celluloid, and even metal for many purposes. It is said, moreover, to be an excellent insulator for electrical purposes. The cost at which it can be produced is not stated.

SKIN-GRAFTING.

Among the curiosities of modern surgical science is that of skin-grafting, a most remarkable instance of which was lately referred to by Dr Stewart M'Guire in the course of a chemical lecture. Some twelve months ago, the doctor reminded his hearers, he had performed the operation of skin-grafting upon a negro who some time before had lost his leg. The stump of the limb, instead of healing satisfactorily, exhibited a granular surface of about six inches in diameter, and it was determined that the defect should be made good by the operation of grafting. It so happened that at this time a white man had his leg amputated, and advantage was taken of the occurrence to borrow a section of skin from the white leg with which to patch up the black one, in the hope that the white patch would gradually darken. This hope has not been fulfilled, although the operation was perfectly successful, and the negro carries a white tablet which will identify him as long as life lasts. Once again truth is stranger than fiction.

RAISING SUNKEN VESSELS.

The art of the ship-raiser has of late years been brought to great perfection, and much ingenuity has been exercised in the various methods resorted to. A new apparatus has recently been patented in Germany by an engineer of Sonderburg, which depends upon the well-known fact that calcium

carbide will give off acetylene gas when brought into contact with water. The apparatus consists of a series of barrels or drums, each containing a tipping vessel filled with carbide. These drums are attached full of water to the submerged vessel, and a mechanical device causes the water to attack the carbide. By this means gas takes the place of water in the tanks, the liquid being forced out by pressure, and the sunken vessel is thus buoyed up to the surface.

A CURIOUS SALAMANDER.

Under this title is described in *Nature* an animal quite new to science which has recently made its appearance under unusual circumstances at San Marcos, Texas. Near that town the United States Fish Commission have established a station, and, owing to the uncertain rainfall, it was decided to bore an artesian well. Water was reached at a depth of 188 feet, and, to the surprise of the borers, the first rush brought with it a number of crustacea and the salamander in question. The creature is about four inches in length, with rudimentary sightless eyes; the skin is dingy white, and the exposed gills scarlet. It possesses four slender legs and feet, which are described as being startlingly hand-like, and the body terminates in a flattened tail, bearing a fin like that of the eel. The well is bored through limestone, and is believed to communicate with a subterranean lake.

ELECTRIC HEATING AND COOKING.

The possibility of heating houses and cooking by means of the electric current was long ago demonstrated, but the cost of such a convenience is prohibitive unless the current can be produced in a wondrously cheap manner. The system has, however, been adopted at the Carmelite Hospice which is situated on the Canadian side of Niagara River, about two miles distant from the falls, from which source the necessary energy is obtained. At the Hospice about one hundred horse-power is in use, twenty-five per cent. of which is employed for lighting and cooking, while the rest is devoted to heating the lower floor of the building. All good housekeepers must sigh for the cleanliness of such an arrangement: no fires to create dust and dirt, and a kitchen-range without black or smut—a range with a surface of six square feet, any portion of which can be brought to a dull or bright red heat by the action of a switch. Baking and roasting ovens are heated in the same way, and any surplus current goes to raise the temperature in a tank of water containing four hundred gallons.

THE UTILISATION OF SEWAGE SLUDGE.

At the recent Sanitary Congress the manager of the Dalmarnock Sewage Works, Glasgow, read a paper on 'Recent Developments in the Disposal

of Sewage Sludge,' which was of a very sanguine nature. He believes that the day is not distant when the solids extracted from sewage will be recognised by agriculturists as the globe fertiliser. Two years ago farmers would not take it as a gift, and now they are glad to buy it at one shilling a ton. The Dalmarnock Works have booked orders for eight thousand tons since June last, and an offer to take two hundred thousand tons for a period of ten years is now under consideration. The manager of the works stated that he had no hesitation in recommending the Glasgow Corporation to accept any such offer, even at the low price of one shilling to eighteenpence per ton, as he felt confident that in so doing they would finally settle the knotty question of disposing of the Glasgow sludge on the most satisfactory basis yet dreamt of by sewage engineers, chemists, or sanitarians.

POLARIS.

Not the least wonderful thing in modern astronomy is that, by means of the spectroscope, an observer can not only tell whether a distant star is approaching the earth or receding from it, but can calculate the rate at which it is moving. Professor Campbell, of the Lick Observatory, has recently reported that the Pole-star of the northern heavens is approaching the solar system at the rate of $11\frac{1}{2}$ kilometres (about seven miles) per second. He also from his observations deduces the circumstance that the star is not a single body but one of a pair. The companion star is invisible to us, but the two bodies revolve around their common centre of gravity in a period of four days, the orbit in which they move being comparable in size to that of our moon. It is also assumed that there is a third body which exerts an attractive force on the binary system, and that this attraction causes a periodical variation in the rate at which the Pole-star is moving towards us. The observations were made with a Mill's spectroscope in conjunction with the big telescope.

A MOISTENED WARM-AIR GAS-STOVE.

A gas-heating stove has been recently introduced, and described in *The Practical Engineer*, which heats by bringing a continuous supply of fresh air into a room, removing the vitiated air, and practically renewing the atmosphere in a room hourly. This removes the objection to gas-heating, which uses up the atmosphere and makes the air too dry for health. At the same time, by an ingenious arrangement for moistening the moisture required by the air to render it suitable to breathe at the higher temperature is automatically introduced, and a uniform temperature is maintained in every part of the room, the parts farthest from the stove being quite as warm as those in close proximity to it. These advantages are effected by about a dozen

one and one-half inch or two-inch wrought-iron air-tubes being fixed vertically behind the gas-heated asbestos fire, connected to a tube plate at the top and bottom of the stove. The bottom of the stove below the bunsen burner constitutes an air-chamber connected with the outside air, either by a duct or by an opening in the floor under the stove, made by removing one or two tiles where the hearth is tiled, and air can be obtained from underneath the floor. When the stove is lit, as the tubes become heated by the bunsen flame and incandescent asbestos shells, the air in the upper portions of the tubes is rarefied and rises to the upper part of the room, diffusing itself along the ceiling and walls. A rapid warm-air current is thus set up from the stove, the fresh air from outside as it becomes heated entering the room and removing by displacement the vitiated air, which is continually escaping up the ordinary chimney. This stove, which is known as the Langfield Moist-air Heating Stove, brought out by Langfield & Co., Blackfriars Street, Manchester, cannot work where there is no provision for ventilation such as an ordinary fireplace.

OMNIA SANITAS!

Was it Lord Beaconsfield who, as Mr Disraeli, was once twitted with being the exponent of a 'policy of sewage'? According to Sir William Preece, no loftier subject can occupy the attention of man; and, according to him also, an ancestor of the great premier—Moses, to wit—was 'the greatest sanitary engineer the world had ever known,' and the Book of Leviticus was 'a treatise on hygiene.' The Jew was the healthiest and longest-lived type of humanity, and the doctrines of Moses could be summed up as the objects of sanitation to-day—namely (1) pure air, (2) pure water, (3) pure food, (4) pure soil, (5) pure dwellings, and (6) pure bodies. Pure air, he said, was to be found in lunatic asylums, jails, and workhouses; but not in our churches, theatres, railway carriages, or dining-rooms—even the dining-room of your 'dearest friend.' Sir William started what will be regarded as a rank heresy by many when he stated that it was a 'moot question' whether absolutely pure water was healthy, and that good drinking-water might contain as many as twenty bacteria per cubic centimetre; that five thousand tumblers of London water contained only one grain of solid matter, and the Thames valley ought to be able to supply London with excellent drinking water for the next fifty years—even with its present works. This is good news for London; but what will the London County Council and the Royal Commissioners say on the subject? Sir William advocates an 'auxiliary supply,' in the shape of sea-water, for street-watering and such purposes. But sea-water is said to be bad for roads and still worse for horses' feet, and its use is said to have been discontinued

even in seaside towns for this reason. For baths, however, it would be invaluable. Pure soil was not so easy a subject as it looked, and we had not got much beyond the experimental stage in this respect, although astonishing effects had been produced by the natural process of bacteriolysis. In regard to pure dwellings, the legislation of recent years had had a beneficial influence on the community by clearing away slums, building well-designed houses, and constructing new streets; and Sir William instanced the case of Edinburgh, which, by spending £560,000 in improving the housing of the poor, had brought down the death-rate from twenty-eight to seventeen per thousand. Electricity was to be the great regenerator of the future. Introduced into our houses, it was to purify the air and save our books, pictures, and curtains from deterioration; albeit there are many people who consider that curtains are a leading factor in insanitariness! It was to be a valuable aid in securing the much desiderated auxiliary supply of water, and it had already demonstrated its value as a sewage disposer in the Hermitte process, which had been introduced at Ipswich and in Netley Hospital. But above and beyond all, it was destined to extend the 'allotted span' of life from the Psalmist's 'threescore years and ten' to fivescore, and, in fact, to bring about a kind of millennium, in which everybody should be healthy, wealthy, and wise. In a word, as the *Times* remarked in a leading article on Sir William's address to the members of the Sanitary Institute at Southampton, 'there is nothing like leather.'

THE MALARIAL MOSQUITO.

As already indicated in the article, 'Mosquitoes and the Spread of Disease,' in this *Journal* for October, there seems no longer any doubt that malarial fever is transmitted by the agency of mosquitoes. Major Ross, writing to the secretary of the Liverpool School of Tropical Diseases, states that an outbreak of fever in the 3rd West India Regiment has been traced to the insect, a large species of *Anopheles*, and in the bodies of these insects the malarial germs have been actually found. Those who wish to acquaint themselves with the method of mosquito life, and the remedial methods which may be adopted to mitigate the pest, are referred by Miss Ormerod to the paper published a few years ago by Dr Howard, entomologist to the American Agricultural Department, an important part of which is the enumeration of the measures which may be taken to check the propagation of the insect. Infestation may arise from deficient sewage and sanitation arrangements. Kerosene will kill the mosquito on a small scale; but, dealing more broadly with the difficulty, the introduction of fish into fishless ponds is a better remedy. Fresh or brackish lakes and ponds near the coast should have canals in communication with the sea, so

that the water may become salt—salt water being fatal to the mosquito. The *Times* suggests that the destructive effects of the tsetse fly on horses may be due to some similar parasite.

RAILWAY SPEEDS.

Since the mad 'race to Aberdeen' of 1896, the English and Scottish railways have quietly settled down to a steady pace of something between fifty and fifty-two miles an hour. There are one or two short lines, such as that from Dorchester to Wareham, where a speed of sixty miles is attained, and from Forfar to Perth, where fifty-nine miles is the scheduled speed. But, generally speaking, anything over fifty-two miles is quite exceptional, and is only maintained for comparatively short distances. While England has been lagging behind somewhat, other countries have been forging ahead, and one is not surprised to hear that America claims to have the 'fastest regular train in the world.' But it is not a little surprising that this claim should be disputed by France, which only a few years ago was far behind our own country in the matter of fast trains. Mr W. M. Acworth, the great railway expert, writing from Denver, Colorado, describes a journey he made recently on the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad to Atlantic City, in which the 'fastest mile' was run at the rate of eighty-one and seven-eighths miles per hour, and the average was over seventy-eight miles an hour! Atlantic City is the Brighton of Philadelphia, and Mr Acworth contrasts this performance with the sorry performance of our Brighton company, with its one Sunday express, Victoria to Brighton, fifty-one miles in sixty minutes, and its single week-day express, London Bridge to Brighton, fifty and one-half miles in sixty-five minutes. The American Empire State Express performs part of the journey from New York to Buffalo at a speed of fifty-seven and one-tenth miles an hour, the inclusive speed for the whole journey being fifty-three and three-tenths miles an hour. Against this the French claim that their Luxe Facultatif train from Paris, by way of Amiens, to Calais Pier, runs between Paris and Amiens at sixty and five-tenths miles an hour, and between Amiens and Calais at fifty-seven and three-tenths miles an hour, the inclusive speed for the whole journey being fifty-seven miles an hour. The highest speed attained on the local express between Paris and Bordeaux is fifty-eight and one-tenth miles an hour, and the inclusive speed fifty-four and two-tenths miles an hour. Against these our Scotch expresses cut but a poor figure, that by the East Coast only reaching a maximum of fifty-four and five-tenths miles an hour (between Grantham and York), and an inclusive speed of fifty and seven-tenths miles an hour. There is one consolation, however, that for long-distance runs—that is, 'breaks' of one hundred miles and upwards—England still holds the record, the system

of 'pick-up' water-troughs enabling the journey between Paddington and Exeter of one hundred and ninety-four miles to be performed without a stop. This is the longest run in the world; but it is closely approached by the North-western Company's American Liner Express, which performs the one hundred and ninety-three and a half miles between Euston and Edgehill, *via* Runcorn Bridge, in three hours forty-five minutes, or a speed of fifty-one and sixth-tenths miles an hour. On the whole, the English speed suits the English people best, although one is surprised to hear that the French have made such strides in recent years.

DESOLATION.

NIGHT, like a pall, with stealthy speed,
Throws o'er the land its sombre frown;
Each darkening glen grows dark indeed,
And wind-blown rain comes beating down.

Gray mists, like shadowy phantoms, trail
Through ev'ry lone and eerie spot;
While ghostly voices moan and wail
Around the shepherd's lonely cot.

Along the wild and wasted shore
A howling gale sweeps fiercely by;
The waves leap in with deafening roar,
And looming storm-clouds fill the sky.

'Mid grim, dark woods, grown desolate,
The last leaves fly before the blast.
Decay and ruin reign elate,
And winter claims the land at last.

SAM WOOD.

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Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

COUNT PAUL.

By EMERIC HULME-BEAMAN.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

CHARLES CUMBERLEGE had dined well; he had smoked his cigar; he had read the evening papers; and now he rose from his chair, stretched himself, and yawned. The clock that confronted him on the mantelpiece informed him that the hour was ten; he was in no humour for whist, and the billiard-tables were occupied. Moreover, he had to get home to Clapham; and the knowledge that the night was cold and damp struck a shiver of repugnance to his heart as he looked at the blazing fire before him and then at the inviting furniture of the club smoking-room. Again he yawned, flung away the end of his cigar, and, descending to the hall, put on his overcoat and left the club. The air that wrapped him round as he stepped into the street was charged with a penetrating damp; it settled on his cheeks with a clammy touch, and crept insidiously beneath his eyelids and made them tingle. He looked up, and knew that the hand of a London fog was laid upon the night. Between the twinkle of a lamp opposite and himself there loomed a shadowy object, taking shape slowly out of the mist; by degrees it assumed the form of a hansom, and he hailed it as it passed him.

'Victoria, sir? The night is a bit thick; but, Lord, it ain't nothing, sir. Down south of the water I'm told as it's a little foggy, certainly. But the fog is only a-beginning hereabouts. Piccadilly is as clear as your hand. Victoria? Yes, sir.'

'A civil cabman,' thought Cumberlege, leaning back in the hansom; then he smiled—for he was aware that civility in a cabman claimed its price. His train was on the point of starting as he walked on to the platform at Victoria. He opened the door of a first-class compartment and flung himself on to a seat; the compartment chanced to be empty, and, turning down the

collar of his coat, he thrust his hands into his pockets and closed his eyes. The train steamed out of the station with a brave show of determination, and was pulled up sharp by a fog-signal this side of Grosvenor Road. All round came the sound of intermittent explosions. The air was laden with the suggestion of a desultory fusillade; a man could fancy himself the advance-picket of a skirmishing party without violence to his imagination. Cumberlege's imagination played with the idea as he listened to the fog-signals, and pictured a night attack on the heights of Chitral. The train crawled forward for a hundred yards, and stopped again before the enemy's cannonade. Cumberlege worked out the whole scene of operations, and in his mind he planned a counter-attack and laid an ambuscade most delicately devised; till, finding himself in the act of storming the enemy's position, he fell asleep. He woke with a start as the train slowed into a station.

'This,' said he, 'is Clapham;' and pulling up his coat collar, he got out of the carriage. The station wore a strange air of silence, and a white curtain was stretched straight across his eyes, whichever way he looked.

'This,' said he, turning round in bewilderment, 'cannot be Clapham after all;' and he bumped into a porter.

'What place?' he demanded.

'Wandsworth Common,' replied the porter, and the next moment was swallowed up in the fog.

'Then I must have been asleep!' ejaculated Cumberlege. 'Wandsworth Common, and eleven o'clock! Not to mention the fog!'—He looked thoughtfully at the little red light, now disappearing like a tarnished disc in the whiteness, and wondered if it represented a real train or the ghost of one. Then he groped his way along the platform. A figure seemed to float past him. He stretched out his hand and gripped a man by the arm.

'I don't let go of you, my friend, till you take me out of the station,' he remarked pleasantly. 'You perhaps know the geography of the place; I don't.'

It was the same porter whom he had first addressed—the only porter, it would seem, on the premises, and a sleepy one at that.

'Come along, sir; this way,' said the man, steering an instinctive course through the void.

'Any train up to-night?' asked Cumberlege.

'Victoria? No, sir. Last train went ten minutes ago.'

'Where's the nearest cab-stand?'

'Half a mile off.'

'Direct me to it and I'll give you half-a-crown.'

The man considered, hesitated, agreed; and five minutes later the two of them were cutting their way through a solid wall of mist. Neither spoke. The porter walked forward mechanically. He had walked in the same way over the same ground any day for the past ten years, and was independent of the assistance of vision. Fortunately the road was straight; yet to Cumberlege it appeared to be twisting into different directions at every step. Then he addressed his companion:

'Any chance of finding a cab to take me on to Clapham?' said he.

'Not much,' said the porter. 'It ain't a night for cabbies, this ain't. You may find one tramping round.'

'And if not?' thought Cumberlege, and an instant after heard the sound of wheels, and saw two little specks glimmering out of space.

'Luck favours me!' he exclaimed.

'Hi, there! cabby!' cried the porter.

There was the flick of a whip, and a cab steered its way slowly towards them.

'What bloomin' place is this?' called out a voice. 'I've lost my bearings, it seems.'

'Half-a-guinea if you take me to Clapham!' cried Cumberlege.

'Clapham. Yes, sir,' answered the cabman, with a quick relapse to professional alertness. Difficulties melted before the magic touch of gold.

'Get in, sir. A thick fog.—I say, Bill, where are we?' added the man in a muffled undertone to the porter.

'Arf a mile from the station anyway,' replied the porter. 'Turn your blessed cab round and follow your nose.'

The cabman winked; but he might have stood on his head and no one the wiser under cover of the fog. The porter pocketed the half-crown and vanished into the spectral night; the hansom swerved round and rolled off in the opposite direction, with Cumberlege inside; the fog weighed heavier. Presently the driver opened his trap at the top of the cab.

'Make it a guinea, sir!' he called through the aperture. 'It's a foggy night, and we're out o' the rady.'

'All right,' said Cumberlege; 'a guinea.'

The trap-door snapped to, and the cab rumbled on. It appeared to Cumberlege as if they were descending precipices; in front there was nothing but the impenetrable white curtain. Thus it may be they traversed a mile—it may be more—slowly and with occasional stoppages, and still the bottom of the precipice seemed not to be reached. At length the cab stopped once again, and this time there was a suggestion of finality about the action. The cabman clicked open the trap.

'I can't a-go no farther!' he shouted down. 'You must get out.'

'Confound you!' cried Cumberlege; 'what do you mean?'

'I mean as the fog is a bit too thick for anything but a scythe, and I ain't a-goin' to run my hoss into a brick wall to please nobody. Here I stays.'

'Where are we?' asked Cumberlege.

'I don't know, sir,' said the man.

Cumberlege got out. There appeared to be some excuse for the driver's lack of definite knowledge; Cumberlege was aware that the cab stood there, because he saw dimly burning the two lamps of the hansom; otherwise he might have been in the street alone.

'Have you followed a straight road?' he asked.

'As straight as the hoss knows how,' said the cabman. 'And I'd like that half-sovereign, sir.'

'We can't be far from Clapham, then,' said Cumberlege.

'About a mile, sir. You could walk it easy. Keep to the pavement, and feel along the railings. It ain't a night for driving.'

Cumberlege handed him a gold piece.

'I suppose you've done your best,' said he. 'Good-night. I'll try and ferret out my way.'

Five minutes of fruitless effort proved to him the futility of any such attempt. He lurched into lamp-posts, cannoned against palings, bumped into walls, and ultimately lost the pavement altogether. Moreover, he was possessed of an uneasy conviction that he had turned at least three corners, while aiming to go straight. Suddenly a step brought him into a clear space, where the fog had lifted. He saw houses opposite him, and, beyond, a lamp-post. He crossed the space and stood a moment pondering at the fringe of the fog, when he heard close by him the sound of voices. His first impulse was to call out and inquire his direction; his second was to draw himself stealthily within shadow of the railings of a house and listen. There was something mysterious, something surreptitious, about the tone of the voices as they came, muffled, to his ears through the intervening fog. The hidden speakers did not approach, neither did they recede; consequently they were stationary. Two men standing still in the midst of a fog and the midst of the night, talking earnestly together, was in itself a circumstance odd enough to excite a passing curiosity. Cumberlege drew a pace or

two nearer; the fog secured him from all possibility of detection, and he paused within five yards of the speakers. Then the consciousness of eavesdropping sent a flush to his cheeks, and he prepared to move on, when again he was arrested by the distinct utterance of a sentence.

'*C'est qu'il serait arrivé d'ici là,*' said one of the voices; and, continuing, in French: 'This cursed fog may have delayed him. Did you not fancy you heard the wheels of a cab pass the end of the street a minute or two ago?'

'I heard them,' said the other.

Now, apart from the fact that the men spoke in French, there seemed to Cumberlege something almost sinister in the significance of the words they exchanged. Here was a rendezvous—a rendezvous arranged by foreigners under conditions and at an hour most singular. Cumberlege stroked his beard and reflected: if there was mischief afoot he would best be serving the ends of justice by remaining where he was and ascertaining the nature of it. On the other hand, the situation was one of discomfort; his teeth chattered with the cold, the fog chilled his valorous instincts, and discretion pointed with convincing finger towards his own fireside. By this and that, it seemed to him the most sensible course to leave other people to manage their own affairs, and pursue his way homewards as best he might. As he was on the point of carrying this laudable resolution into effect the two figures advanced a few steps along the pavement towards him, and once more stopped—this time so close to Cumberlege that by stretching out his hand he could have touched the buttons on the coat of the foremost gentleman.

'Without doubt she must be put to death,' said the first in a low, distinct voice.

Cumberlege felt his heart contract; he pressed his back against the railings and held his breath.

'I will see this through,' he thought.

'We can do nothing without the Count's sanction,' replied the second in an equally low, yet equally distinct, tone. 'Perdition take him for keeping us waiting!'

'For my part, I do not know him. I have not seen him.'

'Nor I. But I have seen his portrait.'

'I also. A tall man with a beard. But this lovely traitress'—

'Naritzka? Well, well! To kill a beautiful girl!'

'Name of God! Are you going to turn sentimentalist—you?'

'I keep to my oaths,' muttered the other. 'The Count is the head. The responsibility rests with him. Yet she is, as you say, lovely.'

His companion gave a short laugh.

'So was a Scottish queen; but it did not save her, *mon cher!*'

'It should weigh, one would think; there are not so many beauties in the world that— Ha!'

The speaker was interrupted in the midst of

his sentence by a somewhat singular thing. At his ear there had come, suddenly, a loud and clamorous sneeze—as it were from the very middle of the circumambient fog. Now Cumberlege, leaning forward to catch the words of the strangers more clearly, had been seized with an uncontrollable impulse to sneeze at the very moment when he least desired to; in spite of the most determined effort to suppress the inclination, the tickling that assailed his olfactory nerves was of so peremptory a nature that the sneeze had taken place even as he was in the act of congratulating himself on having successfully stifled it. He perceived that further concealment was impossible, and at the same instant formed his resolution. He had heard enough to persuade him of two things: one, that a lovely girl was in danger of her life; the other, that she could be saved by the authority of one man only. That man was due at the precise spot where he himself now stood, and, like himself, was tall and wore a beard. Cumberlege possessed the quality of decisive action. He rarely stopped to consider consequences when sudden emergencies made sudden demands upon his courage or resources. The conviction smote him that here was an occasion upon which to act was better than to reflect. He made a quick step forward and laid his hand upon the last speaker's arm.

'Gentlemen,' said he in French, 'I am here.'

'The Count!' cried both of them in a breath.

'Even so,' said Cumberlege calmly.

'We did not hear you approach,' observed one.

'You were too busy talking,' replied Cumberlege, 'and the fog perchance gets into one's ears as well as one's eyes. Mine tingle so that I would wish to reach the shelter of a house as soon as we may. Let us proceed, my friends.'

'Two to the left, one to the right—eh, Ivan?' asked the other of his companion.

'And the fourth house on the left,' replied Ivan. 'There is a light in the upper window. You see, we had to calculate our direction in the fog, Count,' he added, turning to Cumberlege. 'Had you much difficulty in finding the rendezvous?'

'Considerable difficulty.'

'But the directions were explicit!'

'Fortunately.'

The man addressed as Ivan had proceeded a few paces, with his companion and Cumberlege at his heels. The question that was uppermost in Cumberlege's mind as they walked shaped itself thus: 'Where is the *real* Count?' and close upon it another: 'If he should arrive too?' Finding no satisfactory answer to either, Cumberlege contented himself with following his guides through the fog. Ivan stopped.

'Here is the turn,' he said; 'one to the left.'

A few steps more, stumbling and groping through the thick curtain of the fog, and another turn was reached.

'Two,' said Ivan; and an instant after they had crossed the street.

'Count twenty paces,' said the second stranger.

At the twentieth pace they stopped again.

'The street corner should be here,' said Ivan, pausing. 'Can you make it out, Bergstein?'

Bergstein—for this appeared to be the name of the second gentleman—passed his hand carefully along the railings of the houses; presently it slipped from the railings into space.

'This should be it,' he exclaimed. 'Yes, here it is. Now, look out for the light in the window.'

Three minutes later they had ascended a flight of steps leading to the door of a large house, and Bergstein pressed an electric bell gently. They were not kept waiting long. The door swung cautiously back on its hinges, and a man's voice demanded who were there.

'*Le Roi!*' replied Bergstein promptly.

This would appear to have been a pass-word, for without more ado the door was flung open and the three men admitted. Cumberlege found himself standing in a spacious hall, dimly lighted from above by a lamp on the landing.

'It is the Count,' said Ivan.

The man who had admitted them bowed low. 'Everything is ready, Monsieur le Comte,' he murmured.

'Then lead the way,' said Bergstein impatiently. 'Count, will you precede us?'

Now, almost for the first time, as he ascended the wide flight of stairs before them, it occurred to Cumberlege that he was doing a very foolish thing; for here was he, entirely ignorant both of the character of his associates and the nature

of the assembly to which they were conducting him, yet voluntarily assuming the rôle of their leader. Simultaneously, the thought of a maiden whose life was in peril fortified his resolution to entrust the issue to chance and his own wits; it was now too late to draw back. They had reached the head of the stairs. Their conductor traversed a corridor and tapped at a door on the opposite side of it. From within there came a murmur of voices; then the door opened and a flood of light burst upon the gloom, enabling Cumberlege to perceive, through the doorway, the interior of a large and brilliantly lit apartment. In it were seated some dozen persons, of whom a few were women. The entire company rose to their feet as Cumberlege, followed by his escort, entered. A man at the farther end of the room advanced to greet the new-comer, and, fixing his eyes upon Cumberlege, regarded him for a moment with a steady scrutiny. Cumberlege returned the stranger's gaze unabashed.

'Count Paul Rassovitch?' said the latter, bowing.

'You have named me,' replied Cumberlege haughtily, for he recollected that he was playing a part, and would require to adapt his bearing to his rôle. 'You have named me. And you, sir!'

A curious smile flitted for an instant across the stranger's mouth. He bowed again.

'Karamoff—at your service,' he said. Then, looking full into Cumberlege's eyes, he added: 'And what is our friend Lavtchok's message, Monsieur le Comte?'

THE SPECTRES OF THE GERMAN AND AUSTRIAN COURTS.



UMOURS having been whispered in Austrian Court circles—but which have assiduously been hushed up—of the appearance thrice of the spectre which portends woe to the imperial House of Hapsburg, the ghostly 'Black Lady,' in the corridor of the apartments of the hapless Empress of Austria prior to her terrible death, some reference to the spectres of woe haunting the royal families of Germany and Austria may be of interest. *En passant* may be mentioned that they are the supposed ghosts of departed ladies in 'black,' 'white,' or 'red' robes of the Middle Ages, who are supposed to have suffered a terrible wrong at the hands of some ancestor, for which they are casting a bane on the family.

The best known of these ghostly apparitions is the so-called 'White Lady' of the House of Hohenzollern, which haunts the old royal residence in Berlin, and the repeated appearance of which has been so oftentimes corroborated by the most reliable witnesses that it can hardly be

doubted. And here be it said that all the three emperors of the century have firmly believed in its apparition when Death stalks the ancient halls of the House of the Brandenburg Margraves. This was even the case with the broad-minded Emperor Frederick, who it may be never to learn was quite as superstitious as his father, and, as indeed, his matter-of-fact son, William III. This apparition has at various times been seen at the hour of midnight, dressed in a long white robe, flitting along the corridor of the chamber of death or sitting in the moonlight in the recess of a window. When approached, as some bold servants have ventured to do, it raises its right hand with a warning gesture, pointing to the chamber in question, and disclosing a marble-white face of exquisite beauty and youthfulness, but with eyes and mien of despair and woe. On the little finger of the right hand is a ring with blood-red stone of great lustre.

It is said, too, that the person thus warned will not see the year out.

In the present century there are several authenticated appearances of this spectre, notably on the

three nights preceding the death of the Kaiser William and of his son Frederick. On the latter occasion news thereof was in an instant brought to William II., who at once gave the most stringent orders to close all exits and make search everywhere in order to discover if it was some ill-timed bogus ghost; but of course nothing was run to earth by the terrified servants; and the Prince, with those concerned, then knew that this noble life was fast ebbing away, and he died within an hour.

The spectre is also reported to have appeared on the night before the then Crown Prince and Crown Princess's baby-boy and idol, Prince Waldemar, fell from the arms of his nurse through the open window of an upper story in the Berlin Schloss, and was killed on the pavement below. It is, by the way, curious that the 'White Lady' only appears at the death of a *born* Hohenzollern; for instance, there is no record of its having been seen at the death of the Empress Augusta, wife of the Kaiser.

Another ghost of the House of Hohenzollern, of which few have heard, is that of a spectral young and beautiful girl who haunts the old Schloss in Königsberg, the former residence of the Markgrafs of Brandenburg and the Electors of Prussia, where the crowning of the kings of Prussia also used to take place; and whereas the identity of the 'White Lady' is shrouded in mystery, here we have a fairly reliable story to go upon. It is said that this sad-faced apparition is the ghost of a beautiful young maiden whose heart was already given to another, but who was forced into marriage with a Brandenburg Markgraf old enough to be her father, with the usual result. Love found a way for the rendezvous of the hapless couple; and information of the meetings coming to her lord's ears, he extorted from the terrified woman a confession of her guilt. Upon this the infuriated husband took a fearful revenge. This fiend in human form actually had his erring wife immured in a secret passage leading to her apartments! For through this passage her lover had been wont to pass to and retire from her boudoir; so here the wretched woman was starved to death, having been furnished with food and drink for three days by her husband, so as to prolong her fearful agonies! She might indeed have cause to haunt his family for all time! But the most remarkable part of the story yet remains to be told; for the walled-up passage is shown to the present day, and many suggestions have been made to the rulers of Prussia to have it opened to ascertain if this ghastly story be true; but all have met with an emphatic refusal, there being a record in the secret Hohenzollern archives setting forth the facts of the tragedy, and inhibiting the opening by any descendants of the House. Indeed, when the late Emperor Frederick was Crown Prince the

local antiquarian society, knowing his broad views and antiquarian tastes, asked him to obtain the permission of his royal father to open the passage and learn the truth, to which the Prince readily consented. But he was doomed to disappointment, for the then king flatly declined the permission, 'for reasons only known to myself,' adding, 'You may do so when you ascend the throne and have read the true record. And, strange to relate, when the Prince had ascended the throne the society reminded him of the circumstances, but, to their great astonishment, received a curt refusal to have the secret of the fatal passage disclosed! The present *fin de siècle* Kaiser, too, has angrily refused permission; and he, like his predecessors, has never slept at the haunted Schloss, in spite of its being, so to speak, the cradle of his race. So thus this awful tragedy still remains shrouded in mystery.

Apocryphal of the superstitions of the Hohenzollerns—superstitions, by the way, found in all ancient royal families, including our own—the rulers of that House possess a talisman brought into it by a good spirit said to guard its destinies. This is the curious 'black stone,' to which is attached the following quaint tradition:

Since the time of the Elector John Cicero, who flourished towards the end of the fifteenth century, each ruler has been wont, before his death, to hand to his successor a sealed packet. This contains a ring, in which is set a black stone said to have been dropped by a huge toad on the coverlet of a princess of the family just as she had given birth to a son. Frederick the Great found the ring in a cover, which also enclosed a memorandum, written by Frederick I., stating its value and its mode of transmission. Schneider, the librarian of William I., declares that he saw the packet handed by Geiling, the treasurer, to his royal master on his accession, and further asserts that he read his account of the talisman to the Emperor, who fully confirmed it.

The present Emperor never fails to wear on all great occasions this queer old ring, and has, like every Hohenzollern, the deepest respect for the quaint little jewel. Frederick the Great's father had the black stone mounted as a ring and bequeathed it to his son, who believed firmly in its value as a talisman, and many of the documents of that time deposited in the archives at Berlin make allusion to it.

But almost stranger and more uncanny than the 'White Lady' of woe of the House of Hohenzollern is the 'Black Lady' of evil omen to the House of Wittelsbach, the hapless insanity-tainted royal family of Bavaria. This weird spectre has been seen several times this century, walking the old family castles of Nymphenburg and Fürstenried, the former now occupied by several members of the family, and the latter by the insane King Otto.

But the 'Black Lady' differs from her 'White' sister by not being a 'maiden young and beautiful,' but of middle age, with a 'sorrowful and careworn face.' As indicated, she wears a long black robe, trailing behind her, of medieval cut, and her hair is white. This spectre is said to have been seen even in broad daylight! This occurred three days before the sudden and inexplicable death of King Maximilian II., and is vouched for by no less personage than his own wife, the late Princess Marie of Prussia.

It was at Schloss Fürstenstein in the spring of 1864 (of course before the days of King Otto's affliction), when a small luncheon party was one day given for the late Landgraf of Hesse-Cassel and his wife. The meal was progressing merrily, when the Queen suddenly happened to look up, and, to her intense astonishment, beheld, standing behind the chair of her husband, who was seated opposite her, a lady robed in black, gazing sorrowfully at her. As quickly the vision vanished. On recovering herself she told what she had seen, knowing nothing of the dire tradition, when a dark shadow crossed the face of her doomed spouse. He instantly rose and rushed to the door, which was screened with heavy curtains and guarded without by an officer and two sentinels. But on angrily demanding who the 'lady in black' they had allowed to pass was, all three most emphatically denied that any living soul had entered. The King explained the mystery to the awe-stricken party as being a hallucination of his weak-nerved wife. But ominous stories soon floated through the castle. Three days later, in the best of health, the King started on his usual morning ride, and was suddenly taken ill. In three hours he was

dead. His death was said to be caused by gastritis.

More creepy still is the story of the sentinel who died so mysteriously on the night before the fearful tragedy on the banks of the Starnberg Lake, when the insane King Louis II., while out walking, first drowned his faithful physician Dr Gudden, and then proceeded, as was afterwards shown, into deep water and drowned himself. The unhappy soldier stated that he was on duty at midnight in the King's corridor, when he suddenly beheld in the moonlight a dark figure moving along at the other end and descending the stairs leading down into the courtyard. Nothing daunted at the weird apparition, he rushed up and challenged, 'Who goes there?' But no response came, the figure descending and the soldier following. When he reached the bottom step he saw the figure in full moonlight glide across the courtyard towards the chapel, where it turned round; and, failing to get an answer, he fired at it. But the gun exploded in his hands with fatal results, and he had barely time to tell his strange adventure to the alarmed guard before he expired. The appearance of this spectre is also shrouded in deep mystery.

Such is also the case with the 'Red Lady' said to haunt the old Schloss at Darmstadt, which, according to report, was last seen on the tragic death of Princess Alice. But there is no rumour of its having been seen prior to the death of her husband. Finally, it should be mentioned that the 'White Lady' of the House of Hapsburg is positively said to have walked the corridors of the Hofburg near the Crown Prince Rudolf's apartments on the three nights preceding the awful Meyerling tragedy.

FENNAN MOSS.

By WILLIAM BUCHAN.

I.



FROM the window of the Herstane Inn, where it stood sheltered by a turn in the hill, a warm glow of firelight shone on the muddy road without. In front and stretching across the valley lay an expanse of water, glimmering dimly in the falling darkness. Midway a dark swirl marked the course of the river, and here and there a solitary tree reared itself above the flood. Overhead, a gray, desolate sky hung lowering over the line of heather-clad hills which crowded westward, black with rain; and nearer, the summits of the smaller green hills stood out yellow and sodden against the blackness beyond.

In pleasant contrast with the bleakness of the night, a genial warmth filled the kitchen of the inn. The dancing firelight lit up the black rafters overhead and played comfortably with the gather-

ing darkness. It leapt round the wide fireplace, licking up the shadows in the nooks and corners, and shining brightly on the polished fender and the tins ranged round the walls. Before the fire, as it roared and crackled up the chimney, sat two powerful, broad-shouldered men. As they sat with hands stretched out to the blaze, their wind-beaten faces shone like burnished metal, and their shadows leapt on the walls in a thousand shapes. Peaceful men were both—one the landlord of the inn; the other, Rob Fletcher, the shepherd of Hopehead, a wild glen five miles into the hills. And yet, peaceful, law-abiding men though they were, their conversation was of the late rebellion of the '45 and the movements of the nearest garrison.

'That weary rebellion!' Rob was saying, 'Mony an honest gentleman it has sent to the scaffold, and mony anither it keeps hiding for his life in wild, God-forsaken bits like the Hopehead.

'At ony rate,' said the landlord cheerily, 'I've heard nae word o' sodgers hereaway. They maun hae gien up seeking for the laird.'

'I'm nane sae sure,' returned Rob. 'He's no' near sae careful as he should be. The day afore yesterday Wat Melrose saw that ne'er-do-weel tramp body, Sandy Scott, come doon the glen; and it might be he saw the laird. That's why I'm here the nicht. But hearken'—

He ceased abruptly, and bent forward listening eagerly. Then he rose and walked quickly to the door, followed by the landlord. In the cold quiet of the windless evening rose a dull sound, low and menacing, telling of spoilt crops and broken bridges, the noise of many waters. But mingled with it came another sound which brought a look of fear into the shepherd's eyes. Low at first, but growing ever louder, nearer it came and, nearer, the beat of hoofs and the jingling of trappings.

The landlord turned to Rob. 'It's them,' he said. 'What'll ye dae? Will ye warn the laird?'

The shepherd stood for a moment; then he turned and walked into the kitchen. 'If they havena a guide,' said he, 'they'll never win to Hopehead this dark nicht.'

The dragoons clattered up to the inn door, and a voice demanded with an oath to see the landlord. Peering through the window, Rob saw the landlord walk up to the leader, the lantern which he held casting shafts of yellow light into the darkness and glancing on the arms of the soldiers. As the glare fell on the leader's face the shepherd started violently and clutched the table.

'It canna be,' he muttered. The face brought him grim memories. His mind went back to his youthful days, and he saw again a lonely hillside and the body of his friend shot through the back. For a minute he gazed earnestly on the face in the lamplight. Then he turned away with a grim smile. 'It's him—at last,' he murmured.

With much noise and jingling of spurs the dragoons entered the kitchen and gathered round the fire. 'Infernal cauld, dark nicht,' said one. 'Landlord, bring us some brandy, for we have work afore us the nicht.'

No one saw, or, if they did, took any notice of, a figure in the darkest corner of the kitchen. There, reclining in a chair, wrapped apparently in the deepest and most peaceful slumber, lay the shepherd. When lights were brought he peered through his half-shut eyelids at the figures round the fire. His look rested again on the leader. He noted his various features—the enormous height, the small head with the scar across the brow, the little shifting eyes, the high-pitched voice. There could be no mistaking the man, and the shepherd's heart was filled with longings for vengeance.

The only person who took any interest in Rob as he lay there was the landlord; and he, knowing that the shepherd must have some plan in

his head, said nothing, but fetched an abundance of brandy and called on the soldiers to drink. Then for a time silence fell on the inn, broken only by the faintly-heard rumbling of the waters without and the clinking of glasses within. At last one spoke out.

'A curse on a' rebels,' said he, 'for keeping honest men out o' their beds on a nicht like this!'

'The laird?' asked the landlord tentatively.

'Ay,' answered the man, whose tongue the brandy had loosened. 'We've run the auld fox to earth at last. Sandy Scott, a tramp, gave the information. But Sandy has gane aff himsel'; and if we canna get a guide to Hopehead this dark nicht, Lord pity us.'

The shepherd had heard enough. He had formed a plan whereby he would save his master and avenge his friend; and now he cast about for a way to awake. Letting his head fall forward on his breast, he began to snore gently, then louder, increasing in vehemence, till the kitchen was filled with a stentorian snoring. The soldiers looked at him in disgust; then one stepped forward, and shaking him roughly by the shoulder, bade him cease. The snoring ceased, and the shepherd's eyes gradually opened. He rose, stretched himself, staggered forward a step, and gazed in sleepy surprise at the soldiers. At last a look of intelligence came into his eyes, and he walked up to the leader.

'I was expecting ye the nicht,' he said. 'I've been waiting for ye this three hours.'

The leader looked in amazement.

'I'm Rob Fletcher, the herd of Hopehead,' he continued. 'It was me that gave Sandy Scott the information about the laird; he wouldna tell ye that, though. Aweel, what road there is to Hopehead isna passable; it's half under water. So I cam' here the nicht to lead ye a short gate across the hilla. But it's time we were taking the road if ye want to be back here afore morning.'

The landlord stared at Rob in surprise and suspicion; but a look from the shepherd reassured him. The leader meanwhile joyfully grasped Rob's hand.

'We could never have managed without ye,' he said. 'We'll just drink ae glass to the King and then start; and he poured out some brandy for the shepherd.

Rob raised his glass to the light and surveyed it critically. 'I ken little and care less about either King or Pretender,' he said; 'but here's to a' gude intentions; and drawing his sleeve across his mouth in the manner of shepherds, he tossed off the glass.

II.



T the mouth of a rocky glen in the midst of the great hill land stood the dragoons. The lantern which the shepherd held shone on a much-bespattered party, whose clothes bore the soil of many hilla. It showed, by its fitful light, a deep and narrow

glen wrapped in blackest darkness. On either hand the hills rose steep and rocky, sparsely clad with heather and bracken; and from their feet a narrow hill-path wound upwards into the darkness. The shepherd blew out the light and turned to the leader.

'The house is just round the hill,' he said. 'Bide you here and I'll gang forrit mysel'. Wat Melrose is sure to be on the watch; and if he saw onybody wi' me he would hae the laird warned, and aff in the darkness afore ye kened. I'll tell the laird that ye garred me guide ye, and I'll offer to show him the way that's clear. He'll suspect naething, and I'll easily bring him into your hands.'

Rob ceased, and waited anxiously on the leader's answer. But the man's naturally stupid brain was dulled by what he had drunk at the inn, and he had no suspicion.

'Vera weel,' he said; 'but look sharp, for it's an unco cauld job waiting here.'

The shepherd strode forward alone, and when out of earshot commenced to run. Arrived at the small, dilapidated house, he burst into the kitchen. There, before a roaring fire, with the window closely shuttered, sat the laird and Wat Melrose, quietly smoking. When Rob's panting figure entered the laird started, but, seeing only the shepherd, sat down again, and asked jocularly if he had any news of soldiers.

'Ay!' said Rob breathlessly; 'there's a party of dragoons twae hunder yards doon the glen.'

The laird sprang up in alarm, and laid a hand on his sword.

'Ye see,' explained Rob, 'I just brought them here mysel' for fear some one else would guide them. And now I'll tell ye my plans. We three men are a' about ae height. You and me will exchange claes—it'll be easier for ye, onyway, to gang about the country in herd's than in gentleman's claes—and Wat here will tak' me to the dragoons. It's ower dark for them to ken the difference; and forbye, I've ta'en away the lantern.'

'But you,' asked the laird—'what will become of you?'

'Never fash yoursel' about that,' answered Rob. 'They'll no tak' me far. I'll be at the sheep in the morning as usual.'

The laird could say nothing further. When the shepherd said a thing he meant it, and nothing could dissuade him. Besides, he could come to no great harm.

'God bless you!' he said simply. 'For my own part, I am not sorry. It is poor work hiding here like a rat in a hole. In the meantime I shall go to my cousin's house in the west, where they will never think of seeking me. From there I must take ship to France, as many a better man has had to do.'

The change of clothes was soon effected, the farewells taken, and the laird strode off up the

glen on his night tramp westwards. The other two men took the opposite direction, and as they went the shepherd unfolded to Wat his further plans and directed him how to act. When they reached the narrow outlet of the glen the dragoons suddenly rose around them. The shepherd, feigning an attempt to escape, burst away from Wat; but, tripping over a stone, he was immediately overpowered. The leader meanwhile stepped up to the supposed laird and scrutinised him carefully. The darkness prevented his features being seen; but, feeling the clothes and the sword, he had no suspicion, and, turning to Wat, began to thank him effusively.

Making his voice as like the shepherd's as possible, Wat cut him short. 'I've done my part,' he said; 'and a' you've got to do is to tak' him awa'. It's time I was in my bed.' So saying, he was moving off, when the leader called him back.

'Stop!' he said. 'Can we no' bide the night at the hoose?'

Here was a new development which they had not foreseen. To allow the dragoons into the house would mean their own discovery and the possible capture of the laird, an event which must be averted at all costs.

'Weel,' said Wat slowly, 'ye micht, if ye have nae objections to sleeping under the open sky; for the kitchen is the only room that has a roof till it, and its no' big enough to haud ye a'. But no,' he added suddenly, as the thought struck him, 'it'll no dae. To get Wat Melrose out o' the way, I telled him the dragoons were coming up; and he went off to raise the shepherds round about. They'll be here afore morning, and as the laird is weel liked, they are sure to make a desperate attempt to rescue him. It would be safer to gang back to the inn.'

The leader stood irresolute. He was reluctant to face the long tramp again, and he knew that his men could easily scatter any shepherds. Still, there was a possibility of their rescuing the laird, and he was unwilling to afford them any such chance. 'I'll no' risk it,' he said; 'but we'll need you to guide us back again through these God-forsaken hills.'

'Hoots!' answered Wat. 'Ye surely mind the road ye cam'. If no', just tie yoursel' to the laird, and tell him ye'll shoot him if he guides ye wrang. He'll gang canny eneuch then;' and with that Wat turned on his heel and vanished in the darkness.

With his right arm bound to the leader's left, Rob led the way down the glen. Behind straggled the dragoons, already wearied by their upward march, cursing the night and the roughness of the road. Several times the leader tried to engage his companion in conversation; but Rob was silent, resolute not to betray himself. His mind was filled with other thoughts, with his plans for escape and vengeance. It was fixed on a lonely

glen in the heart of the hills whither by degrees he was heading, gradually veering off from the direct road to the inn. Onward they wound, a blacker blot in the darkness, over hill and down valley, in silence save for the squelching of their heels in the sodden turf. In that wilderness of rock and heather, rendered more confusing by the darkness, they were entirely at the mercy of their guide. The night seemed blacker than ever; and, to make matters worse, they had no light. A smur of rain also had come on, and, dripping coldly on their faces, added to their discomfort. Onward they marched, tripping over boulders, stumbling in the long heather, and slipping over the sodden ground. At last, when they had mounted a low hill, the shepherd's heart beat faster. He knew that in the blackness below was the scene where the last act must be played. Filling the strath in front lay the Fennan Moss. Dangerous even in dry weather, after the recent rains it would be quite impassable, save by one road. That path Rob had come to know by watching the sheep; and now, through long acquaintance, he knew its every turn, and could walk it by night as by day. Yet now even the path would hardly be safe; but Rob was determined on a bold move. He led the way at an angle down the hillside, and arriving at the bog, struck boldly along the path, increasing his pace as he went. The rest followed without suspicion, and found themselves suddenly floundering in the edge of the moss. They drew back in alarm, while the shepherd increased the distance between them. The leader, walking on comparatively firm ground, heard their footsteps cease.

'Come on!' he cried, with an oath. 'Why do you stop?'

'Watch the laird,' shouted a dragoon in answer. 'He has led us into a bog. Stop him, or he'll escape.'

The leader halted in fright and raised his pistol. But before he knew, the shepherd had stretched out his left arm and snatched it from him. In terror for his own life, the man called on his dragoons not to shoot and held back. But in a moment Rob had clapped the pistol to his breast. 'Come on,' he said, 'or, by heaven, I'll shoot you like a dog!'

As they advanced the ground became softer, and the two men sank deeply. On either side the black moss water glimmered cold and dark. The shepherd's heart was filled with a fierce joy as he dragged his companion onward. He had saved his master, and he would now avenge his friend. Onward they went, deeper into the heart of the moss, treading swiftly and lightly, and dragging their feet from the sinking ground. When the shouts of the dragoons had grown faint on the bank Rob halted. They had come to a piece of ground several yards broad, and much firmer than the rest. Rob ordered his companion to cut their

bonds; then he faced him and laid a hand on his right arm.

'The laird,' he said abruptly, 'is weel on his way to the west by this time; and I am Rob Fletcher, the herd. I wouldna have telled ye that; only naeboddy will ever hear tell o't, for ye'll never leave here alive.'

He felt the man's arm tremble under his grasp.

'Ye'll shake mair, my man, afore I'm done,' he continued. 'Ye have maybe never seen me before, but fine I mind you. Ye'll have heard o' Sandy Veitch? I thought sae. Weel, you've escaped justice long, but your day of reckoning has come at last. You killed that man in jealousy and in the coward's way—shot him in the dark. Ye left him for dead, but he was living when I fand him in the morning. From him I learned the murderer's name; and there I vowed that, whenever and wherever I met ye, I would avenge my friend. The times were troublous then, and, being a soldier, you escaped justice; but now Heaven has sent you into my hands. As you killed Sandy, so you deserve to die; but I'll give you a fair chance of life. We have baith pistols. Gang to the end of this piece of ground, and when I give the word, fire. I'll act with a' fairness.' So saying, he handed him back his pistol.

The man uttered no word; he was trembling violently and his face was ashen gray. He felt that vengeance had overtaken him, and that his doom was about to fall. He felt that to stand up before the shepherd at four yards and with a trembling hand meant certain death. For a moment he could think of nothing, stunned by the sudden discovery. Then, as he turned away, a fierce desire of life rushed over him. He was facing the side of the bog from which they had come; before him must lie the path. By that way there was a faint hope; in facing the shepherd, none. When Rob called on him to halt, he turned suddenly, fired, and darted along the path. As he vanished a look of deep chagrin passed over the shepherd's face. But he did not move. The bullet passed harmlessly over him and dropped with a flop into the moss beyond. Rob knew what was coming, and listened quietly for the end. For a few steps the flying dragoon kept the path; then at a turn he went off. There were some soft, sinking footsteps, a cry of deadly fear, drowned in a splash.

Late next day a sorely bedraggled party of dragoons rode off from the Herstane Inn. Without much surprise the landlord noticed that one of them led a riderless horse. He watched them ride down the valley in a limp and dispirited manner. As they advanced they began to scatter as men without a leader. Then a turn in the hill-side hid them from sight.

In his cousin's house in the west lay the

laird, safe from pursuit. To-morrow he must take ship for France, there to abide till better times fall.

Away in the heart of the hills the Fennan Moss

lay still and treacherous as before. All traces of footsteps had disappeared, and there was nothing to show that in the middle, many feet below its oozing, placid surface, lay the body of a man.

CULTIVATION OF VEGETABLE SILK IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

By ROWLAND W. CATER.



FREQUENT references have recently been noticeable in various newspapers to the discovery of new fibres adapted in a greater or less degree to the purposes of industrial manufacture. From these reports the casual reader may be led to deduce that many of the fibres, of both animal and vegetable origin, in use at the present day are in danger of being ousted in the near future by some newly discovered rival. A German doctor, improving on a method patented in France some years ago, has produced from cotton a fibre which in many respects surpasses the material from which it is prepared; and the same may be said of an English process patented in 1897, by which, from a mass of cotton dissolved in certain chemicals, continuous threads may be spun and fibres obtained of any desired length. The fineness and length of the fibres produced by either of these processes are the chief features of improvement, which may possibly induce manufacturers to take them up. The former is already being handled on a large scale on both sides of the Channel; and the latter, although as yet scarcely beyond the experimental stage, bids fair to become equally successful.

We hear that even silk—the queen of all fibres—is not secure on her throne. She likewise has many competitors, and that little lepidopterous labourer, the silkworm, is likely soon to be out of work. Of these, one hails from certain Mediterranean shores, notably from Sicily, where at low tide, from myriads of shellfish which attach themselves to the rocks and larger stones upon the beach, a quantity of very fine and glossy fibrous matter not unlike a cobweb, and similar in appearance to silk, is obtained, and this, when thoroughly washed, dried, and combed, is made up into fabrics.

Another fibre which threatens to displace the produce of the silkworm is that known as Vandyke silk, produced in Glasgow by artificial means and at a very small cost. It consists of extremely fine threads obtained by forcing a gelatinous solution through a number of minute apertures; and after undergoing a special water-proofing process the fibres become pliable, and can be handled on the looms with perfect ease.

Spun glass, in fine and glossy fibres, capable of

conversion into textile fabrics possessing a sheen even surpassing that of silk, has long been known; but unfortunately it has serious disadvantages unfitting it for general use.

The only fibre which really deserves to be called a substitute for silk is ramie—known also in England as rhea and China-grass, according to the stages reached in its preparation. It is of vegetable origin, and, curiously enough, the plant is a native of China, the land to which we owe our earliest knowledge of the true product of the silkworm. There, as in many other countries of the Far East, it has been known under various names—in China, *tchou ma*; in Japan, *karao*; in Java, *wapierit*—from time immemorial, and has been used for cordage, nets, and coarse cloth. It was apparently widely known in olden times, for to the present day it is unwrapped from mummies found in Egypt and from human remains in the burial-mounds of India.

This fibre is obtained in some regions from the *Boehmeria nivea* of botany, and in others from *Bahmeria tenacissima*. Both of these plants belong to the *Urticaceæ* or nettle family, and usually reach five or six feet in height. The fine filaments, which are extracted from the twenty to twenty-five stalks of the plant, constitute the strongest and most beautiful of all vegetable fibres, combining much of the fine glossy appearance of silk with the strength of flax. Like the latter, this fibre can be bleached to an almost dazzling whiteness, and possesses in a marked degree the peculiar power of holding dyes of the former.

Although it may be on a comparatively small scale, ramie is actually cultivated in Ceylon, the Malayan Archipelago, Brazil, Mexico, and many of the smaller states in Central and South America, besides those countries already mentioned. As an article of export, however, it may be said to have scarcely made its début. To some extent it is now being used, both in England and on the Continent, in the manufacture of yarn, drill, velvets, fancy cloths, and hosiery; whilst in the form of carpets, household drapery, and hangings it gives promise of a great future. The untrained eye would find it difficult in the extreme to distinguish many of these articles from similar ones of silk.

Long enough ago the use of this invaluable

fibre would have been adopted generally by European and American manufacturers; but there has hitherto been an apparently insurmountable barrier, inasmuch as no suitable machinery, capable of thoroughly and economically solving the problem of preparation for the markets, has been forthcoming. This is the problem that many a level head has been endeavouring to solve for years past. Thirty years ago the Government of India, desirous of encouraging these attempts, offered large money prizes to any one inventing a machine which would extract the fibre and so handle it as to turn it out fit for the manufacturer. None of the inventions submitted, however, were considered satisfactory, owing, probably, to the prohibitive cost of the processes. The great difficulty all along has been the separation of the filaments from the woody matter enveloping them, and when separated, to rid them without injury of the strongly adherent gummy substance still left behind. This, it was claimed, could be effected by an invention put on the market some few years ago by Captain S. B. Allison, a native of Texas; but although his machine was more or less successful in its treatment of this fibre, it was generally pronounced to be too complicated. Of the other methods which have since been proposed, the Blaye-Subra and Smith-Nicoll processes deserve mention; but the process generally considered to be the best, and which appears to have eclipsed all previous attempts, is that known as the Gomess process—the invention of an English chemist of that name. This has given such good results that it has been taken up by a London syndicate, which is prepared to contract at very satisfactory prices for the purchase of large quantities of ribbons—the trade name for strips of dried bark containing the fibres.

Experiments which have been going on for years have proved that ramie may be grown successfully and profitably in Central America; and there is no reason, therefore, why tropical planters should not turn their attention to its cultivation. Nothing is more simple or more easily undertaken on a small capital. Being perennial, the plant produces crops through several years without replanting. The annual yield per acre is astounding, the cost of production low, the demand constant, and the profit good; while by shipping the article in the shape of ribbons a large outlay on machinery is avoided, and at the same time the cost of the labour involved in tedious methods of preparation.

The ramie-plant is very hardy, having an unusually wide distribution; but it thrives best in moist and shady situations in tropical regions. Almost any soil will suit it; but a deep, rich, and loose loam answers best. It can be propagated either from cuttings, seed, or from sections obtained by division of the tuberous roots of older plants. Where these latter are procurable

it is advisable to propagate from them. The process is very simple. Long furrows are dug; the ground between them is well harrowed; and the roots with most 'potato eyes' in them being selected, they are cut into pieces of a moderate size, and planted in the beds about a foot apart. Then the beds are covered with a sprinkling of soil from two to three inches in depth. The luxuriance of the plants springing from these roots naturally varies a great deal, according to locality; but under favourable conditions the quantity of stalks and their height should be as I have stated, and the first crop ready for harvest in three months from the date of planting. Planting from seed is only adopted in cases where the germin of the plant has to be carried over any great distance, occupying a long time in transit. Here, too, the *modus operandi* is very simple, although less so than that by planting from roots. The exceedingly small seeds are mixed with fine earth and sown broadcast over the beds, which are then covered with a thin layer of fine soil. Just as the first blades appear a temporary framework is erected over the beds, and covered with palm or plantain leaves, or matting, in order to protect the young shoots from the direct rays of the sun. The matting must be kept moist by day, and is removed at sunset. Constant weeding of the beds is essential, and when three or four inches high the shoots are ready to be transplanted, having been well watered the night before. The earth surrounding the roots, when taken from the nursery, should not be shaken off—the more earth that goes with them to their new position the better.

Not long ago I happened to find myself one morning at the principal Pacific port of Guatemala—San José—a mixture of wooden and *adobe* huts encircling a few larger but even less elegant edifices with galvanised iron roofs; and, aware of the fact that one or two plantations where the cultivation of ramie has been made a speciality were to be found in the vicinity, I booked for Escuintla by the narrow-gauge line which connects the port with the capital—Guatemala City.

The traveller in Central America, after a few journeys such as this—eight or nine miles an hour through choking dust—learns to be thankful for small mercies, such as, for instance, the comfort afforded by the best hotel in a town like Escuintla, which is a very small mercy indeed. The town is surrounded by numerous sugar estates and the few ramie plantations already mentioned. One of the best among the latter is that belonging to Señor Arnaud, at Monte Alto, which lies a few leagues out of the town—in a north-westerly direction, I think it is—and I decided to make my way there. Accordingly, the next day I hired a mule for a few days indefinitely, and set off.

To speak of the native *caminos*—other than those in the immediate neighbourhood of the capital and larger towns—as roads would be to utter a gross libel on the word. Highways and lanes alike are but beaten tracks through the bush, whose width depends entirely on the amount of traffic on them. Arriving at a junction of several of these, having no directions beyond that I must stick to the widest, small wonder that I erred and had to retrace my way. Starting afresh on another track—not the widest, but that on which most wheel-ruts were visible—I determined to keep to it and put up with the consequences. While the mule was ambling slowly along, apparently as undecided as its rider, I happened to look forward along the track, and noticed a figure approaching. As it drew nearer I could distinguish a very shabby native of the ‘don’t-like-work’ type astride a well-proportioned horse and a somewhat dilapidated Mexican saddle. I kept my eyes fixed on this stranger as he approached gradually; but, before I had quite finished taking stock of him, some unaccountable instinct prompted me to glance over my shoulder, after the manner of a nervous child in the dark, down the lane I had just traversed. There behind me appeared another stranger, also well mounted and sufficiently disreputable-looking, but not quite so close upon me as the first.

Now, highway robbery, although not common in Central America, is not entirely unheard of; and the discreet traveller will always provide himself with a trusty revolver before setting out on a more or less lengthy journey, for otherwise he is liable to sustain serious losses or receive nasty wounds and bruises whilst striving to avoid them.

As the stranger from the front drew nearer I was better able to study his physiognomy, and his decidedly bad face convinced me that his intentions were no better, and I persuaded myself that the stranger in the rear was his confederate.

Nearly everybody in Central America—man, woman, or child—is addicted to the habit of smoking; the article they consume being torpedo-shaped apologies for cigars known as *puros*, native made and of native-grown weed. Taking cunning advantage of the prevalence of this habit, the favourite scheme of these robbers, or *ladrones*, is to stop the traveller on lonely roads and ask him for a light, chewing an unlit *puro* the while. When the unsuspecting traveller complies—usually by offering his own lighted cigar—his arm is grabbed and he is violently thrown from his beast to the ground; and before he has time to realise what has happened, even if his neck has not been broken by the fall, he is robbed of everything of value about him, and his provisions and mount are gone. It is an old dodge, and usually a successful one. I have known many instances of its use, all of which had the desired

effect—from a robber’s point of view—especially as, according to native etiquette, the granting of a light is a favour which cannot be refused even to the very meanest beggar; and of course this fact greatly helps these wily scoundrels in their design.

As I rode along, having turned all this over in my mind, I gave my belt a pull so that my revolver was in front and somewhat handier, and then I spurred the mule onwards to meet the stranger; for, now that I knew that something was coming, I wanted it to come quickly and end the suspense.

Coming abreast of me, he closed in, and asked in an insolent and off-hand tone for a light.

‘*Permitame su fuego, hombre,*’ said he; and as he held out his left hand as if to receive my lighted cigar, I noticed that his right was dangerously near his *machete*. His half-suppressed smile and his occasional rapid glances towards the other stranger approaching from the rear convinced me that in prompt action lay my only chance.

Taking the lighted cigar from my mouth as if about to hand it over as usual, I at the same time noiselessly released my revolver. Then quickly sticking the cigar into the open barrel, I held it out towards him. ‘*Con mucho gusto,*’ was my polite reply.

The suddenness of it took the rogue entirely by surprise, and the smile he was wearing passed quite as suddenly from his face to mine. He took the cigar, however, and the hint too—the former very gingerly—lit his own *puro*, and even replaced my cigar in the revolver-barrel, which, of course, I kept ‘quite contagious.’ A timid ‘*Adios, señor,*’ and he was gone.

This trick of mine is, I believe, a very old one. A boy from Texas had initiated me into it years before I dreamt of ever crossing the seas; and now that I had profited by his instruction and proved the effectiveness of the ruse, I vowed as I rode away that the very first opportunity should find me drinking a deep draught to the health of my friend from Texas.

My confederate theory had proved true also, for the rider coming up from the rear, after exchanging a few words with the first-comer, turned about, and the baffled pair were soon out of sight. Even yet I cannot repress a smile as I recall the picture of those two retreating rogues, bearing in every line of their downcast figures the mark ‘returned empty.’

I went on my way rejoicing, but at a considerably accelerated pace, for I was not entirely without fears of their reappearance in some other and—from their point of view—more effective rôle. That was the last I saw of them, however; and, indeed, I need have had no fear, for such men are arrant cowards at heart, and will seldom attack openly or when one is *en garde*. They confine their attempts to the occasions on which they have a manifest advantage.

About dusk I came upon a small hut on the left of the track—a sort of bird-cage built of cane and thatched with palm-leaves. I dismounted and went inside. In reply to my queries, the Indian occupant informed me that I was on the right track; in fact, I was on the outskirts of the very plantation I was in search of, and he himself was in the employment of its owner. Thanking the Indian and bidding him the usual *adiós*, I spurred my mule onwards, and finally reached the house about seven in the evening, having taken a whole day to accomplish a journey which should have occupied but a few hours.

The owner, I was sorry to find, was not at home, having gone up to the capital on business; but his foreman made me very comfortable, and in the morning showed me over the plantation. I was fortunate indeed, for both here and on other plantations in the neighbourhood which I visited the harvest of ramie was just commencing.

The harvest begins at from sixty to eighty days from planting. The stalks are carefully examined and watched. They begin to change colour near the roots, turning gradually from green to a reddish-brown. When the brown colour reaches to, say, half a foot from the ground the stalks are ready to be harvested; and the less delay there is in gathering in the crops the better, for the next will grow the quicker. Care is very necessary in cutting, in order to avoid damaging the roots. The native labourers grasp the tops of the stalks in a bunch in the left hand, and by rapidly passing the right down their whole length remove all the leaves; and then with a sharp *machete* or other suitable implement the whole is, by a single and dexterously delivered blow, cut off at a couple of inches from the roots. The tender portion at the top is then lopped off, and the remainder, made into convenient bundles, is conveyed to the barn or shed where decortication is to take place.

As I went from plant to plant, watching them at work, in my mind's eye the busy crowd of semi-nude natives became for a space the Rev. Justus Krenk's Hindu converts pulling their Nilghiri nettles in order that 'the heathen shall in white clothes made by their own hands clothed be,' and one momentarily expected to hear the trump of Athos Dazé's horn, and then to see the crowd break and flee as they did in that truly 'moving' story of Kipling's.

To return to our subject: the ramie-plant, like ginger and many other crops, is very exhausting to the soil, which requires, therefore, to be occasionally fertilised. Any animal manure, mixed with ashes or lime, is found to be effective.

Decortication, the process which follows immediately after the harvest, consists in the removal of the bark, in long strips or ribbons, from the woody portion of the stems. This operation varies considerably in the different countries where ramie

is grown, and can be performed either by hand or by machinery. Whatever the means adopted, the planter's chief aim must be to avoid fermentation. The safer plan is to decorticate when green, cutting only such quantity as can be dealt with the same day; for if a large supply is cut and stacked to wait its turn at the machine, it invariably ferments and a considerable portion of the fibre is ruined. When performed by hand, the operation merely consists in soaking the bundles of stalks in vats of boiling water for about half-an-hour, after which they are allowed to cool, and the bark is carefully and quickly torn off in strips. These strips are passed through a species of mangle—between the wooden rollers of a disused sugar-mill, for instance—to rid them of as much moisture as possible; and when thoroughly dried, either in the sun or by hanging on lines in a shed through which the air has a free passage, they may be made up into bales and shipped. There are several kinds of machines for decortication, some of which are intended for the treatment of the stalks in a green state and others for the dried reeds; but all give a similar result and turn out the ribbons which, when thoroughly dried, are ready for the market. Where native labour is abundant, however, it would seem folly to invest in expensive machinery when the process can be performed effectively and cheaply by hand.

Estimates of the profits derived from ramie culture which have been put forth by several authorities—to wit, Sir Henry Dering, British Minister in Mexico; the Rhea Fibre Treatment Company, of London; Mr S. H. Slaughter, of Washington, U.S.A.; the Perseverance Fibre Company, of New Orleans—naturally vary considerably, for in no two countries is the cost of production the same; and whilst in some situations two crops may be harvested annually, others more fertile will allow of four, or even five. Of these authorities the first-mentioned states that 'the profits amount to one hundred and forty-five per cent. on the working capital,' which suggests that the planter of ramie on a more or less extensive scale would in a very few years find it necessary to call even six ciphers into use, and on the right side too, when striking his final balance. Personally, I lean rather towards the estimate of the second authority I have quoted. This company, having had occasion and opportunity to go into the matter very thoroughly, considers that 'four pounds per ton may fairly be taken as an average cost,' and is prepared to pay seven pounds per ton for the ribbons at port of shipment. This would represent a clear profit of seventy-five per cent. on the working capital—about half the previous estimate; and we see that from this business, embarkation in which entails very little cost beyond that of the land itself, the planter may reap profits sufficient to compensate him for his few years of isolation.

KNIGHTS HOSPITALLERS PAST AND PRESENT.



WHO has not heard of that famous body the Knights of St John? It is known, even if only vaguely by some, throughout the civilised world. But what is not generally known, especially in Scotland, is that at the present day there exists an order which may be said to emulate that part of the work which was holy, noble, and useful of the old Knights Hospitallers in their best days. The order referred to is that of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England. Before speaking of its work, it may be well to turn briefly to the history of the first-mentioned order, so that the relation between the two may be better understood.

So far back as the year 1048 a hospital—or rather two buildings, one for each sex—was instituted in Jerusalem for the relief of pilgrims. These buildings had each its own chapel, that attached to the portion for women being dedicated to St Mary Magdalene, while the one pertaining to the portion set apart for men was put under the patronage of St John the Almoner, a certain Cypriot, surnamed the Charitable, who had been patriarch of Alexandria. This hospital, together with a Benedictine monastery belonging to it, was founded by some pious Italian merchants of Amalfi, and had survived all the tempests of the Turkish invasion of Palestine; and to it was added later a magnificent church dedicated to St John the Baptist, who seems to have been gradually associated with St John of Jerusalem as patron of the order. The monks attached to the monastery made it their business to serve the sick and poor pilgrims, and the hospital thus became in those dangerous times a most valuable institution for the Christians who visited Jerusalem. On the approach of the Crusaders the monks were imprisoned; but they were released by the conquerors, to whose sick they rendered good service, the result being that Godfrey de Bouillon rewarded them with endowments and immunities. The hospital became rich and famous, and monastic institutions bearing their name were founded in various cities of Europe.

On the death of their abbot—Gerrard, a Frenchman—in 1118, Raymond du Pay, a Crusader and a former beneficiary of the hospital, was chosen his successor. He conceived the idea of making the monks combine military duties with their hospital work, and the Order of the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem was accordingly founded, the declared object of the institution being to make war upon the infidels, and to afford relief and comfort to the pilgrims to the Holy City. The members assumed as their dress a long black, coarse robe, on the breast of which was a white cross. So long as the brotherhood

remained poor the work they carried out was highly beneficial; but wealth began to flow in upon them, and so impair their efficiency. Many great people, impressed with their virtue, bestowed on them rich lordships and immense treasure; and in the space of a few years the Hospital of St John was in possession of numerous manors both in the East and in Europe, which were placed under the management of members of their society, and in the fourteenth century the European countries in which the knights carried on their work were divided into branches or languages, England being one by itself.

With its rapidly increasing power, it would be too much to expect that humility would long continue to characterise the order; the end being that, after a possession of eighty-seven years, the banner of the Crescent once more waved over the hard-won city of Jerusalem. In 1191 the knights laid siege to and took the city of Ptolemais, which afforded them a last residence in the sacred territory, until, nearly after two hundred years' occupancy, the whole of that region was wrested from Christian dominion in 1292. Thereafter the knights lived in Cyprus, Rhodes, Candia, Baia, Civita Vecchia, and Viterbo respectively. At last they were fain to accept from the Emperor Charles V. Malta, with its dependent island of Gozo, and the town of Tripoli on the Barbary coast. Malta was reached on the 26th of August 1530, and the Grand Master, L'Isle Adam, was received with regal honours. The knights gave into his hands, in his capacity as their chief, all monarchical power; after which he took formal possession of the sovereignty of the island. Here the knights, who when at Rhodes became known as Knights of Rhodes, again changed their designation to that of Knights of Malta. Their chequered career in their island home ended in 1798, when Napoleon landed without opposition, and the ancient order ceased to be a sovereign power.

But to revert to its relation to the priory of St John of Jerusalem at Clerkenwell, London. It is now almost impossible to fix the exact date in which this priory was founded, yet many circumstances point to the belief that it was about the year 1100, and that it emanated from the pious zeal and munificent liberality of a certain Jordan Brisset, who had received a grant of forest-land, in which is now Clerkenwell, from William Rufus, as a reward for services rendered to his father, William of Normandy. Very soon after its establishment it became one of the largest and most important priories in the Metropolis or its environs, being palatial in appearance and arrangement. In the twelfth century the district of Clerkenwell rose gently from the banks of the Thames, watered by innumerable springs of the

purest water, with the pellucid river Fleet (then called the 'River of Wells') gracefully meandering along the western side of the priory precincts, and a background of rich umbrageous foliage bearing away to the north, stretching over hill and dale to the beautiful uplands of Highgate and Hampstead, then a part of the great forest of Middlesex, and to the deer park at St Mary Bourne, now Regent's Park.

In 1185 the priory church was consecrated by Heraclius, patriarch of Jerusalem, who happened to be then in England on an embassy to solicit assistance in furtherance of the Crusade. He was accompanied by Roger de Moulines, the seventh Grand Prior of the Hospitallers. From the year of dedication a steady augmentation of wealth and power seems to have attended the establishment in Clerkenwell; and, through the bounty of princes and private individuals, the English branch or language rose to so high an estate and such great riches (to use the words of Camden) that 'after a sort they wallowed in wealth.' Although at this time the order possessed in Christendom alone nineteen thousand manors or lordships, the purposes of the foundation were not entirely lost sight of, for in the year 1237 three hundred knights, preceded by Theodoric, their prior, at the head of a large body of armed stipendiaries, left their house in Clerkenwell for the Holy Land, the banner of St John proudly unfurled in their van.

The downfall of the Templars but increased the wealth and pride of the Hospitallers, who in 1324 succeeded to most part of the lands of the former. But evil days were also in store for the latter. In 1381 Wat Tyler's insurrection broke forth, the mob attacking and burning the priory, and afterwards beheading the Lord Prior, Sir Robert Hales, on Tower Hill. The rebuilding of the priory was completed in 1504, when the Gate House was erected by the then prior, Sir Thomas Docwra. Henry VIII. had fixed his eye upon the wealth of the order, and in 1540 the monastery was suppressed. From the foundation till its dissolution it had been presided over, according to Newcourt, by thirty-seven priors. After the death of Henry the priory church fell into the hands of the Duke of Somerset, Lord Protector, who destroyed great portions of the buildings for the purpose of erecting a palace for himself, which he called Somerset House. Small thanks are due to this Duke for the gate still standing; the probability is that it was retained for its utility, forming, as it doubtless did at that time, a barrier to the inner precincts. When Mary ascended the throne the priory was rechartered, and a grant made of the 'House,' the 'Gate House,' the 'Church,' and other specified places; but on the accession of Queen Elizabeth the order was once more suppressed. In 1604 James I. of England granted to Sir Roger Wilbraham, for his life, the Grand South Gate of the priory. The choir

passed by deed into the hands of Sir William Cecil, Lord Burleigh, son of the Earl of Exeter. In the reign of Charles I. it became the property of Robert Bruce, Earl of Elgin, upon his marriage with the Lady Diana, daughter of Thomas, Earl of Exeter. Lord Elgin's son was created Earl of Aylesbury, and the building was then converted into a private chapel for the Earl's use, and for many years afterwards was called Aylesbury Chapel. The estates, after remaining in the hands of this distinguished family for over a hundred years, were purchased in 1721 by Simon Michell, who in 1723 repaired and enlarged the chapel, built the present west front, and re-roofed the whole. He then disposed of the church and vaults, &c., for two thousand nine hundred and fifty pounds to the 'Commissioners for Building Fifty New Churches.' The building, after enrolment in Chancery and consecration by Edmund Gibson, Lord Bishop of London, was declared to be a parish church for ever, and formally styled 'The Church of St John, Clerkenwell, in the county of Middlesex.'

Early in the last century Edward Cave occupied St John's Gate as a residence and printing-office. It thus became the rendezvous of the literati of the period; and it is curious to note that from the spot where knights had sallied forth for crusading purposes was issued, in January 1731, *The Gentleman's Magazine*. Johnson, Goldsmith, and Savage were among the notables who visited Cave at the Gate, and Garrick's first attempt at acting in London took place within its hall. In January 1845 the then owner was, under the new Metropolitan Buildings Act, ordered to repair St John's Gate, owing to its ruinous and dangerous condition; and at this period, through the instrumentality of Mr W. P. Griffiths, F.S.A., a threatened covering of the building with *composition* was prevented, and a sum of money publicly collected towards making a proper restoration. This restoration took place in 1847. A few years later the Gate once more became the property and headquarters of a new body of Knights Hospitallers; but before explaining how this came to pass it must be shown how the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England was revived.

In 1814 the surviving Knights of the French Language assembled at Paris and elected a Capitular Commission for the government of the order as it then existed. This act was confirmed by Pope Pius VII., and recognised by the Lieutenant-Master, the Sacred Council, the Kings of France and Spain, and by the Knights of Spain and Portugal. Thus five-sixths of the divisions of the order were represented and acted unanimously. About the year 1827 five of the seven then existing divisions or languages of the order, through the Capitular Commission already mentioned, decreed its revival in England, with such alterations in its constitution as were neces-

sitated by the times and conformity with the reformed religion. Two Knights of the French Language of the order came as delegates, and they invested with the functions and authority of Grand Prior of England the Rev. Sir Robert Peat, who attended at the Court of Queen's Bench and took the oaths as Lord Prior in Great Britain. Thus was the suppressed English Language reconstituted; and since 1830 its members, united together as a fraternity for the purpose of performing Hospitaller and other charitable work, have been to the extent of their ability striving to carry out their duty as Hospitallers in the relief of sickness, distress, and suffering. A regular succession of Grand Priors has been continued to the present day. In 1872 the historic Gate at Clerkenwell was purchased by a member of the order, the late Sir E. Lechmere, who disposed of it to the order. Long may the latter continue in possession of such historic, and now well-cared-for, headquarters! On the 14th of May 1888, in recognition of the excellent work performed by the members of the order or fraternity during the past half-century—especially the establishment of the St John's Ambulance Association and the foundation and support of the British Ophthalmic Hospital at Jerusalem—Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen granted them a new royal charter of incorporation under the name and style of 'The Grand Priory of the Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in England,' and was graciously pleased to become the sovereign head and patron of the order. The members existing on the roll of the fraternity at the date of the incorporation formed the body corporate of the then incorporated order or fraternity, and on the eve of St John the Baptist, 24th June of the same year, His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales succeeded the Duke of Manchester as Grand Prior.

In addition to the two foundations already mentioned, the following movements have been supported or set on foot by the chapter during the present century: The relief, through its almoner's department, of poor convalescents recommended by hospitals and infirmaries, by the distribution of good and nourishing food; the promotion of cottage hospitals in country districts; a system of transport for the injured by means of the ambulance stations, where suitable litters were deposited; the initiation of what has been known as 'The National Society for Aid to Sick and Wounded in War,' for the relief of both combatants during the Franco-German campaign; 'The Eastern War Sick and Wounded Relief Fund,' for the same purpose during the Russo-Servian war; the award of medals and diplomas for deeds of gallantry in saving life on land. The order has also taken part in promotion of other useful institutions, such as the Metropolitan and National Society for Training

and Supplying Nurses for the Sick Poor, and the Victoria Hospital, Cairo; and it has afforded relief to the sick and wounded of our armies in some of their recent campaigns.

The great humanitarian work being done by the St John Ambulance Association needs no mention here. It is known and deservedly appreciated all the world over. As regards the other chief foundation of the order, the British Ophthalmic Hospital at Jerusalem, although it does a noble work, it is one not nearly so public as, and therefore far less known than, the other foundation just referred to. This latter fact is much to be lamented, because, being *absolutely* a charity, its upkeep and powers of doing good rely mainly upon voluntary contributions. Established at Jerusalem in 1882 by the order, it is designed as a representative institution of the order on the scene of its early foundation, to meet the special want which existed until the establishment of the hospital for the treatment of the most prevalent diseases of the country—those of the eye, ear, and throat. It admits gratuitously to its benefits, on equal terms, Christians, Jews, and Mohammedans. The work being done in relieving the scourges of the terrible and most common disease of Palestine—ophthalmia—cannot be too highly eulogised; but did funds permit relief could be afforded to nearly five times last year's number (over twenty-one thousand) of cases treated. Scotland in the past was closely connected with the work of the English Language of the old Order of St John, and the remains of the once important and ancient Scottish headquarters still exist at Torphichen in Linlithgowshire. One of the mottoes of the order is, *Pro utilitate hominum*—'Service in the cause of humanity;' and right worthily is this service carried out by the nineteenth-century Hospitallers.

A SONG IN WINTER.

BLACKBIRD, whistling cheerily,
Whistling from a leafless tree,
Through the mist your notes are ringing
Though no other bird is singing,
And the wind wails drearily.

Heedless of December gloom,
Though the flowers no longer bloom,
Though for ever gone the glory
Of the Year that, gaunt and hoary,
Totters to his snowy tomb,

Still your message, full of glee,
Echoes from your leafless tree:
'Summer's coming—Summer's coming—
With song of lark and wild bee's humming,
With blossoms bright for you and me!

'So,' you sing, 'the Poet's lay
Should, like mine, be blithe and gay;
Ever breathing balm for sorrows,
Still foretelling happy morrows,
Spite of cloudy skies to-day.'

LOUISA ADDY.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.



WITH THE INDIAN BAYARD.

By Captain I. S. A. HERFORD, Author of *Stirring Times under Canvas*.

WOULD you like to know how many men we have in front of us? A scout has just come in, and his report tallies with other information which I have. There are ninety thousand of them.' So said genial Sir James Outram to me at his table.

I wish I could put before the reader a sketch of our commander—a finished warrior who, uniting the qualities of audacity and caution with courtesy and affectionate care of his soldiers, reminded one of the last and most famous of the old knights—the Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche*. When some one had dubbed Sir James the 'Indian Bayard' everybody recognised the fitness of the appellation, which ever after remained with him.

The chivalry of Outram was eminently shown when he gave up his right to command, as senior officer, to General Havelock on the march up to Lucknow for the relief of the garrison there—serving as a volunteer with the force, and only resuming his rightful position when the object had been attained.

A little incident will show something of the man. When at Alum Bagh I was riding in quest of the provost-marshal. 'His tent is to be found there, among the General's staff,' pointed out some one. I rode that way, and met a broad-shouldered, thick-set man clothed in white, with a large white cap-cover over his forage-cap instead of the usual wicker helmet enveloped by a turban.

'Can you tell me where the provost-marshal is, please?'

'Certainly. Come along with me.' As we went, my guide walking by my horse, we chatted about various things, he casually asking about my regiment and to what part of it I belonged—for I was a stranger to him.

Presently we came upon a young fellow among the tents. 'Show this officer where the provost-marshal is.'

'Yes, sir.'

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I thanked my stout friend, and went on. 'Who is that officer?'

'That is Sir James Outram!'

I should mention that we were encamped at Alum Bagh ('Garden of the World'), once the summer palace of the Queen of Oude, nearly two miles from Lucknow, on the direct road to Cawnpore, some forty miles off. The headquarters of my regiment, the 90th, which had gone to the East for the China war, had been diverted to India by Lord Elgin on the breaking out of the Mutiny. It formed part of a force of three thousand men with which Havelock and Outram had crossed the Ganges into Oude, and forcing their way into Lucknow, had relieved the garrison. This body, thus strengthened, was able to hold its own until Sir Colin Campbell came up with his army and brought it out, together with the people of our country who had taken refuge there. The part of the regiment in which I served, three hundred strong, had sailed in *H.M.S. Transit*; and, delayed for ten days by being wrecked on a coral-reef near Sumatra, had been sent on to India as soon as possible, arriving at Cawnpore in time to form part of the first expedition after Havelock's Relief, in order to throw provisions into Alum Bagh. Here Havelock had left all his impedimenta before entering the city. We, like our headquarters, had left all our baggage at Cawnpore, for we expected to return within a week, and had instead to stay at Alum Bagh three months, being invested by the enemy till released by Sir Colin, when we took part in the Relief I have mentioned.

After the women and children and sick and wounded had been withdrawn from the Residency, there had been some divergence of opinion whether the city should be evacuated, as Sir Colin proposed, or the Kaiser-Bagh be captured and held with a small force, as Sir James desired. It was like the Indian Bayard to suggest such a difficult and dangerous service, for no doubt he himself would have commanded the troops left behind; but,

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considering the small garrison which could have been spared, while fifty thousand men at the least were arrayed against us, the enemy probably would have, as they certainly ought to have done, overwhelmed it. There can be no doubt that Sir Colin's plan, which was carried out, was the wise one—not locking up any of the small force at his disposal, but utilising it by placing it on the Cawnpore side of the city, so as to bar pursuit, and enabling him to take his important charge, which the enemy declared should not escape them, to a place of safety.

In this way, too, communication between Lucknow and Cawnpore was kept open until such time as the Chief could return with an army strong enough to capture and hold what, next to Delhi, was the most important stronghold in India. Sir James Outram, therefore, with four thousand men, the greater part of whom had been with him in the Residency, now moved to the plain outside the Alum Bagh, and encamped. The spade and the axe being put into requisition, *jhil* (swamp), *tope* (wood), and enclosures, the chief of which was the queen's summer-house—with its wall running round it—were taken advantage of, to make the position as strong as human ingenuity could suggest, while the guns and mortars with us were placed so as to be most effective.

With no fear of an enemy in his rear, Sir Colin set off on his march down-country, heavily encumbered. He had not long started when he was met by the most serious intelligence that the Gwalior, with a second-class siege-train, had attacked Cawnpore, and had driven General Windham, who was in command, into his entrenchments. The old warrior hurried on by forced marches, and appeared at the river's bank before the enemy could get at the bridge of boats and cut off our communications with the city. He was thus able to pass over and send on to Allahabad all those he had come to rescue, and rid himself of all that impeded his movements.

We with Sir James Outram could hear, on placing the ear to the ground, the continued rumbling of guns being fired, and were kept some time in suspense as to the result—especially as it was impossible for those of us who had been at the storming of the Redan, of which the press had made him the hero, to feel any confidence in the ability of the commander at Cawnpore.

Except for going on convoy-duty, fetching provisions and stores from Cawnpore (a troublesome and anxious business), or an occasional attack on the camp, life at the Alum Bagh was not very eventful. On convoy, although the enemy hovered around, they never ventured to come to close quarters. We were let off more easily than Outram and Havelock's force was when coming along the same road. As with us, it had a long string of carts and animals going at a snail's-pace. Oh, that pace! A European snail, I think, would go faster. Poor Nunn of ours was in the rearguard.

But we will draw on the narrative of a brother-officer who was present, and give an incident or two which will help to realise those times:

'It was the 23d of September when we arrived near the Alum Bagh, having crossed the Ganges on the 19th, where we found the enemy drawn up in force to bar our way, with a large body of cavalry and artillery on our left. They could not be more than five or six hundred yards off. I could plainly distinguish the trappings and chains on the horses of the cavalry, with their officers going backwards and forwards dressing the line of squadrons.

'While I was looking at them the enemy began the ball with a shell which burst high in the air with most disastrous consequences to us, as it mortally wounded Perrin, Preston, and Graham of ours, although they were standing some yards apart from each other, as well as killing and wounding many other officers and men around. The 78th and 90th, forming line to the left, advanced towards the enemy, which, wheeling its squadrons outwards, revealed a battery of guns, from which a furious fire was opened. The two regiments then broke out into a double, and cheered at the charge, whereupon, as the men said at the time, the enemy began to "ook it"—Olpherts using his guns with great effect. Most unfortunately we were not able to follow up our successes; for not only were we hampered by the train of stores, but the rain had soaked everything, and darkness had come on. Had we been able to proceed we might have gained the city without much trouble; for, as we learned afterwards, nearly all the rebels took a sudden panic and left the city; to which, seeing they were not disturbed, they soon returned. They had received the same intelligence which greeted us that evening. It was just before dark when a native ran into our column much exhausted. He carried with him from Delhi a letter written in Greek characters telling us of the fall of that city on the 14th. What distance did this man cover in the nine days, added to the distance as the crow flies? He said he had to hide and make detours, so it was a wonderful feat. I heard he got four thousand rupees (£400), and he deserved it all. Well, the column bivouacked for the night while the train of *hackeries* (carts) on the trunk road was left there with a rearguard of the 90th, commanded by Nunn.

'The 24th came; we proceeded to draw in our pickets and pass our stores as they came up into the Alum Bagh building. We fell back for the best part of a mile, then formed up into columns preparatory to the advance, the brightly shining sun enabling us to dry ourselves and our arms. We had not been long in this position before we noticed Olpherts with his battery galloping at a racing pace in the direction of the Grand Trunk Road, but some three-quarters of a mile to our right. We soon all knew what took place.

'The line of carts was moving up when Nunn

observed some horsemen coming on. He was closing up his wagons, when some of the people with him recognised the uniforms of the 12th Irregular Cavalry. "These are friends," said they. They were not wilfully deceiving him; they did not realise that, while half of the 12th Irregulars had remained staunch and did good service to us, the other half had mutinied and gone off with their arms and their horses. It was these, who, under cover of the same uniform, calculating on being taken for their loyal *confrères*, undertook to throw us into some confusion; and they succeeded. Nunn thought it was all right, and took no more special interest in the matter. On came the horsemen, the commander leading in a deliberate fashion, shouting out something amicably and dropping his tulwar. His party had by this time come up so as to envelop Nunn and his knot of men. Then they set to work, slashing right and left, killing some nine or ten. Meanwhile the leader had cut down Nunn, who had raised his revolver, but it missed fire. I saw his body afterwards—one cut went down from the top of his head to the mouth, and one had cut through his collar-bone to the centre of his body. The rest of our men then rallied and took the cover which the carts afforded, and shot down some of the enemy. Olpherts had now come down, and as the horsemen were drawing off he sent some rounds of case-shot among them, emptying a good many saddles.'

Although we had at Alum Bagh an enormous number of men arrayed against us—for, Delhi having been captured, the enemy were free to turn their attention to the retention of Lucknow as their only chance, and swarmed into Oude—we had one advantage in that our opponents' leaders were always at loggerheads. If all wanted the post of honour, they did not care for the post of danger. News came in to us one day that we were to be attacked by twelve regiments; but they split upon the question which regiment should bring up the rear. One day, I remember well, there was an alarm. Our foes were coming *en masse*. They advanced nearer and nearer; this time they meant business. In the centre of our line there were always some horse-artillery guns ready harnessed. Out of a tent near came a wiry, bronze-featured man clad in a flannel shirt with sleeves rolled up, canvas overalls kept up by a shabby cummerbund, and solar tope; a sword and pistols completed his get-up. There was no pretension to dandyism about him; none was needed, for was this not Jack Olpherts, V.C. (his real name was William), the adored of the soldiers, with whom, for his audacity and nerve, he went by the sobriquet of 'Hell-fire Jack'? Swinging himself into the saddle, and without waiting for a cavalry escort, as by all the rules of war he ought to have done, he dashed towards the enemy. When close to them, quick as thought he turned his guns round and saluted them with a round of

grape. The enemy naturally felt hurt and indignant at such audacity. They hesitated a moment to think out the best way of punishing such bravado. If they did not know how to make use of that moment Olpherts did. He had reloaded, and there came upon the dusky crew another shower of his bon-bons. They must be moving—a third shower might come upon them. They moved—not to the front, however, but to the rear. They had broken and fled. In a few minutes Olpherts was back at his tent as calm as if nothing had happened. The ground on which the enemy had halted a moment, preparatory to chastising the *Feringhee*, was strewn with hundreds of shoes, which the owners had kicked off the better to run away.

One characteristic of Olpherts was his quickness at grasping a situation and his readiness in action. Being certain of himself, he felt he could afford to give points to the other side.

One day there was to be a grand attack; the Queen-mother of Oude and a number of distinguished visitors were to be present. One swell had dressed up as Hounniman, the monkey-god; larger groups than usual of red coats were to be seen, while other natives appeared in garments which seemed newly washed for the occasion. On our right was a small mosque, and just beyond it a long trench. The enemy came on in large numbers across the open, and, making ready to rush the camp, dropped into the friendly trench, being masked also by the mosque. They snapped their fingers at the few rifles which we could bring to bear against them. Our officer in command had been quietly watching the manœuvre; he waited till he could have a good haul, and then he ordered one of the guns at the corner of the palace wall to be trained on the trench: this it completely enfiladed. Its grape came as a perfect surprise. Being stationary and never now being fired, our assailants must have forgotten its presence. They arose out of that trench like so many white birds, and scattered. They came no more that day towards our camp, but fled to their own lines.

We were enlivened during our stay at Alum Bagh by one episode at all events. This was the holding of some sports within our lines while the enemy was watching us from theirs, not a mile off. In the olden time when the Chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche* was alive, and combatants prided themselves on dealing chivalrously with each other, it continually happened that on such an occasion a truce was proclaimed, and both sides joined in, so as to carry out the amusement—separating again when the proceedings had come to an end without any thought of treachery towards each other. Naturally things were different with us now, and we knew that our enemy would assail us should he see an opportunity. Olpherts' battery, therefore, was on the ground, with horses harnessed ready for any

eventuality; while our cavalry, for which our military-train did service (many Crimean light-cavalry men and some drafted 11th Hussars being in them), were kept near their horses also. Now might be seen the late H. M'Pherson, of the 78th Highlanders, win a hurdle-race; he died as a general officer in Burma. Chester Master of the 5th Fusiliers signalled himself also; he is still alive.

One night, soon after a conversation with Sir James Outram at his table, I was suddenly awake. 'Herford, Herford, rouse up! The regiment is on parade!' Two minutes sufficed for slipping on my clothes; not before, however, I had shaken out my boots to see if anything had lodged inside—scorpions and snakes were not wanted there.

I found my company; strict silence was enjoined, and not a pipe alight was allowed. It was clearly an important affair, and to be hidden from the enemy. The officers seemed to know nothing. 'What's up, Bill? Have we got to retire on Cawnpore after all?' 'Surely we are not going to attack,' whispered one soldier to another. 'Well, whatever it is, Old Cap-cover is in command; it's all right.' And so they all agreed 'Old Cap-cover' could not go wrong! 'We shall soon see.' We marched along the front

towards the headquarters. If we turned to the right again that was the way to Cawnpore, and we should leave the camp all standing behind us. If to the left—why, that was straight towards the enemy.

We slanted towards the left, and formed into line. On, on, with a ringing cheer, we swept into the enemy's works, using the bayonet only. We had taken four guns and a quantity of arms, and—what was more important in the estimation of Tommy Atkins—a supply of vegetables, chiefly onions, that the soldiers grubbed up from the ground and crammed into their haversacks. A pile of letters which had been intercepted by the enemy was discovered in a hut, one of our fellows finding one addressed to himself. We then quietly set about returning. The enemy now sent a column in our direction. If they had thought of cutting us off they very soon changed their minds, and we regained our lines.

Sir James had found through his spies that an expedition with four guns had been got ready to attack the next convoy, and he determined to be beforehand with them. I will venture to say that very few commanders besides Sir James Outram could have got such a handful of men to advance to what looked like certain death.

COUNT PAUL.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER II.



HERE can be no doubt that this question caused Cumberlege a moment of acute embarrassment; for, so far from possessing even the remotest knowledge of the purport of M. Lavtchok's message, he had never so much as heard of the gentleman himself till that moment. He knew that the eyes of the whole assembly were upon him, and that the least indecision or nervousness of manner would betray his real identity. This consciousness lent him nerve, and by a sudden inspiration he answered, speaking in a low tone, 'The message is for your ears alone, M. Karamoff. You shall learn it—later!' and prepared to move to the head of the table, where a raised chair had apparently been left vacant for the Count. Karamoff smiled again, and motioning Cumberlege to the vacant chair, took his own seat beside him. Cumberlege's mind was busy with conjectures as he sat down; he was aware that safety could only lie in a policy of silence and observation. For the rest, chance must be responsible. He had just seated himself when a gentleman, who appeared to be the chairman, rose from the extreme end of the table round which the company was grouped, and bowing to the Count (for such was the capacity in which Cumberlege was now received by all present), addressed himself to the party in

a distinct and measured tone. By the most fortunate chance Cumberlege happened to be a complete master of the French language, which he understood with the ease and spoke with the fluency of a native; for he had spent much of his life in Paris, where for some time he had been attached to the British Embassy. It was in French that the proceedings at which he found himself present were conducted. Cumberlege, eager to discover some clue to the mystery which surrounded him, bent forward to catch the speaker's words; and once again chance favoured him, for almost the first dozen sentences of the speech gave him a clear inkling of the character of the meeting, the aims of those assembled, and their present purpose. He determined to shape his conduct by events.

'Monsieur le Comte and fellow-members,' began the speaker, glancing round, 'the object that brings us together to-night, and which has obliged us to summon to our council-table the Head of our Order with a haste and informality for which we trust he will pardon us, is one that involves serious issues—as we are all aware. The Secret Committee of the Inner Council has for its aim a far-reaching and progressive policy, the establishment of principles that will, in the end, revolutionise the distribution of European interests. But for the furtherance of our ends, the first

essential is absolute secrecy—implicit obedience to the oaths of the society. To any member who may prove disloyal to the oaths of the Order, it has been ordained by the Secret Council that one punishment alone shall be meted out—the only punishment that can safeguard the interests of the council and the resultant welfare of the kingdom of Borastria. Only so recently as yesterday it came to our knowledge here in London that a member of the council—a trusted and tried member—had proved false to her oaths, a traitress to her country, and had betrayed to the enemy a secret which had been entrusted to her care—a secret of considerable importance. It remained only for us to despatch to Paris a telegram to Count Paul Rassovitch, begging his immediate attendance at our meeting to-night, in order that we might secure his authority for the carrying out of the usual sentence upon the offender. I think none, or at least but few of us, have previously had the pleasure of personally meeting the Head of the Order, and I hope I may take this present opportunity of assuring Count Paul that each of us assembled here to-night is conscious of the honour he confers upon us by his presence.’

The speaker paused, and Cumberlege bowed slightly, in acknowledgment of the compliment paid him.

‘Now,’ resumed the chairman, ‘with the permission of the Count, we will summon to the council table the culprit whom we are here assembled to judge.’

He turned to one of the ladies present, and addressed a few words to her in a low tone. The lady instantly rose and left the room. During her absence Karamoff whispered hurriedly to Cumberlege:

‘The authority for the sentence, Count, rests with you. There is only one penalty. She must die—of course?’

‘She must die—of course,’ repeated Cumberlege mechanically.

‘She is young and lovely,’ urged Karamoff, speaking low. ‘Supposing you’—

He was interrupted in his sentence by the opening of the door. Cumberlege looked up. Three persons entered: the lady who had recently left the room, another and elder woman, and between them a third—young, fair, and passing beautiful. It was upon her that Cumberlege’s glance was riveted from the first moment that she crossed the threshold of the chamber. Never in his life, vowed Cumberlege, had he gazed upon a creature so divine, so entrancing, so singularly and enthrallingly lovely.

‘This a traitress!’ he muttered to himself. ‘No, by heaven! so sweet a bosom could never harbour a treacherous thought; so fair a brow could never conceal aught but a truthful mind!’ And still his eye followed her as, with slow graceful steps and bowed head, she glided to her place, and, guarded on either side by her two attendants,

stood waiting, a mute picture of beauteous despair, upon the dictum of her judges.

‘Mademoiselle Naritzka,’ said the chairman, bending upon her a stern, cold glance, ‘the Count is present.’

With a little start the young lady looked up; her eyes met Cumberlege’s, and for a moment dilated with a sudden wonder, while a deep blush suffused her pale cheeks and then died out, leaving them once more lilies instead of roses. She inclined her head slightly and let her glance fall.

‘Mademoiselle Naritzka,’ continued the speaker, ‘you are aware of the purpose for which we have summoned the Count here to-night. The Order to which you belong is one that admits neither of mercy nor extenuation in the case of those who break their oaths of fealty to it—only justice. You have broken your oaths. You have betrayed the council. You stand, convicted, a traitress!’

‘Ah, no!’

The cry burst involuntarily from the lips of the trembling girl as these harsh concluding words were levelled at her. Cumberlege moved uneasily. The sight of beauty in distress wrought upon his manhood. But the time for interference was not yet. He controlled himself, therefore, with some difficulty as the chairman proceeded:

‘You deny it, mademoiselle? Listen. To whom was the cipher plan of the secret scheme of the council entrusted for delivery to the king?’

‘To me,’ came the response in a low, melodious voice, whose silvery tones struck a chord of infinite pity in the heart of Cumberlege.

‘Ah! To you. So. To whom was it delivered, mademoiselle?’

Silence.

‘Was it delivered to the king?’

‘Alas! no, monsieur.’

‘Alas! indeed,’ mocked the chairman. ‘Come now: was it not delivered into the hands of Zourakoff, the Russian agent?’

There was a slight pause. Mdlle. Naritzka locked her hands together, and her lips trembled. Cumberlege felt his heart stand still. Apart from his apprehension for the safety of this beautiful creature, he was conscious of a strange exhilarating sense of excitement in the position in which he found himself; for the time being he almost persuaded himself that he was in reality identified with the secret machinery of these mysterious Balkan intrigues, and the dangerous allurements of political conspiracy filled his soul.

‘Come, mademoiselle, answer!’ went on the voice of the chairman. ‘Were the contents of the document made known to Zourakoff?’

Mdlle. Naritzka bowed her head. ‘It is useless to deny it,’ she replied.

‘Ha! You admit the charge. And by whom

were the contents communicated to Zourakoff, mademoiselle? Pray inform us. By whom?' he sneered.

Mdlle. Naritzka did not answer.

'Nay then, mademoiselle, it could have only been by one person—a person in whom the council had placed the highest trust and confidence. Do you deny it?'

Again there was silence.

'I think,' pursued the chairman, looking round at the company, 'that we do not require any further evidence of Mademoiselle Naritzka's guilt. For such an offence the laws of the Inner Council prescribe but one penalty. The culprit who betrays the secrets of the council must die. The sentence of death has only to be ratified by the Head of the Order.'

He paused and glanced at Cumberlege.

'State the charge!' exclaimed Cumberlege, whose chief concern was to gain a moment of time in which to form some plan of action.

'Why, Monsieur le Comte, the charge is that Mademoiselle Naritzka, entrusted with a secret communication to Borastria, has betrayed us to her lover'—

'No, no!' cried the fair culprit in accents of wild appeal.

'Come, monsieur, come!' exclaimed Cumberlege angrily, for his blood boiled at this gratuitous insult to defenceless beauty; and, further, the suggestion, from some unaccountable reason, seemed somehow to touch him on the raw. 'Isn't that assertion unwarranted?'

The chairman merely shrugged his shoulders.

'Let it pass, Monsieur le Comte. It is immaterial. She betrayed the secret to Prince Zourakoff—that is sufficient. We only yesterday became cognisant of the fact. Our plans are frustrated. Serious complications have arisen. Difficulties and dangers have sprung up on every side. And the cause of all this stands there.' He pointed to the graceful form of the girl as he spoke.

'Have you anything to say in your defence, mademoiselle?' asked Cumberlege kindly.

The young lady looked up, and her round blue eyes were fastened on Cumberlege with a depth of eloquence such as no man could resist, as she replied:

'I appeal only to your clemency, Monsieur le Comte!' and then let her glance fall once more to the ground.

'Nay,' interposed the chairman. 'Surely this is not a case for clemency! You know the laws of the Order, Count Paul. No member of the society is exempt from the penalties of the society if he be a man. And if she be a woman, only one member may, by special prerogative, claim exemption—and that woman is the wife of the Head of the Order. Count Paul Rassovitch has no wife,' he concluded meaningly.

At these words Cumberlege's heart gave a

quick bound. A sudden flood of inspiration seemed to illumine the difficulties of the situation and point a way of escape. His mind was so overwhelmed by the novel idea that had suggested itself to him that he was scarcely aware for a moment that the chairman had continued speaking. These words, however, aroused him:

'Are we to put it to the vote, Monsieur le Comte?' the chairman demanded.

'The vote—the vote?' echoed Cumberlege.

'Assuredly. It is the usual course, Count. Merely a matter of form.'

'By all means,' said Cumberlege, with a smile, for his mind was now made up. 'By all means, let the usual custom be followed.'

The fair head of Mdlle. Naritzka drooped more dejectedly than ever at this speech, which seemed but to indicate that her appeal had been made in vain. Meantime the chairman again addressed the company.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' said he, 'in accordance with our usual custom, I will now ask you to sanction the sentence of the council prior to its ratification by Count Rassovitch. The sentence is, that the woman, Adèle Naritzka, by reason of her treachery, and in so far as she has betrayed a secret entrusted to her care, involving the most vital issues, shall cease to live. In support of the immediate carrying out of this just sentence you will kindly raise your hands.'

There was a momentary stillness. Then came a sudden spasmodic show of hands. Here and there a member seemed to waver—it may be that Bergstein, for one, hesitated as he glanced at the lovely prisoner, but a taunting smile from Ivan at his elbow decided him, and up went his arm with the rest; 'I keep to my oath,' he muttered again; and in the space of a minute each hand in that pitiless assembly had proclaimed its inexorable fiat against the beautiful Naritzka.

'Brutes!' muttered Cumberlege between his teeth. 'Cowards!'

The man Karamoff heard the words.

'Yes,' he whispered back in English; 'it strikes one so, Monsieur le Comte—eh? But consider the nature of the society! We are not free agents, you comprehend. Yet, hark, sir: the ratification of the sentence lies with you!'

Cumberlege started. In that instant he divined that his imposture had been detected by at least one man in the council. Yet M. Karamoff had not betrayed him. He glanced sharply at his neighbour.

'You wish her to live!' he asked in a low tone.

Karamoff raised his eyebrows and smiled.

'I have my reasons,' he said. 'But a word in your ear. *There is only one way, Monsieur le Comte!*'

'Hush! I know!' Cumberlege whispered back. 'Keep your counsel, man!'

'Count Paul Rassovitch!' called the voice of the chairman.

'Sir!'

'It remains for you to give the order.'

Cumberlege rose to his feet.

'Before I do so,' he said in a loud, clear voice, 'I have yet to persuade myself of one point, which has not so far been made sufficiently clear to me. I desire, monsieur, to have five minutes' private speech with the prisoner. There is a question I wish to put to her, and the question is of a nature that demands absolute privacy. I will, therefore, request you and all the other members to withdraw into another room while I interrogate Mademoiselle Naritzka.'

The blue eyes of the culprit shot a swift glance of gratitude and hope from beneath their deep fringes at Cumberlege as he uttered these words. He noticed the glance, lightning-swift though it was, and smiled. For those sweet blue eyes he swore to himself he would be willing, single-handed, to encounter the entire united forces of Borastris and Rivania—ay, and, for the matter of that, Russia too. There was a murmur of surprise, almost protest, from the assembled members as he finished speaking. The chairman knitted his brows.

'Pardon, Monsieur le Comte,' he began, 'but the suggestion is against all precedent'—

'Suggestion, sir!' broke in Cumberlege fiercely. 'Who is suggesting, sir? I would have you to know that I do not suggest. When I attend your councils I command!'

The chairman bowed apologetically.

'If you insist, Count'—

'Have done with words, monsieur! Am I the Head of the Order, or are you?'

'Assuredly, Monsieur le Comte, you!'

'Then waste no more time, but do as I bid you. Request all present to withdraw, except Mademoiselle Naritzka.'

The irresistible gesture of authority with which these words were accompanied was not without its effect upon the councillors; one and all they seemed cowed; none exhibited any further inclination to dispute the Count's wishes. Slowly and in obedience to a signal from the chairman they began to file out of the room, and when the last had disappeared, and Karamoff, throwing a significant glance over his shoulder as he did so, had closed the door behind them, Cumberlege at length found himself alone in the chamber with the lovely maiden whose life he had engaged himself to save.

'Now, mademoiselle,' he said, approaching her and speaking in a gentle, decisive, though subdued tone, while he was conscious that his heart beat strangely—'now, mademoiselle, we have but little time. You must trust me. I am your friend!'

His inclinations would have led him to sub-

stitute a less cold word as, once more, the young lady's soft eyes met his, and a smile, half-apprehensive, half-mischievous, hovered over her beautiful mouth.

'Indeed yes, *Monsieur l'Anglais!*' she replied; 'but it is a dangerous game this! Of course, from the first, I knew that you were not the Count, monsieur, in spite of your close resemblance to him!'

'And the others know it?' demanded Cumberlege.

'Only one, monsieur. Karamoff knows it. But—he will not betray you. He has his reasons.'

'Ha! Precisely what he told me himself,' reflected Cumberlege. Then he said, 'No, I am not the Count. But, mademoiselle, a kind Providence has directed me here to take his place—and, mademoiselle, to save from a barbarous and unjust fate the most lovely young lady that ever fell into the hands of heartless and inhuman fiends. Mademoiselle, it is a strange occasion upon which to inaugurate a friendship—a stranger one upon which to declare a passion; yet the moment is one fraught with so imminent a peril that neither ceremony nor sentiment should be permitted to weigh with us against the balance of your safety'—

'And yours, monsieur!' interrupted Mdlle. Naritzka anxiously. 'Should the councillors discover your real character before you leave this house, you will, alas! never leave it alive.'

'You think Karamoff will not betray me?'

'Nay, I am sure he will not.'

'Then we have five minutes, mademoiselle. Let us make the most of it. First, my name is Cumberlege—Charles Cumberlege—an Englishman of independent means, though not large fortune, and body and soul at your disposal. Now, tell me: you are innocent of this charge of treachery?'

'Morally, monsieur, I am innocent. It is true Zourakoff has the despatches; but they fell into his hands accidentally. I have a brother, monsieur. I love him. He too is of the Inner Council; but alas! he is weak; he is easily led; he is not—not'—

'Never mind, mademoiselle, what he is not,' interposed Cumberlege, anxious to spare the young lady's feelings. 'Pray continue.'

'He procured the despatches from me, under some pretext or other. He wanted money. Prince Zourakoff offered him a large sum for a copy of the plans, and—and he sold them to him,' faltered the girl. 'I alone knew it, monsieur—and so, you see, it was to—to screen my brother that I gave myself up to the council.'

Cumberlege took Mdlle. Naritzka's hand in his, and bowing low over it, pressed it to his lips with a tender reverence.

'Mademoiselle,' he said, 'I thank you. You have taught me what true heroism is.'

TOMMY ATKINS UP TO DATE.



PEOPLE in this country, who take comfort in the reflection that, if the British army is small, it would be found for all practical purposes very hard to match in any country in Europe, will find interesting as well as satisfactory reading in the report by the Inspector-General of Recruiting for last year. Many changes have been introduced during the past twelve months, one or two of them of prime importance. To a man well acquainted (as the writer was) with the British army of thirty years ago, and who, on his return after long absence from his native land, runs against the Tommy Atkins of to-day as he perambulates the London streets in the furlough season, the first thought that comes is: 'Why, these soldiers I meet everywhere, on the streets or at the railway stations, are certainly more sensibly and neatly uniformed than were the *quondam* wearers of the stiff leather stock and the murderous cross-belt; but they seem mostly mere boys under twenty, and even the men of the Foot Guards seem to be of decidedly lower stature than they were in the days when every company had its quota of Crimean medals.'

Thirty years ago the recruit enlisted for a period of twelve years; and if his character and physical condition admitted of it, he could take on for an additional nine years, with a view to securing a pension. It is true that not a large percentage of the enlisted men came off with this desirable prize; but it was always dangling before them as a possibility, and it served well as an inducement to keep the men in the ranks until they were fit for nothing else. And, indeed, there was nothing else for them—no reserved berth of any kind awaiting them at the end of a few years of creditable service with the colours, as is the case with the deserving soldier of to-day; and neither was there a lump sum of deferred pay to tempt a man away from the service when the fit took him to have a couple of months' wild holiday, which would end his military career when he was at his best. Add the fact that a discharge from the infantry by purchase cost twenty pounds, and from the cavalry thirty pounds, and the combined result was, that when a recruit joined his battalion after a few months' drill at the recruit-house, he found himself among men many of whom had seen active service, and almost all of whom were older and more experienced than himself. The oldest soldiers of the company, with their breasts covered with medals, and with a bearing full of a grim sort of dignity, were beings he stood in awe of as much as if they wore the stripes, and, as a matter of fact, the oldest soldier of a barrack-room relieved the non-commissioned officer of the task

of maintaining order among the younger men when off duty.

But the times changed, and Tommy Atkins changed with them—changed, indeed, several times, and not always for the better, since those days. When a young man enters the army now he enlists for twelve years—seven years with the colours and five in the Reserve. If he is an exceptionally useful soldier, however, and if his regiment is not up to its full strength, his period of service with the colours may be extended to twelve years, and again to the twenty-one years necessary for a life-pension. But, until quite recently, an enormous number of men threw down their arms on completing their seven years—about 14,000 men are passed into the Reserve every year; and the chief reason was that they were attracted by a very tempting bait in the shape of their deferred pay, which had been accumulating for seven years, and amounted to twenty-one pounds, and, if abroad, a free passage home to their friends.

The great merit of the reforms introduced last session for the improvement of our military system lies in their common-sense. The soldier is now treated fairly. With the exception of those enlisting in the infantry of the line for three years with the colours and nine years in the Reserve, all now receive (instead of deferred pay) an increase of threepence to their daily pay on becoming efficient soldiers, provided they are nineteen years of age. On transfer to the Reserve or discharge, they also receive a gratuity of one pound for each year of their colour-service up to a limit of twelve pounds. If, however, they serve on until they are entitled to pension, the gratuity is two pounds only. The men enlisted prior to April 1, 1898, were offered an opportunity of availing themselves of these conditions. The report shows that practically all have accepted them, a pretty sure proof that they are popular, and that the old ones were prejudicial to recruiting. The improved system only came into full effect on 1st April last, and even yet the advantages accruing to the soldier are scarcely appreciated by the classes to whom we look to supply the bulk of our recruits.

It was made known at the beginning of the year that the Minister of War had resolved, in view of the proposed increase of the army, to permit Reservists who cared to do so to rejoin the colours without refunding the deferred pay they had received on going into the Reserves. No fewer than 4479 men returned to the colours under these provisions.

Another change, by which the terms of service are three years with the colours and nine with the Reserve for a limited number of men, was introduced in order that, by giving the soldier, as

far as possible, a choice as to the terms under which he serves, a larger number of men of a better sort may be attracted to the army. Henceforward the soldier has, in most cases, the option of serving for seven and five years, or three and nine years, a provision by which the service cannot fail to be rendered more popular with the recruit-giving classes.

One innovation is a most interesting, as it is certain to prove a most beneficial, one. Britain has always some small irregular war on her hands; and to conduct these with thoroughness and economy two qualities are especially required in the soldiers engaged in them—namely, experience and marksmanship. It was with the view of bringing regiments detailed for small wars up to their strength without calling out the Reserve that the formation of 'Section A' of the First-class Army Reserve was determined upon. This Reserve is to consist of 5000; and the men must be of unexceptionable character, within the first year of their Reserve service, and good shots. The liability is for twelve months; and an additional sixpence per day to their ordinary Reserve pay of sixpence is given them. The new section was not formed till October 20, 1898, yet by the end of the year 1360 men had been enrolled. By such modifications as these, Lord Lansdowne has endeavoured to render the service more popular as a calling than ever it was before; and so we believe it will be found as the changes come to be better understood.

'The difficulty with recruiting now,' said a veteran staff-sergeant who was accosted by the writer, 'is that they look at everything so very much from a business point of view. They're not fellows who are broke; they join the ranks because they get so much reliable comfort—food and lodging and time for taking pleasure without being too tired to enjoy it. Still, whenever there is a war-scare on there's always plenty to come up to the scratch. One thing is, there's no good telling lies to them—no good at all. They know very well indeed what they're doing when they come to me.'

Still, they do come. See the smart, well-dressed country candidate, the decent-looking ex-carman, the shy-looking sprig of the educated middle-class, the callous-looking member of the toiling lower class, all ready—nay, eager—to take the Queen's shilling. But lately a baronet's son joined the ranks, and so did the son of a Montreal medical professor in McGill University. Young fellows who have failed at Sandhurst; 'varsity men of spirit, sickened with the dismal prospect of a curacy at seventy-five pounds a year; other young fellows out of a love of adventure and a desire to see the world across the seas; decent mechanics and honest labourers, tired of the monotony of their lives or out of a job through a spree, are all found at the recruiting depot.

Let us see what actually are the young soldier's

condition and prospects to-day with the colours. During the past year an addition has been made to the army of 9980 men, so that in the estimates for 1899-1900 the number of men of all ranks in the total of the regular army, exclusive of India, is returned at 184,853. The establishment of British regiments in India is given as 73,157, practically the same as last year.

Tommy Atkins when he first dons his uniform has, broadly speaking, the same chances before him that a youth has who quits his father's house to enter an office in a city of about 258,000 inhabitants. To put it in the briefest possible way, a young soldier on joining the British army to-day may be said to receive in pay, rations, lodging, clothing, &c., the equivalent of not less than fifteen shillings a week, which sum gradually increases according to his conduct and promotion. After deducting all stoppages, a well-conducted soldier has at his own disposal about five shillings a week, most of which he may very easily set aside. For well-conducted soldiers who are also well educated there is a prospect of quick promotion, if professionally fit, and the pay of the non-commissioned officer compares very favourably with the wages of artisans in civil life. An ordinary sergeant of a line regiment gets seventeen shillings and sixpence a week clear money, a colour-sergeant one pound two shillings and twopence, and a quartermaster-sergeant one pound eight shillings; while a regimental sergeant-major gets one pound fifteen shillings, and a superintending clerk one pound eighteen shillings and sixpence. The last two now rank as the warrant-officers of a battalion, as also do the master-gunners of the Royal Artillery.

All these honourable posts are open to the deserving young soldier; but what is not so generally known is, that there are two appointments among the commissioned officers that are filled exclusively by men from the ranks—namely, that of quartermaster—there are 345 of them in the army, with pay at the rate of from nine shillings and sixpence to sixteen shillings and sixpence per day—and that of riding-master, with daily pay varying from ten shillings and sixpence to sixteen shillings and sixpence. After twenty-one years' service, should the soldier get so far—and it is quite possible for him to do so if he wishes, and if there is no physical bar—he is entitled, on discharge, to a pension varying with his rank as follows: Privates, gunners, &c., receive from eightpence to one shilling and sixpence per day; non-commissioned officers, from one shilling and threepence to three shillings and sixpence a day—and let it be noted that there are altogether 14,000 sergeants of every grade in the army; warrant-officers, from three shillings to five shillings per day—and there are 700 of these prizes. Should a soldier during the first three months of his service desire to leave the army, he may claim his discharge on

payment of ten pounds; during last year 1649 men claimed their discharge on this footing. After three months' service the sum will be eighteen pounds, and the permission of the officer commanding is necessary. Discharges by purchase are allowed to the fullest extent consistent with the requirements of the service; last year 1574 men were allowed to leave on payment of eighteen pounds. This is called 'discharge by indulgence.'

Such, put in a nutshell, is the position of the British soldier to-day, and even on this bare showing, without taking any account of his many special privileges, one may safely assert that, even from a mere business point of view, there are worse trades than that of the soldier.

But there are 'side-shows' in the army—if we may so dub the auxiliary branches of it—of which the public never hears, because, though the men belonging to them are regularly drilled as soldiers, their duties are non-combatant; and though they share in the dangers of a campaign, they have no part in the glory of the battlefield. Yet they have the best 'plums' in the army for all that. Two of these auxiliary arms of the service may be instanced: the Medical Staff Corps and the Army Service Corps. The former is under the immediate command of the Director-General, Army Medical Department, and is intended for the performance of duties connected with the military hospitals, and for rendering assistance to the sick and wounded in time of war. This branch provides for an unusually large number of warrant and non-commissioned officers—namely, one out of every four men; and as the quartermasters of the Army Medical Staff are selected from the warrant-officers of the same corps, there is also a very good prospect of those who merit such advancement rising to commissioned rank. The Army Service Corps is composed of clerks, tradesmen, and artisans of almost every sort, and the recruits for it are required to be able to read and write and to produce certificates of good character. They must be from eighteen to twenty-five years of age, and measure from five feet three inches to five feet five inches. In this arm of the service, which is composed chiefly of little men, the prospects of promotion are exceptionally good, owing to the large number of warrant and non-commissioned officers on its establishment. The weekly rates of ordinary pay are as follows: Warrant-officers, from one pound sixteen shillings and ninepence to two pounds two shillings; staff-sergeants, one pound six shillings and threepence to one pound thirteen shillings and threepence; sergeant, eighteen shillings and a penny; private, eight shillings and twopence. But this is not all. In addition to the above, corps pay is granted to all men below the rank of staff-sergeant, at rates varying from one shilling and ninepence to eight shillings and twopence per week; and good-conduct pay is

also granted according to length of service. The gratuities on transfer to the Reserve are the same as in other branches of the service.

Throughout the army, soldiers serving with the colours, who are medically fit for service, may re-engage to complete twenty-one years' service under the following conditions: Warrant-officers and sergeants, after nine years' service, have the right to re-engage, subject to the veto only of the Secretary of State for War. Corporals, bombardiers, bandsmen, and artificers, after nine years' service, may re-engage with the permission of their commanding officers. Other soldiers of good character may re-engage after completing eleven years' service. Warrant-officers have, at any time, the right to extend their service to twelve years with the colours; and non-commissioned officers, after a year's probation, have the same right. Non-commissioned officers who fail to exercise this right, and other soldiers, will be permitted, after three years' service and under certain conditions, to extend their service to twelve years with the colours. Men enlisted for three years with the colours and nine years with the Reserve may at any time be permitted to extend their service to seven years, and subsequently, under certain restrictions, to twelve years, with the colours. One often hears it idly said that there are now no long-service pensions granted in the army. The reader can easily make out from the foregoing statements that the way to such a pension is to-day as unobstructed in the army as it ever was.

To sum up the advantages offered by a career in the army to a well-conducted, well-educated, and ambitious youth, in addition to the commissioned appointments of quartermaster and riding-master (there are but fifty of the latter), a limited number of non-commissioned officers, who are recommended by their commanding officers, and who are able to pass the qualifying examination, are annually selected for commissions as second lieutenants; but without a private income such a promotion is often a snare. The quartermaster is in very different case; for, besides his substantial pay, he has separate quarters and other allowances, which make his position one of the most independent, if one of the busiest, in the regiment. Much more, in fact, depends on non-commissioned officers in the English army than in that of other countries, for with us the colour-sergeants are the company chiefs, and are only controlled by their respective captains. A warrant-officer or sergeant has the right to re-engage for a further term of nine years after twelve years' service, after which further term he will receive a pension, or have the right of serving in the Militia. Thus, a young man who selects the army for his calling, provided he does not misbehave himself, has before him a military career for twenty-one years, after which time he can join the Militia of

his own district, where he will find many comrades from his own regiment.

But now, suppose the soldier has no wish to serve long enough to secure the coveted life-pension, and on completing his term prefers to enter civil life, either as a Reserve soldier or a discharged one, what are his chances of obtaining employment? First, there is already a certain amount of Government employment reserved for him. The Postmaster-General has decided that certain vacancies among provincial letter-carriers and the auxiliary postmen in London are in future to be offered to discharged soldiers and Army Reserve men of good character. Work is also provided for many old soldiers in the Royal Arsenal, the Royal Army Clothing Department, the Army Ordnance Department, the Customs, and other Government departments. Secondly, many ex-soldiers obtain employment in the Metropolitan police, and in borough police and county constabulary throughout the United Kingdom. Thirdly, employment for deserving soldiers is likewise afforded by many of the railway companies and in the Corps of Commissionaires. Fourthly, a register for civil employment is kept at the headquarters of all regimental districts, with the view of assisting discharged or transferred soldiers of good character to obtain employment in civil life. Fifthly, a National Association for the Employment of Reserve and Discharged Soldiers has been established for the purpose of intro-

ducing to employers of labour soldiers of reliable character, on their discharge or transfer to the Reserve. Men are registered without fee at the offices of this association for employment as clerks, collectors, attendants, caretakers, time-keepers, night-watchmen, conductors, carmen, policemen, musicians, grooms, porters, labourers, servants, &c. The chief office of the association is at 12 Buckingham Street, Strand, London, and numerous branch offices have been established in other large towns.

Employers in need of men for show purposes often send in applications. Giants of six feet four inches from the Guards are in great demand for standing in gorgeous uniform outside shops and safe deposits, and sometimes outside the theatres. A draper who was running a big sale cleared out the office once. And let this extraordinary and highly creditable fact be well noted: 'Of all the thousands the establishment has found work for,' said the secretary, Colonel Handley, from whom most of these particulars were obtained, 'not one has ever been accused of dishonesty.'

One word, in conclusion, about the darkest spot in Tommy Atkins's record for the past year. There were 4107 deserters, and 1789 discovered their mistake and, like wise men, returned to the ranks before they drifted, as they would have done, into mischief and ruined themselves for life.

A VISIT TO THE SEVEN HUNTERS.

By W. J. GIBSON.

WHO or what are the Seven Hunters?' is naturally the first question of the reader. The Seven Hunters, or Flannan Isles, is a group of rocky islets lying in the Atlantic, sixteen miles west of the westernmost point of Lewis. They thus share with St Kilda, which is over forty miles to the south-west of them, the doubtful honour of forming part of the outlying rocky picket that amid the Atlantic breakers guards the western coast of the Hebrides. Unlike St Kilda, they are not inhabited. Their small size and the difficulty of obtaining water would be sufficient to account for this. A few sheep, however, are pastured on them by the people of the part of Lewis lying opposite. These are put on when young and taken off when ready for the market. The crop of grass, kept short by the sea-winds, seems to afford sweet nibbling, for the sheep thrive on it; and Flannan Island mutton has a good reputation. Nature seems to have been kinder three hundred and fifty years ago than she is now, for then there was no need to place sheep on the islands, there being already 'infinite wild sheepe therein.'

Donald Munro, High Dean of the Isles, who visited the Western Islands in 1549, has left the following quaint account of the Flannans, which he calls the 'seven Haley Isles':

'50 myle in the Occident seas from the coste of the parochin Vye in Lewis, towarts the west-north-west, lyes the seven iles of Flanayn, claid with girth, and Haley iles, verey natural gressing within thir saids iles; infinit wyld sheipe therein, quhilk na man kuaves to quhom the said sheipe appertaines within them that lives this day of the countrymen; bot M'Cloyd of the Lewis, at certaine tymes in the yeir, sendis men in, and huntis and slayis maney of thir sheipe. The flesche of thir sheipe cannot be eaten be honest men for fatnesse, for there is na flesche on them bot all quhyte lyke talloune, and it is verey wyld gusted lykways. The saids iles are nounder manurit nor inhabit, bot full of grein high hills, full of wyld sheipe in the seven iles forsaid, quhilk may not be outrune.'

The people from the mainland of Lewis have been in the habit of going periodically to the islands at the bird-nesting season; but with the exception of these occasional visits and those to

put on and take off the sheep, the islands lie lonely and unvisited amid the continual fret and roar of the Atlantic rollers. These outlying islets, and the rocky shores of Lewis opposite to them, are in the path of ships from the western continent when sailing round the north coast of Scotland, and in the absence of any warning light many a poor ship has here found her doom. A wreck on the Flannan Islands would mean simply another ship added to the list of those that every year disappear no man knows whither; for an uninhabited island showing on every face precipitous cliffs running down into deep water keeps no trace of sea-disasters. A dark or foggy night, a vessel a little out of her course running before a gale, a shadowy mass of rock against which she rushes stem on, a crash, a shriek mayhap, and the howling winds and roaring waters sing their requiem over a tragedy whose only traces now lie far down amid the secrets of the sea. Recognising the danger to navigation offered by these coasts, the Lighthouse Commissioners several years ago arranged for the building of a lighthouse on the top of the largest of the group; and the work, for the last four years in the hands of a competent contractor, is now nearing completion.

At midnight on a calm July evening, still lit by the glow from the western sky, the writer left Breasclet, an anchorage well up the long sea-firth of Loch Roag. Supplies and material for the operations on the island are regularly shipped here by a stout little tug chartered for the purpose by the contractor. To keep a work of this kind supplied with material, and to provide over fifty workmen on the rock not only with food but, what is even more important, with fresh water, and to do this each time after a run of thirty miles on what is proverbially one of our stormiest coasts, adds not a little to the difficult task of lighthouse construction. We steamed down the still waters of the loch, having on our left hand the island of Great Bernera, and on our right the black, vaguely-outlined masses of the mainland of Lewis. In about an hour we anchored off Little Bernera to load sand. Black rocks on both sides, and in front the glimmer of a sandy beach, beyond which rose a wind-drifted ridge of sand, made up the picture. Over the rock to the right peeped, from the northern side of the loch, the continually winking eye of a little light which, always burning, guides the fishing-boats as they creep round in the dark to Carloway Harbour. About two o'clock the glow in the sky began to strengthen as the dawn stole up. The row of sand-bags on the beach grew more distinct, and the moving figures of the men less mysterious and stealthy-looking. On the height to our left the walls of a vault began to show distinctly; for Little Bernera, though uninhabited, contains the chief burying-ground of a very considerable district. One

cannot think of a more peaceful 'God's acre' than this, with no habitation near nor sound of men, but only the wail of the sea-bird and the dirge of wind and wave. The island shows traces of having been previously inhabited, and some say that it is the scene of William Black's famous novel, and claim it as the spot where 'the Princess' had her home. Soon our bows were headed for the open sea, and as we left the narrower waters of the loch behind we were caught up on the long swing of the Atlantic; not a heavy sea, but enough to remind a landsman that the swell was from the ocean.

In four hours we find ourselves at the Islands. The stopping of the engine brings us on deck, to find facing us a gray front of rock rising precipitously to a height of over a hundred feet. There is a great gash in its face, clean cut on the edges and without a trace of vegetation. At the top the cliff slopes backward, and patches of grass and green clumps of the wild chamomile, gay with white blossoms, brighten up the grayness of the rock. As the rocks run sheer down into the water there is no beach, and at first sight there seems no possibility of landing, although two hand-cranes clinging like huge spiders to the face of the cliff give evidence of the work that is in progress. Closer inspection shows a concrete stair in process of construction up the face of the rock, and at the foot of this we attempt a landing from the ship's boat. The waves swing the boat along, and it bobs up and down in an uncertain way, as the sparkling green water breaks in white foam against the cliff; but with a little difficulty we find ourselves on the bottom step, and with the help of the stairway and a little judicious scrambling we are soon on the grassy top, two or three hundred feet above the sea.

The islets are in two groups, an eastern and a western. Eilean Mòr, on which we stand, is the largest of the islands, and is a grass-crowned mass of gray gneiss, measuring about five hundred yards in length by two hundred in breadth. The top slopes considerably to the south-west, and is covered with a close mat of short grass decorated with sea-pinks and diminutive buttercups and ragged-robins. On the highest point is the lighthouse, now almost completed, a strange combination of grace and stolid strength. From its base, where are the engine-room, storerooms, and kitchen, rises a short tower capped by the crystal dome of the lantern.

A feature of interest in the island is the bird-life. Rows and rows of orange-beaked and orange-footed puffins sit on the ledges of the rocks and on the top of the cliff with a solemn air that is irresistibly comic. On other ledges may be seen groups of razorbills, if possible more solemn, for their pure white bosoms, glossy black backs, and black bills and feet give them a sacerdotal appearance that accords well with the gravity of

their demeanour. Along with these may be seen gulls with yellow beaks, white breasts, and gray wings tipped with black. There is no air of solemnity about them; on the contrary, there is a bold vociferousness that sometimes almost becomes insulting when one of them flies past with jeering shrieks that are suggestive of offensive personalities. The puffins have the peaty earth at the top of the cliff excavated into short burrows, in which they lay their eggs and hatch their young. As we looked a gull was moving about jauntily among the puffins, peering inquisitively into each burrow as he passed—a bold, bad bird evidently, soliloquising on the suitability of fat young puffins for breakfast. The parent puffins that were sitting by made no attempt to show fight, nor did they move far out of his way. They are, however, much given to fighting among themselves. When thus engaged the puffin seems to forget everything except his adversary. One pair we saw got their bills locked together during their fighting, and tumbled over each other and rolled head over heels down the rocks with the most charming abandon. They are a little more shy now of allowing one to approach than they were when the workmen first came to the island, but they will still sit stolidly until you are within a couple of yards.

Near the middle of the island is an ancient stone building of very small size, said to have been connected in some way with the St Flannan after whom the islands are supposed to be named. According to the authorities on ecclesiastical antiquities, St Flannan was, in the seventh century, the first bishop of Killaloe, and several small islands in Ireland have been named in his honour. The chapel or cell is a tiny erection of flat unhewn stones, with considerable spaces between them. Its roof is constructed of some of the larger and flatter stones, each overlapping the one below until they meet in the centre. The gables, unlike those of the native Lewis houses, are vertical and rise to a peak. The doorway is in the western gable, and is a hole about two feet square. The interior measurement of the cell is about six feet by five. Ancient saints were evidently content with scantier accommodation than suits the modern ones.

Near the western end of the island are the remains of two other low buildings of stone, the largest of them being about eight feet square; but what their age or what their purpose is not apparent. Not far from these is a line of stones running across the island, as if intended to serve as a boundary. These are all the traces of man's handiwork observable, but there is no doubt that from early times the islands have been periodically visited by the inhabitants of Lewis for purposes of fowling and to take off the sheep pastured on them.

Martin Martin, Gent., who visited the Western Islands about 1695, gives the following description

of the Flannan Islands and the curious customs connected with them two hundred years ago: 'To the north-west of Gallan-head, and within six leagues of it, lie the Flannan Islands, which the seamen call North-Hunters; they are but small islands and six in number, and maintain about seventy sheep yearly. The inhabitants of the adjacent lands of the Lewis, having a right to these islands, visit them once every summer, and there make a great purchase of fowls, eggs, down, feathers, and quills. When they go to sea they have their boat well manned, and make towards the islands with an east wind; but if before or at the landing the wind turn westerly, they hoist up sail and steer directly home again. If any of their crew is a novice, and not versed in the customs of the place, he must be instructed perfectly in all the punctilios observed here before landing; and to prevent inconveniences that they think may ensue upon the transgression of the least nicety observed here, every novice is always joined with another, that can instruct him all the time of their fowling: so all the boat's crew are matched in this manner. After their landing they fasten the boat to the sides of a rock, and then fix a wooden ladder, by laying a stone at the foot of it, to prevent its falling into the sea; and when they are got up into the island, all of them uncover their heads, and make a turn sun-ways round thanking God for their safety. . . . One of their principal customs is not to steal or eat anything unknown to their partner, else the transgressor (they say) will certainly vomit it up; which they reckon as a just judgment. The biggest of these islands is called Island-More; it has the ruins of a chapel dedicated to St Flannan, from whom the island derives its name. When they are come within about twenty paces of the altar, they all strip themselves of their upper garments at once; and their upper clothes being laid upon a stone, which stands there on purpose for that use, all the crew pray three times before they begin fowling: the first day they say the first prayer, advancing towards the chapel upon their knees; the second prayer is said as they go round the chapel; the third is said hard by or at the chapel; and this is their morning service. Their vespers are performed with the like number of prayers. I had this superstitious account not only from several of the natives of the Lewis, but likewise from two who had been in the Flannan Islands the preceding year. I asked one of them if he prayed at home as often and as fervently as in the Flannan Islands, and he plainly confessed to me that he did not: adding further that these remote islands were places of inherent sanctity, and that there was none ever yet landed in them but found himself more disposed to devotion there than anywhere else.'

When we landed on the island in the morning the position of St Kilda had been marked by a

patch of white cloud on the horizon to the south-west. In the afternoon the sun came out, the cloud melted away, and the outlines of the St Kilda group showed high and clear against the sky. The only other land in sight was the coast of Lewis on the east. After wandering over and round the island we lay down at last on the greensward while eye and ear took in the features of the scene—the sunshine, the pure clear air, the gleam of the sea; the white fringe of broken water running up the rocks of the neighbouring islet, only to fall back again; the lazy seal floating on the edge of the foam; the blue sky flecked with white; and the perfect peacefulness that

brooded over all. In the evening we again embarked, pleased to have had a whole day of sea and sky, and with gratitude to the officials whose ready courtesy had made such a day possible. We steamed eastward over a quiet sea, leaving behind us a sunset sky of greens and reds, to which nothing but the brush of a Turner could have done justice; and as we went we took with us a fresh appreciation of wild nature and a renewed respect for the constructive skill and energy of the men who, in spite of all difficulties, have marked out with friendly lights the dangerous reefs and shoals of our rock-bound coasts.

DIPS INTO A DOCTOR'S DIARY.



WHEN the young and aspiring medico has 'put up his plate' and launched himself on the troubled sea of private practice he is not long in making the discovery that hitherto he has had all his real difficulties before him. Unless he possesses considerable influence, or has first-class introductions, or has already in some way so far distinguished himself as to have attracted attention, he finds that private practice is a precarious means of livelihood, and, amid the harassments of daily life, is apt to lose the fine edge of true professional enthusiasm in the hard grind of making a living.

Should he succeed in forming a connection, he speedily finds that there is a wide difference between hospital work and independent practice, or between the position of assistant and that of entirely responsible practitioner. Particularly does he feel at sea if, as in my case, he passes at once into practice on his own account without having spent some time in association with an experienced private practitioner. Probably he has had a spell of house-physician's or house-surgeon's work in some hospital or infirmary. In that position the cases which have come under his care have been well defined and amenable to treatment. For the most part complicated and hopeless cases are not admitted to general hospitals; and at the worst the young house-surgeon had the longer experience and wider knowledge of the visiting doctors to fall back upon in cases of exceptionally difficult diagnosis and treatment.

But now he is called in to all sorts of cases, many of which present very mixed conditions and symptoms indeed. His text-books, while giving him general principles and many illustrations, cannot set forth every possible complication of an ailment. Except in grave emergencies, his patients do not care to go to the expense of a

'consultation.' The young doctor may have a senior friend with whom he can take counsel; but he is compelled practically to stand alone and to accept the responsibility of diagnosis and treatment, while any display of uncertainty or hesitancy on his part would forfeit confidence and ruin his prospects. If I may make a transition from the third person to the first, and, for the sake of clearness, deal with my own experiences, I frankly confess that in the early days of my practice I often felt bewilderment, and was inclined to attribute the recovery of my patients almost as much to good luck as to my own management. Of course I did my best, and in serious cases did not hesitate to counsel further advice; but knowledge of the ins and outs of disease—complicated by a hundred things which are apt to upset one's calculations—had to be gained by long and close observation and comparison. The training of medical students now is far and away in advance of what was attainable in my student days; but even now a beginner needs to carry into private practice a well-stored and retentive memory, the results of accurate observation, a good deal of 'gumption,' and the power of allowing for differences of bodily habit, nutrition, environment, &c.

I soon found that in a medical sense I was expected to be 'all things to all men,' ready to treat all sorts of diverse cases with promptitude and confidence; and sometimes I used to wish that my patients possessed the nice discrimination manifested by one of my hospital applicants a short time before I abandoned my post there. A collier, suffering from an abscess, was ushered into the consulting-room; but before he would permit examination he wished to ascertain what kind of treatment he was likely to receive at my hands. Said he, 'Are you the cuttin' doctor or the poulticin' doctor? Because it's the poulticin' doctor I want.' But now I had to cut or poultice as the case might demand; to

act as surgeon or physician with equal readiness and skill.

As an illustration of the variety of a young doctor's experiences I cull from my diary of the early-practice period the record of cases visited in one day. It may be regarded as a fairly representative day.

After having been called up to one of those domestic affairs which have an aggravating way of happening in the middle of the night, I was trying to get an hour's sleep before early surgery hours, when an urgent call came to visit a new case—that of a man suffering from *dementia*. He had shown signs of mental peculiarity for some weeks, but had now become uncontrollable. He was not violent, but obstinate; and his mania took a curious and comical form. I found him gravely and laboriously descending the stairs in a most uncomfortable manner—namely, in a sitting posture. His friends said he had kept it up all night; ascending the flight of steps, sitting down, and bumping his way down step by step. A good deal of persuasion and a little force succeeded in getting him to bed, in a very exhausted condition. He rapidly became worse, and in a few days had to be removed to an asylum for the insane.

Immediately on regaining my residence I was summoned—indeed, I found the summons awaiting me—to another case of insanity, this time of a suicidal description, which had been in my care for some time. A week earlier the patient, when left alone for half-an-hour, had turned on the gas in her bedroom, thus attempting to put an end to her life by suffocation. Now she had eluded the nurse in charge of her, and had swallowed the contents of a bottle of poisonous lotion which had been carelessly left within her reach. It required an hour's hard work to bring her round and place her out of danger. I was compelled to overcome the reluctance of her friends to send her away, and she also was placed under restraint away from home.

By this time my surgery patients had been kept waiting some time, and I found them in by no means the best of temper at my late arrival. Then ensued the usual round of consultations, in which, despite the deep sympathy with which a doctor is supposed to listen to the detailed description of his patients' ailments, an exasperating verbosity much tried my patience. Each case dealt with as fully as possible, and the last of the batch dismissed, a hasty meal was snatched, and off I hastened on my visits. In those days the practice didn't run to a carriage, while it was in that transition state when the work was too much for one and the income not large enough to admit of my keeping an assistant; so I had to trudge on foot, and with as much expedition as possible. The ordinary number of sad and depressing cases of consumption and other lung diseases were taken first, as far as geography

would permit; then a troublesome and disgusting case of *delirium tremens*, the patient, among other vagaries, beseeching me to tread carefully, as big ticks were growing up visibly all over his room.

Another unpleasant case that day was one of hysteria—on the peculiarities and diversities of which a volume might be written by any medical man of twenty years' experience. I found the patient's relatives much perturbed by a sudden and unaccountable spitting of blood. Careful examination and stern questioning and plain accusation elicited the confession that she had pricked the roof of her mouth with a needle in order to simulate blood-spitting, that she might frighten her relatives. In such a case hospital experiences aided me considerably.

Then a case or two of typhoid, and 'after that' three or four of whooping-cough and measles and lesser ailments among children, were attended to, and the afternoon was well advanced before I reached home—tired and hungry, only to find awaiting me an urgent summons to another of those cases which tend to allay one's fears as to any danger of the dying out of the race yet awhile.

Attendance at the surgery, a call to an accident—which meant the replacing of a dislocated shoulder—and a round of revisits to the more serious cases, and two or three calls on fresh patients, and a few on some of older standing not seen earlier in the day, brought bedtime—and found a tired man ready for it. But my night was not to be undisturbed, for at two o'clock in the morning my newly-made, stair-bumping acquaintance could not be pacified without seeing the doctor, his 'oldest and last remaining friend in the world,' he declared.

It was a wearing life in those days of single-handedness, when each journey had to be made on foot—before a brougham and assistants were possible; but I was happy in it, and found immense interest, as experience grew, in unravelling the mysteries of disease and cure, and felt unspeakable delight in alleviating pain and suffering. And the life was not without its lighter touches; for, while aggravation and discouragements were often to be found in the fads and unreasonableness of some patients, amusement was also to be found therein. For example, I had a patient who always wore five suits of clothes at the same time, summer and winter. He was really not suffering from any bodily ailment whatever; but he regularly called me in for consultation, and the guineas which he insisted on paying were very useful to an impecunious beginner.

I once received a great fright, and a lesson in the truth of the saying, 'A little learning is a dangerous thing,' at one and the same time. Among my child-patients was a little girl who was down with a severe attack of measles. As there was a good deal of bronchial and threatened

lung-complication, I prescribed constant poulticing, back and front. At the end of my morning visit the little one's mother had said, 'Now, doctor, if there is any rise of temperature'—she was great on temperature, by the way—'I will send for you at once. As you know, I have a clinical thermometer, and can take the temperature myself without troubling you to come in for the purpose.' Just as I was going to bed I was startled by a violent ring at the bell, and, hastening to the door, saw a terrified domestic, who gasped, 'Oh, sir, please, sir, do come round at once! Miss Marjory is worse. Missus said I was to tell you her temperature is 108, and is risin' fast.' Scarcely waiting to put on my hat, I rushed round to the house of my little patient, and discovered the whole family assembled in the sick-room awaiting the end of poor little Marjory, the mother wringing her hands in agony and crying dreadfully. 'What's the temperature now?' I almost shouted in my agitation. 'Oh!' sobbed the mother, 'I haven't dared to look since. My poor darling! It was 108, and they say that 105 is always fatal;' and she broke down completely. Without wasting any more time, I turned down the blanket, and—found that the thermometer had been thrust between the child's side and arm, and the bulb embedded in a freshly-applied hot poultice!

Whether the following instance is to be regarded as indicating unbounded faith in the doctor's prognostications, or must be looked upon as showing lack of faith in his power of effecting a cure, I leave my readers to determine. It happened in my own practice, but, as good stories generally become common property, has probably been fathered on others also. A man had been at death's door for days, and, having abandoned all hope, I had prepared his wife for the worst. However, the patient took an astonishing turn for the better—as much to my surprise as to that of any one else. On coming down from his room, highly delighted, I said to his wife, 'I think you may hope for recovery now. I believe he has turned the corner.' Instead of showing joy, her face fell, and she said, 'Oh dear! and I've sold all his clothes.'

Of a somewhat similar character was a case which occurred in the practice of an intimate friend of my own in a northern county. His patient, a collier, had made a brave fight for life, but had been defeated. All hope of recovery was gone; and my friend said to the dying man's wife, 'It is of no further use placing any restrictions on diet. You may let him eat anything that he may fancy.' The good woman, who was relieved by the doctor's permission—for she had found her husband by no means a tractable subject in the matter of diet—went upstairs, and said, 'Is there owt tha could fancy to eat? The doctor says tha can hev owt tha fancies now.' 'Ay,' replied the sinking but hungry man, 'I

should like a bit o' that ham as I cured afore I was ta'en bad.' Said his wife firmly, 'Nay, tha can hev owt else tha likes, but we're savin' that ham for the funeral.'

FAIRY GOLD.

THERE's fairy gold upon the moor—the blossoms of the gorse:

The gold which comes and shines and dies with every season's course;

The gold which, with its glamour, binds the children of the soil,

And winds around the hearts which ache, the weary hands which toil.

Oh, fairy weavers of the gold!

To-day for ever loose your hold,

And let poor Aileen go.

With eyes like violets wet, she sees a vision of the years,
And of the home in alien land where, only through her tears,

That fairy gold shall she behold, or feel the soft breath more

Which, with the perfume of the gorse, played round her cabin-door.

Oh, fairy weavers of the gold!

To-day for ever loose your hold,

And let poor Aileen go.

She clasps the letter from her kin, with loving words and true;

'And leave,' they say, 'the poor old land, the worm-wood and the rue

'Of hunger-pang and cold and want—you'll never know them more;

'Alanna! come across the seas; come home to us, ashore.'

Oh, fairy weavers of the gold!

To-day for ever loose your hold,

And let poor Aileen go.

A thousand sounds are on the breeze: the shiver of the rush,

The curlew's cry, and from on high the wild, sweet songs that gush

As though the lark's heart burst with joy; and, dearer than them all,

A voice to which her pulses thrill. Ah! wherefore doth it call?

Oh, fairy weavers of the gold!

To-day for ever loose your hold,

And let poor Aileen go.

The flowers of the gorse are spent, the moor is grey and cold,

Dark clouds have curtained o'er the sky; there's no more fairy gold.

But a grave in yon lone churchyard, by a lover's falsehood made:

Ah! woe the day, poor Aileen, when thy parting steps he stayed.

For winter came, and love grew cold;

And fairy weavers of the gold

Were fain to let thee go!

MARY GORGES.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

THE HEROINE OF LYDENBERG.

AN EPISODE IN THE TRANSVAAL WAR OF 1880-81.

By W. WILMOTT DIXON.

NONE forgets many things in eighteen years; and probably the story which I purpose retelling here is forgotten by all except the surviving actors in it and their immediate friends. But the memory of such a signal instance of British pluck should not be allowed to die.

On Sunday the 5th of December 1880 the little town of Lydenberg, in the Transvaal, was in a state of unwonted excitement. The whole population was out in its Sunday best to give a hearty send off to the 94th Regiment, which had been quartered there for many months, and was now ordered to Pretoria. Both officers and men had made themselves extremely popular with all classes, and the expressions of regret at their departure were universal. Numbers of the inhabitants accompanied the regiment on its way for five or six miles. One lady and gentleman—Lieutenant Walter Long, the junior subaltern of the 94th, and his pretty young wife—rode out as far as fifteen miles. The colonel had paid the lieutenant the high honour of leaving him in sole command of the troops left behind—a responsible position for a youngster of barely two-and-twenty.

As the lieutenant and his wife turned their horses' heads and bade farewell to their comrades Colonel Anstruther called out:

'Good-bye, Mrs Long! Look after Long, and mind you're a good little adjutant. Good-bye, Long! Look after my garden for me; remember I expect to find it in as good order as I leave it.'

Both the colonel and the lieutenant were enthusiastic gardeners.

As the regiment tramped past, Mrs Long cried out:

'Good-bye, 94th! God bless you!'

And the men shouted back:

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'Good-bye, *our* lady! God bless you, Mrs Long!'

It was a last farewell for many of them, though they little thought it; for a fortnight later Colonel Anstruther and more than half his men were killed at Bronkhorst Spruit.

Out on the open veldt, about half a mile from the town, were eight military huts, each fifty feet long by eighteen feet wide, built two abreast, with an intervening space of thirty feet, the whole forming a parallelogram seventy-eight yards in length by twenty in breadth. At the first rumour of disaffection among the Boers, Lieutenant Long resolved to withdraw his men into these huts, and throw up some kind of shelter round them, for up to this time they stood without the slightest enclosure, and utterly unprotected. The force under his command consisted of fifty privates and three non-commissioned officers of the 94th, seven privates and a sergeant of the Royal Engineers, three privates and a conductor of the Army Service Corps—in all, including Dr Falvey, of the Army Medical Department, and Lieutenant Long himself, sixty-six officers and men.

Mrs Long, who had been living with her husband in a pretty little cottage embowered in roses and fruit-trees at the lower end of the town, without a moment's hesitation decided to leave her comfortable home and take up her quarters with her husband. Her many friends in Lydenberg tried in vain to dissuade her from the step. She was offered a warm welcome in half-a-dozen houses; but the brave little woman said that her place was beside her husband. So the soldiers brought her belongings from the pretty cottage to one of the huts, and showed their admiration for her pluck by taking the greatest pains in making her quarters as tasteful and comfortable as possible. There was, however, but scant accommodation for a lady in the hut assigned to her, which sheltered

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under its roof three horses (whose every movement was distinctly audible) besides herself and her husband.

On the 16th of December they began throwing up works of defence round the huts, and Mrs Long delighted the men by working as hard as any of them. On the 23d of December the appalling news reached them of the massacre of the 94th at Bronkhorst Spruit. But, stunned though they were by the terrible tidings, they set to work more vigorously than ever to complete their defences. When the tiny fort was finished it was christened Fort Mary, in honour of Mrs Long; and Father Walsh, a Roman Catholic priest who had elected to cast in his lot with the little garrison, formally blessed it.

An envoy from the Boers, Dietrick Müller, appeared, on the 27th of December, with a proposal that the garrison should surrender and accept a safe-conduct into Natal. His surprise at the youthful appearance of the commandant of the fort was great. 'Dat younker!' he exclaimed in contempt. But 'dat younker' was not so green as Mr Müller imagined. He suggested writing to Pretoria for instructions. Müller consented, and Lieutenant Long thus cleverly gained a delay of five days, which he utilised in very materially strengthening his defences.

On the 4th of January the Boers appeared in force, some seven hundred of them, and formally demanded surrender of the fort; to which summons the young subaltern returned the spirited reply: 'It is inconsistent with my duty as a soldier to surrender my trust.' An urgent appeal was once more made by Mrs Long's friends in the town to induce her to quit the fort and take up her residence in one of the many homes placed at her disposal. But she stoutly refused.

Two days afterwards the attack commenced. For three hours and a half seven hundred Boers kept up a continuous rifle-fire upon the little fort at a range of five hundred yards. In her own charmingly modest and simple narrative, Mrs Long thus describes her feelings when she first found herself under fire:

'I must humbly confess that during the first hour of the firing I was dreadfully frightened, and took refuge under a table, for its imaginary shelter. Father Walsh, entering the hut at that moment, with his breviary in his hand, to look for me, and not finding me, as he expected, called me. I lifted the tablecover and popped my head out, saying, "Here I am, Father!" My position struck me as so ludicrous that I burst into a hearty fit of laughter. Not till 4 P.M. was I able to ascertain that, notwithstanding the terrible fire of the last four hours, not a man had been wounded. My husband, knowing how anxious I should be as to his safety, looked in as often as he could to cheer me.'

But she very soon overcame these natural terrors, and got so used to the firing, even when the Boers

brought a couple of cannon to bear on the fort, that she frequently slept right through the cannonade.

What with tending the sick and wounded, and making sandbags, sometimes turning out as many as four dozen of them in a day, Mrs Long's time was fully occupied. Think of her there, one woman, little more than a girl, alone among sixty men fighting for their lives against ten times their number! What wonder that the men fought like heroes with this daintily-bred English lady sharing all their dangers and setting them an example of patience and courage and cheerfulness. She admitted that at first she felt the absence of any of her own sex keenly. But the soldiers were so devoted to her, so delicate in their solicitude and consideration for her, that she soon lost the sense of loneliness.

One day a strange messenger arrived, a little black-and-tan terrier, with a piece of paper folded in a rag tied round its neck. It was a communication from some friendly townsfolk informing them that the Boers were quarrelling among themselves, furious with Dietrick Müller for being such a fool as to allow the English those five days to complete their defences; and adding, as a hint, that the defenders of the fort were firing too high—which hint, I need hardly say, was quickly taken.

The garrison had nothing in the shape of a gun with which to meet the fire of the two six-pounders that the Boers had in position. But one day Mrs Long suggested to one of the Army Service men that the 'monkey' of an Abyssinian pump which they had might perhaps be utilised. The idea was promptly seized upon and ingeniously carried into execution; and the Boers were very much amazed when a cylindrical shot weighing two pounds six ounces, formed of round crowbar iron cased in lead, came crashing in amongst them. 'Mrs Long's gun,' as it was christened, proved a very valuable addition to the armament of Fort Mary.

The huts were riddled through and through with round-shot and rifle-bullets, and the escapes from death were so miraculous that Lieutenant Long twice had the men assembled for a special thanksgiving service conducted by Father Walsh. On one occasion a cannon-shot struck the wall within an inch of Mrs Long's head and covered her with dust and débris.

Another time the hut in which she lived came down about her ears, and her escape from being crushed in the ruins was marvellous. But she must needs, woman-like, go back to rescue her 'things,' and expressed truly feminine sorrow to find her best bonnet smashed as flat as a pancake, and only one cup, two saucers, and a couple of plates left of all her cherished crockery.

Meanwhile the men kept up their spirits with music and dancing. 'Hold the Fort,' with a strictly local application, was a favourite chorus,

and the men invented a version of the famous Jingo song:

We don't want to fight; but, by Jingo! if we do,
We've got the pluck, we've got the men, and ammunition too.

We've fought the Zulu king and Sekekuni too,
And the Boers shall never get into Fort Mary.

And they never did, though they tried their utmost to drive out the gallant defenders with cannon and rifles, and, what was worse, 'Greek-fire' shot in metallic tubes into the thatch of the roofs. Perhaps if the Boers could only have summoned up courage to make a determined assault whilst the huts were blazing and half the garrison occupied in putting out the flames, they might have captured the fort. But the Boers are not dashing fighters, and they did not care to meet the stubborn defenders of Fort Mary hand to hand. So they contented themselves with potting at the gallant fellows who fearlessly exposed themselves in their efforts to extinguish the fire. Those efforts were successful, though they cost the lives of two brave men who could ill be spared.

But the garrison were not content with standing only on the defensive. They made plucky little night-sorties, which scared the Boers considerably and caused them some loss. Twice Conductor Parsons of the Army Service Corps sallied out alone in the dark, and pitched hand-grenades in amongst the enemy, which produced a perfect panic amongst them. There was vigorous sapping and mining, too, on the part of the Royal Engineers, who made things very lively for the besiegers.

Then the water ran short. A pint a day for each man was all that could be spared; and this, though supplemented with a pint bottle of ale from the stores, was terribly short rations of drink in the hottest month of an African summer. Plucky Mrs Long found the privation of water for washing more trying than even the thirst; and her joy was intense when, after many days of this privation, she discovered a big bath-sponge in its oil-cloth case still damp. One daily wipe she and her husband allowed themselves as a luxury, and then locked the sponge up. At last the rain, which for many weary hours they had watched deluging the hills around, condescended to visit them, and then they had rather more water than they wanted; for, the huts being all roofless since the fire, there was no shelter from the pitiless down-pour. The soldiers, always eager and anxious to protect Mrs Long, rigged up a tarpaulin screen to shield her from the rain when sleeping; but, despite their care, she often woke up drenched.

The news of the disasters at Laing's Nek and Majuba Hill was, of course, promptly communicated to them by the enemy, accompanied by a

peremptory summons to surrender. But Lieutenant Long, though badly wounded himself, lying helpless, with his faithful wife nursing him night and day, sent back the curt answer, 'I shall hold out to the last.' And the men, looking at that brave woman so patient and cheerful under her terrible load of anxiety, set their teeth hard and swore the Boers should never have Fort Mary whilst there was a man left to handle a rifle.

'And ever on the topmost roof the old banner of England blew.' At first, indeed, it was but a merchant-ship's ensign. How they hoisted a real Union-jack I will let Mrs Long tell in her own words:

'Our ship's ensign had become, what with the wind and what with the bullets, a perfect shred; moreover, we were anxious to hoist a *real* Union-jack. A Geneva flag was discovered, but though sufficient red and white were forthcoming to complete the crosses, no blue was to be found. Nothing daunted, the men came to me to inquire if I possessed such a thing as a bit of dark blue for the new flag, and, to their delight, I gave them a serge dress of the desired colour. A beautiful Union-jack was very soon made and hoisted, instead of the first. Our ship's ensign, though exchanged, was not discarded, for under its tattered shred our brave fellows were carried to their graves.'

On the 29th of March the Boers kept up a furious cannonade and fusillade all night. But the next morning, to the surprise of the garrison, a white flag was hoisted over the enemy's lines, and under its protection Lieutenant Baker of the 60th Rifles brought them the humiliating news that peace had been concluded with the Boers. So the gallant defenders marched out from the riddled and battered little fort which for eighty-four days they had held against ten times their number.

Mrs Long was so thin and pulled down that her friends in Lydenberg hardly knew her. The Boers cheered her heartily as she passed them on her way into the town, and their commander, Piet Steyne, treated her with the utmost courtesy. Indeed, such a chivalrous gentleman was this gallant Boer that he sentenced one of his men to twenty-five lashes for shouting out during the siege, 'Come out, Mrs Long, and make us some coffee; we are so cold.' At the same time he threatened double the penalty if any further insult were offered to the English lady.

Lieutenant Long and his men were publicly complimented in a General Order 'for their successful and heroic defence.' But I am disposed to think that the largest share of the praise was due to the brave woman who set them so noble an example.



COUNT PAUL

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER III.



T this moment there was the sound of a footstep in the passage outside. Cumberlege hastily crossed to the door and threw it open. He found himself confronted on the threshold by Karamoff.

'What now, monsieur?' he began angrily.

Karamoff stopped him with a gesture.

'Don't be a fool, sir,' said he; 'and speak lower. I come to warn you. The members of the council are getting impatient; they exhibit signs of discontent, even rebellion, at their exclusion from the council chamber. It is possible, if time is allowed them for reflection, they may even begin to suspect'—

'What you know!' said Cumberlege grimly. 'Well, monsieur, I intend to save the lady—councillors or no councillors.'

'And I desire to assist you. That's why I offered to bring the chairman's message. It is this: he begs, with all proper respect, to request you to readmit them in five minutes, as time presses. You can read the message as you like. There is also another reason for haste. Count Paul may arrive!'

'Do you think it likely that he will?'

'Not now; but he *might*; and then'—Karamoff shrugged his shoulders significantly. 'My opinion is that he missed the Calais boat, or else has got lost in the fog. Now, Monsieur *Comment l'appelle-t-on*, let me advise you. Get mademoiselle out of this house if possible in half-an-hour, and conduct her with her woman attendant ostensibly to the Hotel Cecil; that is where the Count stays, remember—the Hotel Cecil. A carriage will await you in the street. This done, lose not an instant in transferring her, if you can, to an unknown address, whither the Borastrians cannot trace her, and as speedily as may be smuggling her out of London. Can you do this, monsieur?'

Cumberlege nodded.

'I *will* do it!' he answered.

'You have your plan?' asked Karamoff hurriedly.

'I have, sir.'

'Rely upon me to second you. *À voir*. Five minutes only. Be wary; exhibit neither undue anxiety nor excitement in your demeanour. Our councillors are shrewd fellows;' and with a smile Karamoff closed the door and vanished.

Cumberlege instantly returned to the side of Mdlle. Naritzka, whose pale face and agitated manner sufficiently betrayed the emotion under which her gentle spirit was labouring.

'Mademoiselle,' said Cumberlege, 'as you value your life, I entreat you to be plain with me.

You must pardon what may appear in me a blunt impertinence. Mademoiselle, if Count Paul Rassovitch were here, and if Count Paul Rassovitch, standing before you thus, said, "Mademoiselle, I love you!" what would you reply?'

'I should reply, monsieur,' responded Mdlle. Naritzka, with the prettiest of blushes, 'that I felt honoured by the Count's declaration—no more.'

'No more! Then, mademoiselle, supposing again that the Count should say, "Mademoiselle, you have it in your power to confer upon me the greatest happiness of my life. With all humility I now offer you my name, my heart, and my fortune," what then would you reply?'

'If it were the Count, monsieur—if it were Count Paul Rassovitch who spoke thus, I should reject his offer,' she answered slowly.

'Ah! Is your heart, then, already engaged, mademoiselle?'

'If you have a purpose in the question, monsieur, I will answer it.'

'Believe me, I have a purpose.'

'No, monsieur,' replied Mdlle. Naritzka in hesitating accents.

Cumberlege felt his heart throb strangely.

'Then, mademoiselle, hear me. It is as the betrothed wife of Count Paul that you must escape from the hands of these conspirators. As Count Paul I shall declare to them that you are my affianced bride. Do you follow me, mademoiselle? As Count Paul!'

She bowed her head.

'As Count Paul,' she murmured.

'I shall conduct you, with your woman attendant. Can you trust her?'

'She is faithful to me. Yes.'

'I shall conduct you, then, with her to the Hotel Cecil; presumably to the Hotel Cecil. After that I shall not leave you, mademoiselle, till you are in a place of safety. Then, mademoiselle, no longer as Count Paul, but as a plain and honest English gentleman, you will permit me to lay at your feet a heart that has learnt in the brief space of one hour to love and honour you, and a devotion that asks for its reward no more than a perpetual opportunity of serving you to the end of life? Nay; do not reject them now! Leave me yet an hour or two in which to cheat myself with hopes'—

'Monsieur!' broke in Mdlle. Naritzka, 'how am I to thank you for your brave and disinterested service? As Count Paul'—

'Ay, as Count Paul. Thank me as Count Paul,' interrupted Cumberlege hastily.

'No. I was going to add'—She faltered, hesitated.

Cumberlege seized her hand suddenly and looked into her eyes that drooped beneath his gaze.

'I love you!' he exclaimed hotly. 'I love you; and I will know my answer now! I cannot wait an hour—an instant longer!' Then as suddenly he dropped her hand and bit his lip. 'Forgive me, mademoiselle!' he added. 'It seems as though I would take advantage of your helpless position. Forget the words. Think of me merely as one who plays a part—as, in fact, Count Paul, whom you would not marry!'

'Nay, but as the gentleman who has risked his life to save me,' she murmured; 'not as Count Paul. Perhaps, monsieur, a maiden may be permitted to express her—her gratitude,' she ended shyly.

There was a noise of approaching footsteps and voices nearing the apartment. Mdle. Naritzka started and turned pale. Again Cumberlege seized her hand and pressed it to his lips.

'Courage,' said he. 'All will be well. One word only, mademoiselle. Zourakoff—there was no ground for that villain's lying assertion—Prince Zourakoff is nothing to you?'

'Nothing!' exclaimed the young lady, flushing. 'Nothing, monsieur!'

'And, mademoiselle, may I hope?'

Cumberlege could only read his answer in the soft blue eyes that looked meltingly into his own, for whatever words were on Mdle. Naritzka's lips were roughly interrupted by a sudden sharp knock at the door.

'Courage!' he repeated, and turned rapidly to answer the summons. Mdle. Naritzka sank back into a chair at the farther end of the room. The door opened, and the chairman entered, followed by the councillors.

'I trust, Monsieur le Comte,' said he, 'that we do not disturb you too soon'—he glanced from Cumberlege to the form of the girl cowering in the chair, with a curious expression—'but, as you are aware, each minute is of importance. We desire to terminate the proceedings as soon as possible.'

'Be seated, sir,' said Cumberlege haughtily; 'and you, too, ladies and gentlemen.'

Again the councillors took their places at the table, and Cumberlege proceeded to the head of it. There was a moment's silence; then when each person had settled down in his place he rose to address them.

'Members of the Inner Council,' he began in slow and deliberate tones, 'I am conscious of a great weight of responsibility in the position which I occupy as the Head of our Order. The traditions and principles of that Order are, I need hardly remind you, matters of the deepest import to me. Least of all should I be the one to interfere with the operation of those principles, or seek to divert the course of justice as it is laid down by our laws. In the present case a lady stands before

you charged with a crime against the secret society—a crime, I grant you, for which there would appear to be no palliation and but one punishment. But, fellow-members, there is something connected with this particular crime which at once removes it from the category of unpardonable offences; that something is of a nature so private that I alone am in possession of the knowledge of it. It is impossible for me to make public my information, nor can I tell you how in the first instance I gained it. Aware of the existence of this circumstance, I desired to interrogate Mademoiselle Naritzka privately. The result of that interrogation serves only to confirm what I knew before. Councillors, this lady is no traitress!'

Cumberlege cast a quick, scornful glance round the assembly as he uttered these words. They were greeted by a murmur of astonishment; some of the members looked relieved, others perplexed, and a few evinced signs of anger and distrust—among them Ivan and the chairman.

'Monsieur le Comte,' exclaimed the latter, 'can you not furnish to the council some proof?'

'No, sir,' said Cumberlege coldly. 'I can furnish you no proof. I would not if I could. My word is sufficient; let any dispute it who dare.'

'The Count is right,' cried Karamoff. 'The word of the Head of our Order is law. There is no appeal from the Count's decision.'

'That is so,' grumbled Ivan. 'But surely even the Count is aware that a convicted prisoner'—

'Silence, sir!' thundered Cumberlege in very real anger.

'Rome must come before Cæsar, Monsieur le Comte!' exclaimed the chairman, raising his voice, threateningly, in turn.

This remark seemed to be the signal for a general clamour of protest. Voices were raised on all sides. There appeared to be every indication of a growing uproar. In the temporary hubbub that ensued, and during which Cumberlege stood confronting the assembly with flashing eyes, while Mdle. Naritzka shrank trembling behind the form of her attendant, Karamoff took occasion to lean forward hurriedly.

'Don't lose your head!' he whispered in English. 'Your plan—it is the only chance now. Be firm and cool. The carriage waits. Remember the Hotel Cecil. Say you will marry her!'

It seemed as though the crafty foreigner had contrived to read Cumberlege's very thoughts, so easily and correctly did he appear to have divined his project and motives.

'Yes, yes,' whispered back Cumberlege; 'that is my plan.' Then in a loud voice he cried:

'Fellow-councillors! Listen.'

Immediately there came a lull; every voice once more was hushed, every eye directed to the figure of the speaker.

'You have said, sir,' proceeded Cumberlege, addressing the chairman, 'that "Rome must come

before Cæsar." The sentiment gains in truth what it lacks in courtesy; and, let me add, it is entirely in accord with my own principles. The laws of the Inner Council shall ever be respected by its Head. I am here neither to discredit nor to violate them. I will, first, repeat what I have already told you: this lady is not a traitress. I have certain knowledge of that fact, but I cannot divulge my information. It is immaterial to me whether you believe my word or not; for it is now on other and more legitimate grounds that I pronounce her instant release. It is well known to you all that by the laws of the Order there is one case in which a member, even if she offend to the last degree, can claim exemption from the penalties of her offence; and that is, if the member be the wife of the Head of the Order. Now, fellow-councillors, although Mademoiselle Naritzka is *not* guilty of the crime of which you accuse her, without stooping to exonerate herself from the unjust charge preferred against her, she is yet able to plead this special prerogative to which I have alluded, and which guarantees her absolute immunity from the consequences of any act she may have committed. Members of the Inner Council, I here declare to you that Mademoiselle Naritzka is my affianced wife.'

He paused, and there came again a loud murmur of astonishment from his hearers at the concluding words of his speech. The chairman started up.

'If this is so, Monsieur le Comte,' he exclaimed, 'why were we not informed of it earlier, and spared the trouble of these proceedings?'

'The matter, monsieur,' replied Cumberlege sternly, 'was only settled definitely between Mademoiselle Naritzka and myself ten minutes ago: that is why. Have you anything else to say?'

The chairman shrugged his shoulders.

'The laws of the Order must be respected. You are within your rights, Count,' he answered sullenly. Then he turned to Mdlle. Naritzka.

'Mademoiselle,' said he, 'you are free;' and, 'mademoiselle,' he added, with a curious smile, 'I congratulate you.'

Cumberlege crossed over to the side of the blushing young lady and took her hand in his.

'My countess!' said he, and raised it to his lips.

The members of the assembly received this as the public acknowledgment of the Count's betrothal, and a sudden quick change came over the temper of the company; with one accord they all rose to their feet, and a simultaneous cry burst from their lips of 'The Countess!' In that instant they seemed to have forgotten their recent attitude towards the lovely maiden and their relative positions, remembering only that no longer a culprit, but the chosen and honoured wife of the Head of their Order, stood before them.

'Now, sir,' muttered Karamoff in Cumberlege's ear—'now is the time! The carriage waits!'

Cumberlege needed not to be reminded of the danger of unnecessary delay; while yet the buzz of congratulatory exclamations was in the air, he turned to the woman attendant and bade her instantly repair with mademoiselle's hand-luggage to the hall door, and there await them. Then he addressed himself with a smile to the councillors; all trace of his recent anger and excitement had vanished from his countenance, and it was in a friendly and ingratiating voice that he spoke.

'Yes, my friends,' he said, 'the Countess! And as such let this lady be ever honoured by you as she is honoured by me, and as she deserves to be honoured by all the world—for God never made a truer or a nobler woman! He who disputes this will have to reckon with Count Paul! It is not, you see, in vain,' he added, 'that you summoned me here to-night! If the *dévouement* has proved an unexpected one to you, at any rate allow me to hope that it has proved not a disappointing one. There is an English proverb that says, "All's well that ends well;" and it is Mademoiselle Naritzka's wish that I should convey to you her pardon for the somewhat ungallant treatment she has received at your hands this evening. She is a lady incapable of bearing ill-will even to her enemies; but she needs not your assurance to convince her that among the members of our Order at least, from this moment, she may number only friends.'

Karamoff started to his feet.

'Friends!' he cried. 'Friends all to Mademoiselle Naritzka! Long live the Countess Rassovitch!'

The cry was instantly echoed throughout the room: where frowns had been an hour ago were to be seen now only smiles; those who had been ready to condemn were equally ready to applaud; the tide of fortune had turned. Meantime the beautiful recipient of these favours appeared to be as embarrassed by the attentions of her well-wishers as she had been previously dejected by the hostility of her judges. She scarce knew where to direct her eyes so as to escape the admiring glances which were cast upon her from every side. Cumberlege was quick to perceive her distress, and quicker to relieve it. With a simple courtesy he offered her his arm, and, half-shielding her from the scrutiny of the company, indicated with a gesture his desire to conduct her from the room.

'Monsieur,' he said, turning to Karamoff, 'my carriage should be waiting?'

'It is, Monsieur le Comte,' replied Karamoff, bowing.

'Then, my friends,' he continued, addressing the councillors, 'I will detain you here no longer. I find the Hotel Cecil a more comfortable haven than our council chamber; and mademoiselle, you will understand, is fatigued and overwrought!—'

'Permit me, Monsieur le Comte—and mademoiselle,' broke in the chairman, 'to express the assurance of every one here that in future it will be our endeavour to erase from the minds of yourself and mademoiselle all recollection of the unfortunate incidents of this evening by the devotion which it will be our chief care to display in the service of Madame la Comtesse!'

Loud acclamations of assent greeted the chairman's words, and, bowing his acknowledgments, Cumberlege, with Mdlle. Naritzka's tiny hand resting on his arm, made a step towards the door. It was immediately thrown open by one of the councillors, who, bowing low, held it for the two of them to pass through. The rest of the company rose and stood in respectful silence. Karamoff, beckoning to Bergstein, prepared to follow the gentleman and lady. Once on the landing, he touched Cumberlege's arm.

'Lose not an instant!' he whispered; then aloud: 'I will precede you and see that the carriage is ready, Monsieur le Comte.'

Cumberlege and Mdlle. Naritzka stood aside to let Karamoff and Bergstein pass; then they descended the stairs close on their heels, and in the hall below found mademoiselle's waiting-woman equipped and ready. The front door was unbarred by the porter, and in the street outside a brougham stood waiting, wrapped in the mist.

'That is the carriage,' said Karamoff in an undertone. 'The driver was hired by me; he does not know the Count by sight. Give him what orders you will; but first, remember, the Hotel Cecil!' and he glanced significantly towards Bergstein, who had advanced to open the brougham door.

'I thank you for your co-operation, Monsieur Karamoff,' whispered back Cumberlege.

'It is for the sake of mademoiselle,' he answered hurriedly. 'I knew her as a child—and—but no matter, monsieur. God speed you both; and one day we may meet again! Adieu! Adieu, mademoiselle!'

'Adieu—my old friend!' murmured Mdlle. Naritzka, and the next moment she was hurried into the carriage by Cumberlege, for it was now no time for ceremony.

The fog had lifted, but was yet thick; and this circumstance perhaps favoured the fugitives, for it protected them from the comments of any passing policeman whose suspicions might have been aroused by this midnight exodus from a silent house. The woman attendant was directed

by Cumberlege to take her place in the brougham, and then he himself entered it and sat down by the side of Mdlle. Naritzka, while Bergstein closed the door.

'Inform the councillors, sir,' said Cumberlege to him, 'that I will communicate with them—shortly; and oblige me by telling the coachman to drive with all speed to the Hotel Cecil.'

Bergstein bowed, Karamoff waved his hand, the order was given, and the carriage with its three occupants drove swiftly off into the still night. For some moments none of the three spoke. Mdlle. Naritzka cowered back in the cushions; Cumberlege sat erect, his brows knit into anxious thought; and the woman opposite appeared to be sleeping. Presently Cumberlege roused himself from his reflections with the gesture of one who has arrived at a definite conclusion, and his face wore a sudden smile as he bent down close to Mdlle. Naritzka's ear.

'Mademoiselle!' he whispered.

The young lady gave a little involuntary shiver, it may have been of maiden apprehension, it may have been of joy—or perhaps a little of both.

'Monsieur,' she replied softly, and seemed to shrink still farther back in her corner.

'Mademoiselle,' repeated Cumberlege in a low tone, 'I think you are now safe. I have only to await your orders. Am I to drive you to the Hotel Cecil, or?'—He paused eloquently, and in the gloom of the carriage his eyes sought out hers. She felt his gaze upon her and trembled, but not with fear.

'Do what you will!' she murmured below her breath.

He bent still lower.

'My answer—now!' he whispered passionately.

'Your answer, monsieur?'

'For an hour we have acted, but this—this is reality! Not for an hour, but for life, mademoiselle!'

In the darkness a little hand stole out; yet, though it was dark, it was not so dark but that it found itself instantly enclosed in the strong grasp of another and pressed to burning lips. Thus Cumberlege got his answer. A moment later the serving-woman was awakened from her slumber by hearing some one say laughingly:

'Then we will not drive to the Hotel Cecil after all!'

And she was under the impression that it was Count Paul who spoke.



A LADY OF QUALITY IN THE OLDEN TIME.



THE luxury which prevailed at the Court of Queen Elizabeth and her successor, James I., is apt to be underestimated in these days. The notion is prevalent that the state maintained by the ladies of quality in the time of the last Tudor Queen was of a very sordid kind, and it is generally supposed that lavish outlay on dress and appointments only took place on special occasions. The following letter shows what a baroness of the period thought was due to her rank. The document speaks for itself; but a few notes will make the references to personages intelligible.

Sir John Spencer, Knight, was Lord Mayor of London in 1594, and was reckoned one of the wealthiest men of his time. His only daughter and heiress was Eliza Spencer, the writer of the letter. She married William, second Baron Compton, who was created Earl of Northampton in 1618, and was ancestor of the present Marquis of Northampton. The Lord Mayor was colloquially known as 'the rich Spencer' to distinguish him from his relative Sir John Spencer of Althorp, whose daughter, Anne, was the stepmother of Lord Compton, and was afterwards married to the Earl of Dorset. Eliza Spencer brought a large fortune to her husband; much of the land around the Charterhouse belonged to her, and Compton Street and Northampton Street in that quarter preserve her titles.

It will be seen from her letter that she expected a full return for her dowry. The letter is not dated, but from internal evidence it must have been written between 1597 and 1611. The allusion to the Lord Chamberlain is obscure. The writer evidently means Thomas Lord Howard of Walden, afterwards Earl of Suffolk, whose son, Theophilus, bore the title of Lord Walden during his father's lifetime. Lord Howard was not Lord Chamberlain but Lord High Treasurer. The reason of Lady Compton's animosity is explained by an entry in the manuscript 'Memorable Accidents,' written by the famous Parliamentary leader, John Pym, and now preserved among the manuscripts of Mr Philip Pleydell Bouverie: 'A.D. 1611. . . . Sir John Spencer the Alderman died. My Lord Compton havinge married his only daughter, oppressed with the greatnes of his sudaine fortunes fell madde. The Erle of Suffolke, havinge begd the keeping of him, would have seized upon his money and jewelles at Islington; my Lord Compton's [step-]mother the Countesse of Dorset, playinge the valiant virago, withstood him, and he was thereby defeated; my Lord Compton, being kept in the Towre a little while, recovered.'

It is certain that Lord Compton could not upbraid his wife with extravagance, for he was himself a notable spendthrift. John Pym says further: 'I was credibly informed by his steward, Mr P., that my Lorde Compton at the first comminge to his great estate after the death of Sir John Spencer, did within lesse than 8 weekes spende £72,000, most in great horses, rich saddles, and playe.' It is stated that 'on 21st April 1628, the Earl [of Northampton] rode to his installation as Knight of the Garter from Salisbury House, in the Strand, to Windsor Castle, with such splendour and gallantry, and exhibited so brilliant a cortége, being attended by nearly one hundred persons, that a vote of thanks was decreed to him by the Chapter of the Order.' He died on 24th June 1630. These notes will enable the reader to understand this remarkable letter:

'MY SWEETE LIFE,—Now I have declared to you my mind for the settling of your state, I suppose that it were best for me to bethinke or consider with myself what allowance were meetest for me. For, considering what care I have had of your estate, and how respectfully I dealt with those, which both by the laws of God, nature, and of civil polity, wit, religion, governm^t, and honesty, you, my dear, are bound to, pray and beseech you to grant me £1600 per annum, quarterly to be paid. Also I would (besides that allowance for my apparell) have £600 added yearly (quarterly to be paid) for the performance of charitable works; and those things I would not, neither will be, accountable for.

'Also I will have three horses for my own saddle, that none shall dare to lend or borrow; none lend but I, none borrow but you. Also I would have two gentlewomen, lest one should be sick or have some other lett, also believe that it is an undecent thing for a gentlewoman to stand mumping alone, when God hath blessed their Lord and Lady with a good estate. Also when I ride ahunting or hawking, or travel from one house to another, I will have them attending; so for either of these said women I must and *will* have for either of them a horse.

'Also I will have six or eight gentlemen; and I will have my two coaches, one lined with velvet, to myself, with four very fair horses; and a coach for my women, lined with sweet cloth, one laced with gold, the other with scarlet, and laced with matched lace and silver, with four good horses. Also I will have two coachmen, one for my own coach, the other for my women. Also at any time when I travel, I will be allowed not only carroches [carts] and spare

horses for me and my women; but I will have such carriages as shall be fitting for all, orderly; not pestering my things with my women's, nor theirs with chamber-maids, nor theirs with wash-maids. Also for laundresses, when I travel, I will have them sent away before, with the carriages, to see all safe; and the chamber-maids I will have go before, with the greens [rushes for the floors] that the chambers may be ready sweet and clean.

'Also, for that it is undecent to crowd up myself with my gentleman usher in my coach, I will have him to have a convenient horse to attend me, either in city or country. And I must have two footmen. And my desire is that you defray all the charges for me. And for myself, besides my yearly allowance, I would have twenty gowns of apparell; six of them excellent good ones, eight of them for the country, and six others of them *very* excellent good ones. Also I would have, to put in my purse, £2000 and £200; and so for you to pay my debts. Also I would have £8000 to buy me jewells, and £4000 to buy me a pearl chain.

'Now, seeing I am so reasonable unto you, I pray you to find my children apparell and their schooling; and also my servants (men and women) their wages. Also I will have my houses furnished, and all my lodging chambers to be suited with all such furniture as is fit; as beds, stools, chairs, suitable cushions, carpets, silver warming-pans, cupboards of plate, fair hangings, and such like; so for my drawing-chambers in all houses, I will have them delicately furnished, both with

hangings, couch, canopy, glass, carpet, chairs, cushions, and all things thereunto belonging.

'Also my desire is that you would pay all my debts, build Ashby House, and purchase lands; and lend no money (as you love God) to the Lord Chamberlain, who would have all; perhaps your life from you. Remember his son, Lord Walden, what entertainment he gave when you were at the Tilt-yard. If you were dead, he said he would be a husband, a father, a brother, and he said he would marry me. I protest I grieve to see the poor man have so little wit and honesty, to use his friend so vilely. Also he fed me with untruths concerning the Charterhouse; but that is the least; he wished me much harm; you know him. God keep you and me from such as he is.

'So now that I have declared to you what I would have, and what that is that I would not have, I pray that when you be an Earl, to allow me £1000 more than I now desire, and double attendance.—Your loving Wife,

ELIZA COMPTON.'

The children of the marriage of Lord Compton and Eliza Spencer were one son and two daughters. The son, Spencer Compton, second Earl of Northampton, was a distinguished Cavalier, and fell at the battle of Hopton Heath in 1642. One daughter was married to Robert Earl of Nithsdale, and another to the first Marquis of Clanricarde. Ashby House, referred to in the letter, is now Castle Ashby, one of the seats of the present Marquis of Northampton.

SOME HISTORIC DIAMONDS.



THE diamond, for a long time considered the most precious of gems, has been known from early antiquity; but, acknowledged as it is on all hands to be supreme in beauty, the manner of its production remains to this day one of the secrets of Nature's laboratory.

Unquestionably, brilliant objects have ever proved wonderfully fascinating to men, and when we reflect on this instinctive taste we cannot be surprised at their fondness for the diamond. But it is to the cutter we are indebted for the revelation of its loveliness and the development of that radiance which distinguishes it from all other gems. In early times the diamond was worn *rough* or polished only on its upper surface, and it was in this form it was used to decorate temples, goblets, crowns, &c. These stones, called *naïfes*, are still infinitely preferred to any others by the natives of India. Any one who may have seen some of the presents received by the Prince

of Wales in the course of his Indian tour will recall to mind how many of the jewels were in an uncut state, and realise what a very different appearance diamonds present when so set from what they do when forming part of some dazzlingly beautiful and glittering ornament such as is worn by ladies of our own time.

Diamonds are of varied hues, and, according to an old writer, 'seem to take pleasure in assuming in turn the colours proper to other gems;' but those considered the most perfect and most esteemed are colourless like water. One of the finest of coloured specimens in Europe is the famous blue 'Hope' diamond. The King of Saxony possesses a magnificent green one, which forms the button of his state hat. But the most perfect collection of coloured diamonds is in the museum at Vienna, and is in the form of a bouquet, the different flowers being composed of diamonds the same colour as the blooms they represent. These stones were collected by one Virgil von Helmreich, a Tyrolese, who had

passed many years in Brazil among the diamond-mines.

From the earliest moment of its discovery it would appear as if the diamond quickened the wits of its possessor and awakened a thirst for gain. Even the poor slaves who worked in the mines occasionally managed to elude the keen vigilance of the overseer, for we are told by Tavernier how, when he was making a tour through the Indian diamond-mines, he saw one poor creature conceal a stone of considerable size by forcing it into the corner of one of his eyes in such a way as to effectually hide it.

Although diamonds have played an important part in modern history, we do not hear of any in ancient times of special note, with the exception of that of Nerva, which he presented to Trajan on recognising him as his colleague, and which the latter afterwards gave to Hadrian as a reward for his services in the Dacian war, thus tacitly appointing him his successor. Diamonds of large size have always been exceedingly rare; and it is from Asia, the cradle of luxury and wealth, that most of those stones which have become famous have been derived.

The crown of England is extremely rich in beautiful diamonds; but the 'Koh-i-nûr,' or 'Mountain of Light,' takes the highest rank as its principal treasure. This wonderful stone, said to have been discovered in the Godavery River five thousand years ago, was the talisman of India for many centuries, and, according to Hindu legend, was worn by Karna, one of the heroes in the 'great war' which forms the subject of the epic poem *Mahabharata*. There is little doubt that it is the same diamond mentioned by the Sultan Baber as having belonged to Ala-ed-din, who ruled over a portion of Hindustan from 1288 to 1301; and it is very generally believed that the 'Koh-i-nûr' was amongst the jewels shown to Tavernier by Aurungzebe in 1665.

After many vicissitudes the 'Koh-i-nûr' found its way into the Lahore treasury, where it remained until the annexation of the Punjab by the British Government in 1849, when it was taken possession of by the civil authorities under the condition that all State property should be confiscated by the East India Company, and that the 'Koh-i-nûr' should be presented to the Queen. It was sent by Lord Dalhousie to England in the charge of two officers, and presented, as stipulated, to the Queen on the 3d of June 1850, and exhibited in the first great Exhibition the following year. Its weight was 186 $\frac{1}{2}$ carats, but it did not then present its now brilliant appearance. It had been badly cut by the natives in India; and the late Prince Consort, who took great interest in the gem, after due consultation, and acting on the advice of Sir David Brewster, decided that it should be recut. This was accordingly done, at a cost of £8000, the operation being completed

in thirty-eight days; but the result was not entirely satisfactory, Prince Albert openly expressing his disappointment.

The 'Koh-i-nûr' now weighs 106 $\frac{1}{4}$ carats, having lost eighty carats in the recutting. It is preserved in Windsor Castle, a model of the stone being kept with the regalia in the jewel-room of the Tower, and is valued at £140,000. It is neither the most brilliant nor yet the largest diamond in existence, but the most interesting because of its connection with our own Royal House, and on account of the romantic incidents associated with it.

The 'Braganza,' in the possession of the King of Portugal, is unquestionably the largest diamond of which there is any record. Grave doubts are, however, entertained as to whether the stone is really a diamond or only a white topaz. As it is still in an uncut state, and is jealously guarded in the Portuguese treasury, no one being permitted to examine it, there has never been an opportunity of arriving at a definite conclusion. It weighs 1680 carats, is said to be the size of a hen's egg, and, 'according to the method of calculation by Jeffries,' its value will be, in its present form, £5,644,800. Murray tells us that 'Don John VI. had a hole drilled in it, and wore it round his neck on gala days.'

The discovery of this diamond is generally fixed about the year 1798, and there is a most interesting account of it in Mawe's *Travels in Brazil*, which we cannot do better than give in his own words: 'Three men (elsewhere named Antonio de Sousa, José Felix Gomez, and Thomas de Sousa), having been found guilty of high crimes, were banished into the interior, and ordered not to approach any of the capital towns, or to remain in civilised society, on pain of perpetual imprisonment. Driven by this hard sentence into the most unfrequented part of the country, they endeavoured to explore new mines or new productions, in the hope that, sooner or later, they might have the good fortune to make some important discovery which would obtain a reversal of their own sentence, and enable them to regain their station in society. They wandered about in this neighbourhood, making frequent searches in its various mines, for more than six years. At length they by hazard made some trials in the river Abaité, at a time when its waters were so low that a part of its bed was left exposed. Here, while searching and washing for gold, they had the good fortune to find a diamond nearly an ounce in weight. Elated by this providential discovery, which at first they could scarcely believe to be real, yet hesitating between a dread of the vigorous laws relating to diamonds and a hope of regaining their liberty, they consulted a clergyman, who advised them to trust to the mercy of the State, and accompanied them to Villa Rica, where he procured them access to the governor. They

threw themselves at his feet, and delivered to him the invaluable gem on which their hopes rested, relating all the circumstances connected with it. The Governor, astonished at its magnitude, could not trust the evidence of his senses, but called the officers of the establishment to decide whether it was a diamond, who set the matter beyond all doubt. Being thus by the most strange and unforeseen accident put in the possession of the largest diamond ever found in America, he thought proper to suspend the sentence of the men as a reward for their having delivered it to him. The gem was sent to Rio de Janeiro, from whence a frigate was despatched with it to Lisbon, whither the clergyman was also sent to make the proper representations respecting it. The sovereign confirmed the pardon of the delinquents, and bestowed some preferment on the holy father.'

Another celebrated diamond is one in the possession of the Sultan of Matan, in the island of Borneo. This stone is also uncut and weighs 367 carats. So great is the value its owner attaches to it, and so keen his dread of being deprived of this symbol of royalty, that when strangers desire to see the gem they are shown only a model in crystal. On one occasion, at the beginning of the century, the Governor of Batavia offered in exchange for the diamond the sum of £31,000, two large ships with their full equipment, and a quantity of ammunition; but neither entreaties nor bribes would induce the rajah to part with it. The value of the stone has been estimated at £269,378.

The crown of Russia is at present presumably the richest in diamonds. Besides several valuable collections in the imperial Treasury there are three crowns entirely composed of these stones. That of Ivan Alexiowitch contains 881, that of Peter the Great 847, and that of Catharine II. 2536. One of its most remarkable diamonds is the 'Orloff,' now set in the top of the imperial sceptre, and on this account sometimes called the 'Sceptre' diamond. The history of this stone has been much mixed up with that of the 'Moon of the Mountain,' another great diamond in the possession of the Czar. The most authentic account appears to be that it formed one of the eyes of the Hindu god Sri-Ranga, to whom was dedicated a magnificent temple situated on a fortified island in Mysore. A French deserter from the Indian service, who had been at work in the neighbourhood of this temple, hearing of the idol's *beaux yeux*, determined to become their possessor. As no Christians were permitted within the precincts of the pagoda, he, in order to gain the confidence of the priests, became a devotee, and so ingratiated himself with the Brahmins that they confided to him the guardianship of the inner shrine, which contained the idol. Watching his opportunity, one stormy night he succeeded in forcing one of the eyes out of its socket, and

fled with it to Madras, where he sold the gem to an English sea-captain for £2000, who in turn disposed of it to a Jew for £12,000. From him it was purchased by Khojeh, a Persian merchant, who at Amsterdam, when on his way from England to Russia, met Prince Orloff. This prince, in order to regain the favour of Catharine II., under whose displeasure he had fallen, bought the gem from the merchant for the sum of £90,000 and an annuity of £4000, and presented it to his imperial mistress, who had previously declined the purchase as too costly, but now accepted this truly royal gift from her illustrious subject. The 'Orloff' diamond weighs 194 carats, and its estimated value is £369,800. In size it ranks first amongst European gems, and in beauty yields the palm to the 'Regent' only. It is said that Wilkie Collins's novel *The Moonstone* was suggested by this stone.

But unquestionably the 'Pitt,' or 'Regent,' as it was afterwards called, is the most perfect brilliant in existence, and its history is also very remarkable. It is said to have been found by a slave in the Parteen mines in 1701, who, to retain his treasure, cut a hole in the calf of his leg, in which he concealed it, although it is more probable he secreted it among the bandages. The slave escaped to the coast with his 'find,' where he encountered an English skipper, whom he made his confidant, offering, indeed, to bestow upon him the stone in return for his liberty. The mariner, apparently consenting to the slave's proposal, took him out to sea, and when there drowned him after obtaining possession of the diamond. Disposing of the gem to a diamond merchant for £1000, it is said the man afterwards hanged himself in a fit of remorse. Mr Pitt, Governor of Fort St George, and great-grandfather of the illustrious William Pitt, became the next possessor of this valuable stone, weighing 410 carats, for £20,000. He sent it to London, where he had it very skilfully cut at a cost of £5000, the process occupying two years. Pitt appears to have found his diamond no very enviable possession, for, after refuting the calumnies of his enemies, who had charged him with having obtained it by unfair means, he was so haunted by the fear of being robbed that he never slept two nights consecutively under the same roof, never gave notice of his arrival in or departure from town, and went about mysteriously disguised. He must necessarily have felt greatly relieved when he parted with the diamond to the Duc d'Orleans, regent during the minority of Louis XV., king of France, in 1717, for the sum of £135,000.

With the money so obtained the ex-governor restored the fortunes of his ancient house. After this the 'Regent' became identified with the fortunes of France, and passed through many revolutions and literally through many hands, for, during the Reign of Terror it was carefully

chained and guarded by gendarmes, exposed to the public, and any poor half-starved creature might hold it for a few seconds. At the robbery of the Garde Mobile the 'Regent' was stolen, with the whole of the French regalia; but the hiding-place was revealed by one of the robbers, and it was found buried in the Allée des Veuves. Napoleon I. pledged it to the Dutch Government in order to raise money, of which he was greatly in need, and after its redemption appears to have worn it in the handle of his sword. Barbot tells us it was exhibited amongst the crown jewels at the Paris Exhibition of 1855, and he justly regards it as the most conspicuous gem in the now disused crown of France, which contains eight other diamonds and is by far the richest in the world. In the cutting the 'Regent' was reduced to 136½ carats, and was in 1791 declared to be worth £480,000.

It may here be mentioned that the Brazilian crown diamonds were valued at more than £4,000,000. One of the most important was estimated at £34,800, and adorns the handle of a cane. Brazil also produced the twenty diamonds which compose the twenty buttons of the doublet of ceremony of Joseph I., each valued at £5000.

The superb stone named the 'Star of the South' was found by a poor negress in 1853, who, according to the prevailing custom in Brazil, was granted her freedom as a reward and a pension for life. It was sold by her master for the ridiculously low sum of £3000. This diamond in the rough weighed 254½ carats, but was reduced in the cutting to 125. It became the property of a Parisian syndicate, who sold it to the late Gaikwar of Baroda. It will be remembered this prince was deposed for attempting to kill the British resident, Colonel Phayre, by means of diamond dust.

The 'Pigott' was formerly one of the famous diamonds. We say *was* advisedly for the stone is no longer in existence. It was nevertheless in Lord Pigott's possession when he quitted Madras to visit England in 1775. How he acquired the jewel is not known; but as he acknowledged to having received a few presents 'of a trifling value' from some of the native princes, there is but little doubt that this diamond was among the number. It could scarcely be termed a 'trifle,' as Mawe speaks of it as being worth £40,000; and it is known to have been bought by a young man for £30,000 in a public lottery in 1801, who afterwards resold it at a very low price. In the year 1818 it was in the hands of a firm of City jewellers, Messrs Rundle & Bridge, who eventually sold it to Ali Pasha. With him it met with a tragic end, and Mr R. W. Murray describes the incident as follows, after saying that its owner always wore it in a green silk purse attached to his girdle: 'When Ali Pasha was mortally wounded by Reshid Pasha he immediately retired to his

divan, and desired that his favourite wife, Vasilika, should be poisoned. He then gave the diamond to Captain D'Anglas, with an order that it should be crushed to powder in his presence, which was forthwith obeyed, and the beautiful gem utterly destroyed.' So perished one of the finest of historical diamonds.

The next diamond we will notice is the renowned 'Sancy,' which was bought at Constantinople in the year 1570 by a M. de Sanci, the French ambassador at the Porte, for a large sum. This gentleman appears to have been induced by Henry III. to lend him his diamond, ostensibly for the purpose of raising money upon it. But it does not appear as if Henry ever really parted with the jewel, for the Duc de Sully tells us that he wore, to conceal his baldness, a little turban on his head—his 'toque,' as it was called—which was ornamented in front with a very large diamond. It must afterwards have been returned to its original owner, for De Sanci is again credited with lending it to Henry IV. of Navarre, for the same purpose of raising money, and there is a most romantic story attached to its transmissions. The messenger who had been entrusted with the stone to convey it to the king disappeared, and some time elapsed before it was discovered he had been waylaid, murdered, and presumably robbed. M. de Sanci, who had entire confidence in his servant, and felt convinced he would not lightly give up his charge, caused the forest where the deed was committed to be searched; and the body being found and disembowelled, the diamond came to light, the faithful valet having swallowed it to prevent its falling into the hands of the thieves. Whether this story be true or not, there is a specially interesting document which shows that the stone must have been acquired by the Crown of England some time between the years 1599 and 1600. This is the *Inventory of the Jewels in the Tower of London*, March 22, 1605, in a passage of which the 'Mirror of Great Britain,' a famous crown-jewel, is thus described: 'A great and ryche jewell of golde, called the "Myrror of Greate Brytayne," conteyninge one verie fayre table-diamond, one verie fayre table-ruby, twoe other lardge diamondes, cut lozengewise, the one of them called the "Stone of the letter H of Scotlande," garnysed with smalle diamondes, twoe rounde perles, fixed, and One Faire Diamonde, Cutt in Fauccettes; bought of Sauncey.' The next mention of the diamond is its presentation by Queen Henrietta Maria, consort of Charles I., to the Earl of Worcester, in return for his valuable services to the House of Stuart; and later, that it was sold about the year 1695 by James II. to Louis XIV. for £25,000. It was lost to the French nation in the robbery of the Garde Mobile at the same time that the 'Regent' disappeared, in September 1792, but *was* afterwards discovered in the hands of the Monte de Piété,

or State pawning establishment. In 1865 it was purchased by Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy of Bombay, but did not remain long in the East, for it was exhibited at the Paris Exhibition of 1867. It afterwards became the property of the Maharajah of Puttiala, upon whose turban it shone at the Grand Durbar held during the Prince of Wales's tour in India, and now belongs to Mr Astor, whose late wife generally wore it when she attended the Queen's Drawing-Room.

In this brief account of some of the world's most famous diamonds the 'Star of South Africa,' or Dudley diamond, must not be omitted, as its discovery is practically the history of the commencement of diamond-mining in South Africa. We will give the story in Mr Murray's words, taken from his papers in the *Society of Arts Journal*, March 18, 1881. In speaking of Albania—a portion of the Griqua territory—he says: 'One of the colonists who had helped to form the settlement was a Mr Van Niekirk. Mr O'Reilly, who was returning from the interior to Colesberg, called upon Van Niekirk, and remained with him for the night. In the course of the evening one of Van Niekirk's children, a little girl, was playing on the floor with some of the pretty pebbles which are common in the neighbourhood of the Vaal River. Mr O'Reilly's attention was directed to one of the stones which threw out a very strong light, to which Mr O'Reilly's eyes had been unaccustomed. He took it up from the floor and offered to buy it, asking what Van Niekirk would take for it. The simple-minded Boer could not understand what the meaning of purchasing a stone could be, and he said he would take no money for it, but that, if Mr O'Reilly had a mind to take it, he could have it.'

'The colonial trader is generally represented as an individual of a most designing and unscrupulous kind; but there are men amongst them whose fair dealing and high character would stand comparison with that of any men in the world, and no men have a better footing amongst the Boers than the old-established traders. Mr O'Reilly is one of them. He told Van Niekirk that he believed it to be a precious stone, and of value; he would, therefore, not take it for nothing. It was ultimately agreed between them that O'Reilly should take the stone, ascertain its value, and, if found to be a diamond, as O'Reilly suspected it was, that it should be sold, and the money divided between them. Mr O'Reilly took the stone to Colesberg, where he showed it, and he confidently stated to the people he met at the bar of the hotel that it was a diamond. He wrote his

initials on the window-pane and cut a tumbler with the stone, and was laughed at for his alleged foolishness, as many a discoverer had been before him. One of the company took the stone out of O'Reilly's hands and threw it into the street. It was a narrow chance that the stone was found again; and had it not been it is quite a question whether the diamond-fields of South Africa would yet or ever have been discovered in our day. However, the stone was found, and O'Reilly sent it to Grahamstown, to Dr Atherston, to be tested; and the Doctor and Bishop Richards, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Grahamstown (one of the most scientific men in South Africa), both pronounced it to be a diamond of twenty-two and a half carats. From Grahamstown the stone was sent to the then Colonial Secretary, the Honourable Richard Southey, afterwards Lieutenant-Governor of Griqualand West, who submitted the stone to the best authorities at hand, and they all decided it to be a diamond. It was then forwarded to the Queen's jewellers, Messrs Hunt & Roskell, who confirmed the decisions obtained in the colony, and valued the stone at £500. . . . This led to a great deal of excitement throughout the country. Small diamonds were brought in by the natives. Then flashed the startling intelligence through the country that a diamond of over eighty-three carats had been discovered. This turned out to be true, and this is how it came about. Mr Van Niekirk, from whom Mr O'Reilly obtained the first stone, hearing that it had turned out to be a diamond, remembered that he had seen one of a similar character in the possession of a native, and set out to find it. A Boer is not long in getting hold of a native when he wants him, and Van Niekirk soon had his man. The native had kept the stone, and Van Niekirk gave him nearly all he possessed for it—about five hundred sheep, horses, &c.; but, at whatever the price, he obtained the stone, and set off with it to Messrs Lillienfeld Brothers, of Hope Town, merchants of long standing in South Africa, and now represented in Hatton-Garden. They purchased the stone for £11,200, and christened it the "Star of South Africa," forwarded it to England, and it ultimately became the property of the Countess of Dudley, who purchased it of Messrs Hunt & Roskell.' It was reduced in the cutting to forty-six and a half carats.

Many writers had suggested that in all probability diamonds would be discovered in South Africa; but it was not until March 1867 that the first Cape diamond was found; and since then the number of fine stones it has produced has been quite unexampled in the history of diamond-mining.



MEDICAL EXAMINATION FOR LIFE INSURANCE.

IT is an awesome business, examination for a life insurance office at the hands of its medical man. Most natures resent personalities. In a drawing-room, among one's own friends, it is embarrassing to be suddenly singled out—divided from the flock—while the self-constituted historian of the party narrates some joke against or some feat favourable to one's reputation. For or against is not the point; it is the isolation that irks.

Small wonder then that—formidable necessity—the medical examiner is often encountered with shrinking. With your wit or enterprise he has nothing to do—not he. You may be the most plausible person in the provinces, but on him your arts will be wasted.

With genial smile and sympathetic manner veiling his keen, cold intellect, he is going to size you up. He intends to find out what sort of people your ancestors were, what your relations are, and, most important of all, what you are yourself.

Like the man who goes round tapping the wheels of a newly arrived train, he is on the lookout for flaws.

'How's your liver?' asked Mr Cattermole of the Rev. Robert Spalding: you will have to answer a lot more questions before Æsculapius lets you go. Not only is he concerned with you then and there as you stand before him, but you must out with your past records, your status moral and social must be glanced over, the performances of your sires go into the balance, and everything has to be properly weighed in order to get a satisfactory answer to the question, 'What is your expectation of life?'

For you who read and I who write are really most complex people. We may inherit all sorts of inconvenient tendencies from our ancestors; and insurance companies are wide awake to the fact that the sins of the fathers are visited upon their children.

Before, then, the doctor focuses his specially developed faculty for research upon the actual person of the would-be policy-holder who has ventured into his sanctum, he concerns himself mainly with two questions which touch his client nearly—family history and personal history.

The usual questions asked under the head of family history relate to consumption, cancer, gout, rheumatism, and insanity. Of these consumption and cancer are the most important.

A history of consumption among one's ancestors must be always an unpleasant thing; but for life insurance purposes it presents varying degrees of significance. We need not go deeply into the question. It is obvious, however, that a man whose father and mother both suffered from con-

sumption would have to run a big risk before he made old bones. If only one of his parents was affected, the other being healthy, his chances of long life would be much greater. And so on. The changes may be rung in several ways. To take just one more instance, suppose that the candidate's mother had died of consumption, and all his brothers and sisters were dead also, then, *ceteris paribus*, his chance of long life would not be so good as that of a man whose mother only had so died, his brothers and sisters still being alive and in fair health.

The reason of this is not far to seek.

Presumably if two healthy people marry, their offspring will be healthy. The children of two delicate parents are most unlikely to be robust. But if a person of sound and robust constitution take unto himself or herself a delicate partner for life, then it remains for the offspring to show how far they for their part are biassed in the direction of health or disease by the healthy or unhealthy parent. Healthy brothers and sisters argues that the nature of the strong parent dominates the children, and *vice versa*.

But there is another element concerned in the calculation of the chances of a candidate with a phthisical family history. This is his age. Contrary to what one would naturally expect, the older he is (of course within limits) the more likely he is to be regarded favourably. Persons under thirty are eyed with suspicion. And for this reason, that consumption is a disease most fatal during the opening years of life. Of such importance is age, that suppose a man, forty, of good physique, with well-developed chest and a good past record, were to present himself for examination, even though both his parents and all his brothers and sisters had died of consumption, he would probably be accepted on his own merits. He would be regarded as an example of the survival of the fittest. And justly so, for the demon of hereditary taint occasionally has pity and lets a favoured few slip through his iron fingers.

A family history of cancer, on the other hand, acquires graver significance with every added year of life; and a candidate of fifty or over, two or more of whose family had died from this cause, would hardly find an enthusiastic reception in insurance circles.

Gout on both sides is a bad thing for the offspring. There can be no question that people suffering from hereditary gout are not really satisfactory lives. Before they are thirty-five the cloven hoof shows itself. They exhibit a general want of tone. Their lives are sluggish, or they catch cold easily, and having caught cold, shake it off with difficulty; their nervous systems may be impressionable, and they become easily overstrung.

and easily depressed; or, again, they may suffer from various skin troubles.

But the yoke of hereditary gout is a light one compared with that of consumption or cancer.

Now suppose the happy candidate is able so far to plead not guilty, there still remain two minor items on the charge-sheet of hereditary iniquity. There are the 'breaking-down age' of the family, and its 'liability to catch disease.'

Some families, generation after generation, break down comparatively young. Up to a certain age no fault can be found with them. At fifty-five, maybe, they compare favourably with their contemporaries; but then in a year or two, with startling suddenness, they become worn out. Yet a little while and they die. It is a fine thing to come of a long-lived stock.

The second point is not so important. The fact remains, however, that in particular families there is manifested a remarkable readiness to catch infectious diseases.

In the case of the general public, especially in these days of sanitary law, this could hardly count. But should the applicant be a nurse or a medical man the point deserves notice.

So far we have dealt with those things over which the person himself under consideration has had no control. These are the qualities with which he was endowed from the beginning. Or if we may be allowed to adopt a time-honoured metaphor whereby we poor mortals are likened unto ships sailing over the waters of life, then the particular we who are writing have so far posed as cunning brokers. We have not trusted to outside appearances. A coat of paint hides nothing from our eyes. We required to know a number of things about the vessel we are appraising; and so far we have not done so badly. We have found out from what forests the timber came, be it oak or pine; we know who did the steel and iron work, and what firm put in the machinery. So far so good. If only the vessel has had fair usage we know within a very small margin what we are doing with our money. But has the vessel had fair usage?

That we must find out; and so in plain English we now come to consider the past record of the candidate himself.

How has he fared? Are his timbers threatened with the dry-rot of acquired consumption; has his delicate and originally beautifully adjusted machinery been crippled by gout or rheumatism; or, dread question, has his whole fabric ever, even for a moment, grounded upon the cruel reef of insanity?

Many diseases are unimportant in their nature and transient as to their effects. But these four, consumption, gout, rheumatism, and insanity, leave their mark.

Of course a candidate suffering from consumption at the time of medical examination would

necessarily be rejected. But suppose that in time past he had suffered from it—suppose, say ten years ago, he had lived through an attack of blood-spitting, cough, and loss of flesh, and that since then, for the last ten years, he had been in good health, and there were no active mischief now at the present moment discoverable, and the old damage done was small, then he might be accepted with an increased premium. If he were over thirty-five, age would be in his favour.

Gout has not until lately received the attention it deserves at the hands of insurance societies. Undoubtedly the degenerative tissue changes it threatens to the vital organs of the body handicap gravely the later years of life. A modern authority lays it down as a law, that one single attack of acute and undoubted gout, no matter how slight, should mean an additional three years to the premium.

The results of rheumatism are often disastrous. A German authority on diseases of the heart says that twenty-five per cent. of all cases of rheumatic fever come out of the struggle with a permanently disabled heart. But, granted one attack of acute rheumatism, the chances of another are at hand. If, therefore, a candidate has had one attack, though his heart came off scot-free, the probabilities of another attack are as a very dagger threatening that heart again.

For this reason one marked attack of rheumatic fever, laying the sufferer up for from two to three months, demands an addition of seven years at the age of thirty. With regard to insanity things are not yet so definitely arranged. In all probability a candidate who had once been insane would find it necessary to accept whatever terms any particular office might like to offer.

A recent history of asthma or epilepsy would in all probability lead to rejection; but if some years had elapsed since the last attack, and no mark had been left on the constitution, the life might be accepted with an addition.

But through all this weary list of uncomfortable possibilities our candidate stands firm. He has nothing to do with these things. His hereditary and personal records are without flaw. Then in all probability he is well built and of sound constitution.

Granted good timber went to the making of the ship; granted that she has so far voyaged scatheless, it is almost a foregone conclusion that we shall find her built on the right lines.

So it comes to this, that without even ever having seen any particular candidate, but with a faithful record of these two things—family and personal history—before him, the medical examiner can tell whether or not that candidate is likely to be a robust, well-built man.

For the guidance of examiners, authorities on the subject have fixed certain standards to which healthy candidates should conform.

The following table sets forth what should be the correct weight and chest measurement of a man aged thirty for any height in inches between five feet and six feet one inch :

Height.		Standard Weight.			Circumference of Chest—Medium.
Ft.	In.	St.	Lb.	Lb.	In.
5	0	8	0	= 112	33½
5	1	8	4	= 116	34
5	2	9	0	= 126	35
5	3	9	7	= 133	35½
5	4	9	13	= 139	36
5	5	10	2	= 142	37
5	6	10	5	= 145	37½
5	7	10	8	= 148	38
5	8	11	1	= 155	38½
5	9	11	8	= 162	39
5	10	12	1	= 169	39½
5	11	12	6	= 174	40
6	0	12	10	= 178	40½
6	1	13	0	= 182	41

The weight at any other age may be found with sufficient accuracy by adding or deducting three-fourths of a pound for each year according as the candidate is over or under thirty. It is considered allowable for a candidate to vary fifteen per cent. under or above the standard weight. An increase of even twenty to twenty-five per cent. does not seem to be of importance ; but very heavy people are liable to diseases of the heart, brain, and liver ; and, on the other hand, among very spare people the mortality from wasting diseases is high.

The chest should be of good shape, neither flat nor barrel-shaped ; and with a full inspiration it should expand from one and a half inch to two inches. The chest measurements given in the table are for a medium-sized chest. The tape should go under the shoulder-blades and over the breasts. Of course different types of constitution vary somewhat in build, and for this reason some slight latitude in chest girth may be allowed ; but a good chest should conform in size very nearly to the foregoing table.

As long as the abdomen does not exceed the chest in measurement it calls for no remark ; but a round stomach is anatomically weak.

We will suppose, then, that our candidate is thirty years old, stands five feet nine inches high, weighs eleven stone eight pounds, and is thirty-nine inches round the chest. He is, moreover, a man whose occupation is healthy, lives in the country, and is in easy circumstances. The very sight of him will rejoice the eyes of any medical examiner. Insurance companies will extend to him an exceedingly cordial welcome. And the reason is this : he will in all probability live to be an old man. His height alone is in his favour. Men of moderate height, from five feet six inches to five feet nine inches, are, as a class, more sturdy than their taller brethren. For great height means a long journey to the circulating blood and increased strain on the heart.

A man's occupation, too, is of much moment. Butchers, bakers, plumbers, and men engaged in the sale of alcoholic liquors show a high rate of mortality. On the other hand, clergymen, as a rule, live long lives.

We have endeavoured to show, in a cursory manner, the lines upon which a medical man goes when conducting his examination for medical insurance purposes. And from the above any one can get a rough idea of his chances of being accepted at an ordinary or increased premium.

In most cases, from the doctor's point of view, the point is quickly decided. But circumstances do arise which call for the most careful weighing of pros and cons.

At the risk of wearying our reader let us cite just one instance.

Suppose a candidate to have had a tuberculous history, but at the moment of, and for several years prior to, the examination he has been in fairly good health ; suppose, in short, that in the physician's mind he hovers on the borderland between acceptance at an increased premium and rejection at any price. Then items coming under the head of environment will, in all probability, decide his fate.

Is he married ? What are his means ? What is his occupation ?

Marriage, easy circumstances, and a healthy occupation are favourable to long life. If the doubtful candidate were a farmer and comfortably off, he would run less risk of rejection than if he were a clerk or baker.

In conclusion we wish to express a hope that those of our readers who retire forthwith to their bedrooms in the company of a measuring-tape will find, on reference to the table given above, that their chests come up to the required standard. For this alone is wonderfully reassuring.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

THE Old Year goes away : her eyes are sad—

The eyes of one who hopes or fears no more.

Snow is upon her hair ; gray mists have clad

A form the vesture of the spring which wore.

The new buds quicken now beneath the clay ;

But not for her—the Old Year goes away.

The New Year enters in : a happy child,

Who looks for flowers to fill her outstretched hand,

And knows not fear although the winds be wild.

Soon shall the birds be singing in the land,

On the young leaves the patter of soft rain,

And violets ope—the New Year comes again.

So with this mortal life : now young, now old,

A spring which never dreams of frost and snow,

Summer and autumn—then the tale is told ;

With tired step, in wintry days we go.

God grant a waking on some happier shore,

Where the lost youth and joy come back once more !

MARY GORGES.



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

SECULAR PROPHECIES.

LIKE a good many other things, prophecies of all sorts are subjected to the 'explaining away' process. They are coincidences, deductions—obvious to a thinking mind—from given data, 'lucky shots' wrapped in such ambiguous and mystifying verbiage that they may mean anything. To this last category belong doubtless many of the prophecies attributed to Merlin, to Nostradamus, to Mother Shipton, and others, following the lines laid down in the Sibylline utterances. But, on the other hand, it must be admitted that there are prophecies recorded which are quite 'to the purpose—easy things to understand.' Historians tell us that the Emperor Diocletian had his future glory foretold by a Druidess when he was but a simple soldier; one of the same weird sisterhood warned Alexander Severus of his approaching fate. On the day before the Red King met his tragic death in the New Forest, the monk Fulcherd, preaching at Gloucester, used the significant phrase, 'The libertine shall not always rule: the bow of divine vengeance is bent on the reprobate, and the swift arrow is taken from the quiver, ready to wound.' When the Dean and Chapter of Thetford were seeking approval in the *Sortes Biblicæ* for the election of their bishop, the passage indicated was: 'Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.' They recognised the appropriateness of the rede when the profligate Losinga was forced upon them. Losinga, informed perhaps of the ominous occurrence, determined, half in mockery, to test the *Sortes* for himself. The result was even more conclusive. 'Friend, wherefore art thou come?' was the solemn passage that confronted him; and rumour has it that from that day he became a pattern bishop. 'Holy men at their death have good inspiration,' we know on the authority of pretty Nerissa. The epithet scarcely applies to William the Conqueror, that 'stark' man to friend and foe; but it was either an inspiration or paternal insight which made him prophesy

his third son's future. 'What good is this money to me?' asked the discontented Henry. 'Be patient, my son,' was the prescient reply, 'and thou shalt inherit the fortunes of thy brothers.' Unconsciously, doubtless, the Conqueror was but confirming the still older rune of Merlin, who foretold the reign of Beauclerc. 'After two dragons the Lion of Justice shall come, at whose roaring the Gallic towers and island serpents shall tremble.' If to us of to-day the prophecy does not seem too perspicuous, it is historical fact that his subjects considered it to refer to Henry I.—just as in the next reign but one Eleanor of Aquitaine was identified with Merlin's 'double eagle,' that 'destructive eagle who should rejoice in her third nestling,' her favourite Richard. Mage Merlin, too, was credited with foretelling the birth of Edward of Carnarvon and the devolution of the crown to the Lancastrians.

Peter the Hermit, speaking three days before the Feast, prophesied that before Ascension Day John would have ceased to reign; and within the time named the king had yielded the imperial crown of England to the papal legate. Shakespeare has made us familiar with the prophecy on which Henry IV. relied—namely, that he should die in Jerusalem—and with its fulfilment in his decease in the Jerusalem Chamber; and a goodly list might be made of oracular utterances which in their accomplishment have 'kept the word of promise to the ear and broken it to the sense.' Pope Sylvester received a similar assurance, and he died in a church named after the Holy City in Rome; the Duke of Somerset—this incident, too, is recorded by Shakespeare—had been warned by Jourdain to fear danger 'where castles mounted stand,' and he died at an inn at St Albans whose sign, the Castle, was hung on high. The famous Michael Scot prophesied that Frederick II. would die near the 'iron gates in a town named after Flora.' It was thought that this pointed to Florence, but the emperor died in the castle of Fiorentino, in a room built on the site of an old gate of which the iron stanchions

still remained. The same famous wizard, it may be mentioned, is said to have foretold the exact manner of his own death—by a blow from a stone received in church; and one day when he was hearing mass a stone ornament from the roof became dislodged, and, falling on his head, killed him on the spot. It is believed to have been in consequence of a vagrant prophecy that Henry V. was so anxious that the birth of his heir should take place anywhere but at Windsor. When he was informed that Catharine had neglected to comply with his request, with the result that her accouchement took place at the inhibited castle, he assumed the mantle of prophecy himself:

I, Henry born at Monmouth,
Shall small time reign and much get;
But Henry of Windsor shall long reign and lose all;

and it must be admitted that the rune was amply fulfilled. Perhaps it was intelligent prescience rather than prophetic afflatus which made this same Henry of Windsor declare of young Henry of Richmond when quite a youth, 'This pretty boy will wear the garland in peace for which we so sinfully contend;' but, if so, it was prescience of a very high order, considering the position of dynastic affairs when the words were spoken.

Then there was the prophecy, which Shakespeare makes 'false, fleeting, perjured Clarence' refer to, that Edward IV.'s issue should be disinherited by some one whose name began with 'G.' The prediction was, as is well known, fulfilled by Richard of Gloucester; though, according to the tragedy, Clarence himself was thought by the king to be pointed at, his Christian name being George. Of Richard Crookback, too, a prophecy is recorded. Before the battle of Bosworth he rode out of Leicester in all the pomp and circumstance of war. As he crossed the bridge his foot struck against a wooden projection. Whereupon a beggar by the wayside was heard to say, 'His head shall strike against that very pile as he returns to-night;' and when the dead body of the vanquished king was brought back to Leicester, flung across the saddle of Rouge Sanglier, the swaying head struck against that piece of wood.

In the reign of Henry VIII., Friar Hopkins prophesied that the king would return with glory from France, but that the king of Scotland, should he cross the border, would never revisit his dominions. A more awesome prediction with regard to Henry is credited to Friar Peyto. In a sermon preached when the king's church spoliation was at its height, the preacher boldly compared the terrible Henry to Ahab, and declared that as it was with the Jewish monarch so should it be with him: the dogs should lick his blood. And it came to pass that when the 'bloat-king' had passed to his account, his coffin rested for a night, unwatched, 'among the broken walls of Sion.' Owing to the rough journey, or

the condition of the body, the coffin had burst, and when the bearers came for it in the morning, beneath the trestles were dogs licking up the blood that had leaked through.

The mention of James of Scotland in connection with Flodden recalls the fact that a more noteworthy seer than Nicholas Hopkins had foretold the disaster. Thomas the Rhymer—True Thomas of Ercildoune—had, more than two hundred years before, seen the banners wave 'by Flodden's high and heathery side,' and an arrow pierce the Scottish king. The Rhymer is said to have foretold, too, the death of Alexander III. by a fall from his horse in 1286, the defeat of the Scots at Pinkie, their victory at Bannockburn, and, more explicitly, as rendered by Sir Walter Scott, that:

A French queen shall bear the son
Shall rule all Britain to the sea;
He of the Bruce's blood shall come
As near as is the ninth degree.

Of that French queen herself, the ill-fated Mary, Queen of Scots, we are told that an equally famous seer foreshadowed her tragic fate. When she was quite a child, her mother, Mary of Guise, took her to the great Nostradamus. 'There is blood on that beautiful brow,' said the sage, and that blood has become one of the most lurid blots on the canvas of history. One of the hapless Mary's most inveterate opponents, John Knox, has also been credited with prophetic inspiration; but his utterances seem prompted rather by shrewd political insight. It was at any rate a daring forecast which he made when imprisoned in Rochelle, that within three years he would be preaching in St Giles's, Edinburgh; and the fact that he foresaw the deaths of Maitland and Kirkcaldy, and that he solemnly warned Murray of the fate that awaited him at Linlithgow, goes far to explain his reputation.

Nostradamus, before mentioned, stands high in the ranks of secular prophets, though his predictions are often expressed in so vague a way as to detract somewhat from the certainty of their meaning. He is said to have prophesied the death of the Duc de Montmorency under Louis XI., the deaths of Louis XVI., his queen and dauphin, and the empire of Napoleon. Amongst his most successful inspirations were those relating to the death of Henry II., of our own Charles I., and of the attack on religion at the Revolution. Concerning the first, he wrote:

Le bon jeune le vieux surmontera
En champ bellique par singulier duel,
Dans cage d'or les yeux lui crevera,
Deux plaies une, puis mourir: mort cruelle.

The prophecy concerning Charles I. is contained in the following lines:

Gand et Bruxelles marcheront contre Anvers,
Senat de Londres mettront à mort leur roi;

while that relating to the persecution of the Church is precise even to dates. It was to last

'jusques à l'an mille sept cent nonante deux, que l'on cuidera estre une renovation de siècle.' The French Republic, it will be remembered, dated its ordonnances from the 22d of September 1792. As an example of his vague rhapsodies which have been honoured as prophecies may be instanced the quatrain which was gravely held to predict the blessings the world in general, and Great Britain in particular, were to derive from William of Orange :

Né sous les ombres journée nocturne,
Sera en gloire et souverain bonté :
Fera renaître le sang de l'antique urne,
Et changera en or le siècle d'airain.

The prince was born in a mourning chamber, the 'ancient blood' was renewed by his descent from Charlemagne, and the remainder of the prophecy was common form of adulation. The explanation seems as ingenious as the text.

Mention has been made of the *Sortes Biblicæ* ; the *Sortes Virgilianæ* (in which not the Bible but Virgil's poems were opened at random, and a passage selected by pricking the page without choosing) were another sort of impersonal prophet much resorted to. Of the many instances recorded may be mentioned that of their consultation by Charles I. He was at Carisbrooke, and, *pour passer le temps*, Lord Falkland suggested that the ill-starred monarch should consult the Virgilian oracle. The lines indicated were from Dido's curse in the Fourth Book of the *Æneid*. As given in Cowley's translation, the lines are as follows :

By a bold people's stubborn arms oppress,
Forced to forsake the land he once possessed,
Torn from his dearest son, let him in vain
Seek help, and see his friends unjustly slain ;
Let him to base, unequal terms submit
In hopes to save his crown, yet lose both it
And life at once ; untimely let him die
And on an open stage unburied lie.

Dryden's translation (line 882 *et seq.*) is scarcely as effective ; but it may be mentioned that in the last verse 'barren sand' is substituted for 'open stage,' and that this agrees with one of the traditions relating to the obsequies of 'The White King.' The story goes on to say that Lord Falkland, by way of proving the folly of thinking twice of such 'warnings,' himself questioned futurity as interpreted by the pages of the Mantuan Swan. Still more ominous was his venture, for the passage indicated by the interrogant pun was Evander's lament over Pallas :

O Pallas, thou hast failed thy plighted word
To fight with caution, nor to tempt the sword.

I warned thee, but in vain, for well I knew
What perils youthful ardour would pursue.

O curst essay of arms ! disastrous doom !
Prelude of bloody fields and fights to come !

With regard to the former of these incidents, another account makes the prince who thus consulted Virgil the Prince of Wales, then a fugitive in France, and his companion in the harmless necromancy Abraham Cowley, whose rendering of the passage has been given.

To refer at length to instances of these prophetic utterances, or coincidences, would occupy too great a space ; a mere mention of some of the most familiar must suffice. A Spanish monk foretold the death of Henri Quatre of France ; Coysel predicted that Coligny would be killed by the Duc de Guise, and that before a certain date the Duc de Beaufort would escape from Vincennes, as mentioned in *Vingt Ans Après*. Perhaps one of the most remarkable forecasts or prophecies was that published in the *Mercurius Britannicus* for 1656, which predicted the Fire of London in the very year in which it occurred :

No reference to secular prophecies would be complete which omitted mention of those strange, well-authenticated instances of victims when at the point of death summoning their persecutors to meet them before the divine tribunal within a specified time. Between them Clement V. and Philip IV. procured the condemnation of Molay, the Grandmaster of the Templars, to the stake. As he was led to execution Molay cited his persecutors to appear before God's throne, the king within forty weeks and the Pope within forty days. Within those respective times both died. Rienzi, the Last of the Tribunes, condemned to death Fra Moriale. When he had pronounced the sentence the culprit summoned the judge to meet death himself within the month, and within the month Rienzi was assassinated. In 1575 Nanning Koppezoön, a Roman Catholic tortured to death during the religious strife in the Netherlands, recanted his extorted confession when on the way to the scaffold. A clergyman, Julian Epeszoon, tried to drown his voice by clamorous prayer. The victim summoned him to meet him within three days at the bar of God, and Epeszoon went home to his house and died within that time. While at the stake Wishart openly denounced Cardinal Beaton : 'He shall be brought low, even to the ground, before the trees which have supplied these fagots have shed their leaves.' The trees were but in the bravery of their May foliage when the bleeding body of the cardinal was hung by his murderers over the battlements of St Andrews.



AN ONION CONTEST.

By JAMES BURNLEY.



It was the time of onions, and we smelt them as we passed. Every greengrocery store was piled up with gigantic specimens of the strong-scented esculent which Falstaff so strenuously objected to assuage his hunger with. In the hotels every meal was accompanied by huge dishes of onions, and those 'native and to the manner born' consumed them with a relish that bespoke not only healthy appetites but a decided taste for this most odorous of vegetables.

The time was towards the end of the month of March, the place the city of Pittsburgh, to which metropolis of iron and steel I had wandered in quest of industrial knowledge, in the acquiring of which the good offices of Mr Andrew Carnegie had greatly helped me. But high above the roar of the furnaces, the belching of smoke, and the sound of the mighty hammers as they crushed and moulded the molten metal, there arose the pungent scent of a continuous feast of onions. It was onions, onions, all the way, all the day, and all the night; and the only possible escape from an oniony martyrdom was to become an onion-devourer one's self. This was the refuge I resorted to; and after a time, when the first stages of nausea and revulsion had been surmounted, I succeeded in so permeating my system with the aroma of the onion that I was able to mix with the eager, pushing business crowds without having my organ of smell made unhappy, for with onions as with many other things it is a case of *similia similibus curantur*.

In England, Hodge is the great consumer of onions, along with his bread and cheese, and the noses of the 'quality' turn up in haughty disdain when the scent of the raw onion is in the air; but in Pittsburgh there is no class distinction involved in the consumption of the vegetable; high and low, rich and poor, millionaire and beggar, have the onion craving, and no question of vulgarity arises in connection with it. I freely confess to a liking for the onion in its cooked form, as an aid to its betters—a delicate hint of it introduced amongst more dominant features of the gastronomic art being at once appetising and delicious; and I know that the redoubtable Soyer made much of it, and that it was far from being scorned by Brillat-Savarin; but to be thrown into sudden contact with it in its raw form, to smell millions of it, and to see everybody eating it in its natural state, without any addition or treatment except such as could be obtained from a dip into the salt with every bite, was rather disconcerting, and, as might be expected, frequently drew tears from my eyes.

It was not to be wondered at that in such an atmosphere there should be found men who prided themselves on their prowess as onion-eaters, and that in the season men should come forward to challenge each other in onion-eating. Such a contest took place while I was in Pittsburgh, and it struck me as being so novel—that is, from a British point of view—that I was tempted to make one of the spectators, and now propose to relate how the affair was carried out.

The contest had been arranged a month beforehand, and the contestants, like aspirants for other championships, had employed the interval in training for the meeting. The names of the men were John Raab and John Weidner. The former, when he had time to spare from onion-eating, ran a pair of rolls at Spang & Chalfant's mill; while the latter devoted his days to the hauling of groceries. The function took place at the rooms of the Madison Square Club, in Concord Street, Allegheny, and drew together such a crowd of members and friends as had seldom assembled there. They were mostly residents of the 'Dutch-town' quarter, and showed an enthusiastic interest in the proceedings, both men having a large following of backers. Nor was the company confined to the sterner sex; Hans Breitmann likes to hare his wife, his sisters, and his daughters around him even at an onion-eating 'barty'; so the cheery voices of a score or two of fraus and frauens mingled with the harsher tongues of their men-folk, and a very strange babel they made of it. There gathered the Schneiders and the Hartmanns, the Müllers and the Schanbachers, the Grimms and the Zollers, the Minchens and the Muntzers; and altogether it was a very jolly affair. They occupied the earlier portion of the evening, as well as the intervals between the onion-eating rounds later on, with dance and song and joviality, after the manner of their nationality. There was a fair sprinkling of Americans present, too, workers in iron and steel and coal, from whom the grime of toil never seems wholly to depart; and the lager beer was copiously served round to all and sundry. By ten o'clock, the time fixed for the opening of the contest, the assembly was in a swelter of excitement.

I ought to have mentioned that the name of the contestant Raab had been kept a profound secret until the night of the match, and much speculation had been indulged in concerning the identity of the unknown. The competition came about in this way: Weidner had long been regarded as the champion onion-swallower of the club. Indeed, he was popularly supposed to stand unequalled in the art. John came of a family of

onion-eaters. His father and mother had been famous for their capacity in that line, so John had been inured to onion-eating from his youth up, and every night before going to bed ate from three to half-a-dozen to assist his slumbers. If he awoke in the night he would get up and despatch a few more onions, which he always kept by his bedside ready for emergencies. With a reputation like this, it seemed a reproach to Weidner's friends and neighbours that an opportunity should not be created for him to give some public demonstration of his special ability. Accordingly, one night at the club, Weidner's friend, John Metz, a patrol-wagon man, made the bold announcement that he would back Weidner to eat onions against any man in the world. To this challenge one Amos Lang, a detective in the police force, made answer that he would produce 'an unknown' who would 'eat onions all around Weidner.' Whereupon a match was made for twenty dollars a side, and betting became very free, considerably over two hundred dollars being wagered on each side.

The contest took place in a large room on the second floor of the club-house. There was a piano in one corner, and on the walls hung coloured lithographic portraits of the Emperor William, Bismarck, Goethe, Von Moltke, and Mr McKinley. In the centre of the room was a round table, by the side of which stood a number of empty chairs. The remaining space was occupied by the exciting, gabbling, smoking, drinking, onion-scented crowd of expectant sight-seers.

A tremendous cheer went up when the clock struck ten and in marched the judges and the referee, followed a minute or two afterwards by Weidner and his backers. Then there was a short lull. All looked for the coming of 'the unknown,' and wondered who it could be. When at last John Raab and his supporters came striding into the room there was a great commotion, for Raab turned out to be almost as well known as his rival, though few perhaps had suspected him of any special gift in the way of onion-eating—yet it transpired later that Raab had been raised on an onion-farm and had lived among onions for years. Weidner took his seat on one side of the table, Raab taking the chair immediately opposite. The judges and the referee also sat facing each other. On a side-table was a pile of onions beside a pair of scales, presided over by a beery German, who seemed proud of the honour of having to weigh out the allotted portions of onions to the contestants.

Weidner and Raab were ready. Weidner, a rosy-cheeked, plump, smiling fellow of about thirty-five, looked round with an easy confidence; while Raab, a hungry-looking, ferret-eyed, slim man, a few years older, seemed perturbed of conscience and ill at ease, for a reason that was soon apparent. The onions—which were of the

big red variety, the strongest kind known—had been divested of their outer skins, and weighed out, two pounds to each man, and placed in front of Raab and Weidner, when a shrill, clarion-like voice sounded a wild, protesting note from the far end of the room. John Raab's pale face turned paler. He recognised the voice of his wife, and for a moment it appeared as if the contest would not be able to proceed. She forced her way to the table, and angrily insisted on her husband 'quitting;' but in spite of her threats and denunciations he clung to his post, and eventually the irascible lady was persuaded to leave the room, and she refused to return, doubtless much to Raab's comfort. His mother-in-law stuck to him, however, as mothers-in-law sometimes will, and did all she could to compensate for her daughter's opposition, by cheering vociferously every time Raab crunched his teeth into a fresh onion.

Weidner's pile comprised nine onions, Raab's eight. The senior judge read out the rules of the contest before the eating began. The onions were to be eaten raw; the men were permitted to eat with salt or without, as they pleased; and they were at liberty to consume as much beer and rye bread as they desired while they went along. A sliced loaf and enough salt to have pickled a pig were placed within easy reach of the principals, and Raab ordered two glasses of lager and Weidner one.

All was now in order for the start, and time was called. The giggling of the women was suspended, and the men held their breaths. The contest was to be in rounds of ten minutes each, with five minutes rest between. Each man seized an onion, and the battle was on. Weidner cut his onions in quarters with a knife, and dipped them in salt. Raab smashed his with a blow of the fist, and also helped himself freely to salt. The greatest excitement prevailed, and there was a good deal of betting, the odds being five to four on Weidner all through the first round. Weidner ate slowly but steadily, while Raab attacked his onions as though they were his natural fodder. The round ended with honours even, each man having disposed of four onions. The men spent the five minutes' interval out of the room.

When time was called for the second round, Raab entered with two glasses of beer in his hands, and Weidner with one—and they got to work again, but by no means with their original avidity. Raab was the fresher of the two, and, perceiving signs of weakening in his opponent, began to chaff him, boasting that he could easily eat two onions to Weidner's one—a remark that drew forth a frantic cheer of approval from Raab's mother-in-law. But Raab himself was much slower than in the initial round, and both showed a greater desire for 'extras' than at the outset. Raab fortified himself with a whole loaf of bread

and four glasses of beer during this round, but Weidner contented himself with a loaf of rye and one glass of lager only. The referee drank more than both the contestants put together, but then he wasn't eating onions. At the end of the round Raab had four onions left, and Weidner three and a half; but the latter's onions were larger than his rival's.

When time was called for the third round Raab was outside drinking a few more beers, and did not show up promptly, whereat Weidner's friends were for claiming the victory for their man on the ground of the other's default; but the referee reminded them that the match was for the man who could eat the most onions, and declared that Weidner must remain and eat more than Raab had eaten before the award could be given to him. At this Weidner started on to get a safe lead, but before he had taken a couple of bites Raab came in with a couple of glasses of beer in his hands. Both men now ate rapidly for a short time, but Weidner showed signs of decided 'grogginess.' Raab chuckled. 'They wanted an unknown,' he said; 'well, they have got one.' Towards the end of the round both men were in distress, and handled their onions in anything but an affectionate manner. Weidner was scarcely able to swallow, and Raab, who had put away

seven glasses of beer during the round, found his teeth hesitating and uncertain.

When the fourth round was called Weidner failed to come up; but Raab, who had probably indulged in copious libations during the five minutes' interval, sat down as if his second appetite had come to him, and avowed himself ready to tackle a whole year's crop of onions. Weidner's friends then came forward and announced that their man had thrown up the sponge, and Raab was awarded the prize of victory amid much cheering, his devoted mother-in-law honouring him with a gushing embrace. Raab had eaten twenty-four ounces of onions to his rival's twenty-two ounces. Weidner was disconsolate; the humiliation of defeat weighed heavily upon him, and he almost wept as he declared that it was the first time in his life that his stomach had gone back on him.

As I took my departure the girls were preparing for further revelries. The piano was set tinkling, and the last sounds I heard were those of uproarious laughter and the shuffling of many feet. The *fräuleins* had entered into the spirit of the contest so thoroughly that they were arranging an eating-match on their own account before I left, with bananas, instead of onions, as the commodities to be devoured.

QUAINT SOUTH AFRICAN CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS.

By LEWIS GOLDING.



AS we become more enlightened, that peculiar tendency inherent in every one of us—no matter what may be our creed, nationality, age, or sex—towards a belief in supernatural agency grows less assertive and apparent. Still, with all our boasted knowledge, we cannot entirely extinguish the spark of superstition, though we may deny its existence and endeavour to conceal its presence from each other. For instance, even to-day many people could not walk through a deserted graveyard without experiencing that indefinable feeling of physical and mental discomfort colloquially termed 'goose-flesh.' Others, again, can never sit down to table with twelve companions without dreading the consequences, or at least without endeavouring to restore their own peace of mind by maintaining that they disbelieve in thirteen being an unlucky number.

If, then, we, the descendants of generations of cultured and enlightened ancestors, still retain some small instinctive horror of things occult, is it to be wondered at that savages of all nations, grovelling in the depths of ignorance and superstition, descend at times to the perpetra-

tion of any brutality, any absurdity, in order to ward off the possible fatal results of a glance from the 'evil eye,' or in an attempt at propitiating offended spirits—malignant or otherwise?

The South African native, in particular, is a strangely superstitious individual. Anything unusual or out of the ordinary course of events is considered by him to be the precursor of some grievous calamity; and such phenomena as an eclipse of sun or moon are viewed with the utmost consternation and awe. In brief, everything that is inexplicable to him is at once termed *tagati*—that is, witchcraft—and attributed to the handiwork of some powerful but malicious 'medicine-man.'

Quite recently a native woman was arrested in Matabeleland by the white authorities on the grave charge of infanticide. At her trial, a day or two later, she was asked to state her motive for so inhumanly murdering her offspring. Without hesitation she replied that she had 'put away' her child because it was a monstrosity, and, as such, unfit to cumber the earth. When pressed for an explanation showing in what way the child was a freak of nature, the woman said

that, contrary to *native* infantile teething-law—she knew nothing of the European—the child had cut the two milk-teeth in the upper jaw first: proof positive that the infant was accursed. It was only the woman's palpable ignorance that saved her from the undesirable attentions of the local 'Monsieur de Paris;' but the long term of penal servitude which the unfortunate woman is now undergoing will doubtless teach her and her friends that the white rulers of the country do not countenance the indiscriminate slaughter of little children, no matter how malformed they may be or how unusual were the circumstances attending their advent into the world.

For generations past the birth of twins has been regarded by Zulu women as a most grievous and regrettable calamity. Doubtless many European nations will contend that the unsophisticated native women are by no means unique in this respect. True; but the reasons for a display of disgust at a 'double event' are in each case owing to a very different cause—the European mother only taking into account the extra care and attention entailed; while the native, attaching no importance whatsoever to this matter, is only overcome and terrorised by the possible punishment which will be inflicted upon her for having so flagrantly insulted and offended some mysterious power by giving birth to two. With the Zulus the belief is that the husband will die or otherwise suffer should both children live; and to obviate this difficulty it was customary, and still is in the remoter and less civilised districts, to suffocate the weaker of the twain—in the case of male and female, the former—before it had well commenced to live. Thanks, however, to a rigorous enforcement of the law in all cases where infanticide can be proved, this ghastly custom has now almost been stamped out; but habits and beliefs, whether amongst us or savages, die hard.

Previous to making war, most South African natives and tribes issue instructions to their head 'medicine-man' to ascertain, by means of his supposed supernatural powers, whether or not the occasion is for them an auspicious one. The methods adopted by the witch-doctors to learn this vary, of course, in accordance with the customs and beliefs of the different tribes concerned, though, at the same time, a great family resemblance is recognisable in all such mystic and barbaric rites. It has been stated that, in regard to the recent outbreak of hostilities between the British and Boers, the Basutos—the hereditary foes of the Boers—acting up to their usual custom, consulted the fates as to the result. Before relating how this was done it is necessary to state that among the natives a red-skinned or always represents the British, a white the Boers, while a black animal, as is natural, is the accepted symbol of all native races. Accordingly, a red and a

white bullock were caught and simultaneously flayed alive; and whilst incantations were being muttered by the 'medicine-men,' a huge concourse of people carefully watched the devoted animals as they writhed and groaned in their agony. It so chanced that the white-skinned ox outlived, by some few moments, its fellow-martyr; in consequence of which, forsooth! the Basutos maintain that the Boers will eventually prove the victors; and, being convinced on this point, these people have at present decided to preserve a strict neutrality, notwithstanding their intense hatred of the Boers, rather than fight on the losing side.

Could anything better illustrate the credulity and rank superstition of these natives than the above-narrated incident, particularly as they quite admit the fact that such a golden opportunity of wiping out old scores will in all probability never again occur? On the other hand, the Dutch must hail with unadulterated joy this determination of their old-time foes to remain inactive, well knowing from past experience what cruel, stubborn, and unrelenting antagonists the inhabitants of mountainous Basutoland make. But, for all this, it would be exceedingly impolitic of either camp to rest assured of the absolute neutrality of the Basutos; for who knows but that the native *savants* may institute fresh inquiries and discover that they have made a mistake as to who are to be the ultimate victors?

Let us now turn to something less gruesome and revolting. In common with the people of almost every uncivilised race the world over, the South African natives look upon lunatics and simpletons—no matter what their creed, colour, or nationality—with reverential awe, and would no more dream of intentionally maltreating or injuring such than they would of hurting a little child. This instinctive abhorrence of wounding a fellow-being more or less incapable of self-defence is ascribable to the deep-rooted belief that all such irresponsible individuals are in close contact with and under the direct protection of the Great Spirit. But with all their reverence for the village idiot, they seldom are able to refrain from perpetrating an occasional practical joke on the poor fellow. Great care is, however, exercised to avoid injuring the subject of their fun, as the following little episode, witnessed in Natal by the writer, will show:

A crowd of appreciative Kaffirs were one day viewing the ludicrous antics and gesticulations of a very ragged and very dirty native idiot, who, as soon as he had attracted sufficient attention, went on to graphically describe his many brave deeds in battle, hinted at his vast knowledge in witchcraft, and generally drew on his powers of imagination for the amusement and instruction of his dusky audience. At length one of the bystanders, growing impatient and eager for greater

excitement, surreptitiously struck from the woolly pate of the poor half-witted creature the battered old silk hat which he was proudly wearing. A yell of applause greeted this development of the proceedings; while the hat was picked up, carefully brushed, and politely returned to the owner by one of the laughing Kaffirs. With a glance full of contempt and indignation, the unfortunate butt again donned his hat, but only to find that before it had been two seconds on his head it was again describing a parabola through the air. Time and again the hat was knocked off, but each time graciously returned by a spectator. At last, however, the poor owner of the topper, turning sharply, managed to catch one of his tormentors in *flagrante delicto*. With a quick grab he laid hold of the Kaffir's arm, and then set about administering a sound thrashing to the culprit with the flexible *sjambok* he held in his hand. The native took his flagellation stoically, and never once attempted to retaliate, nor even appealed to the onlookers for assistance; perhaps, indeed, he knew that it would be futile so to do. At the conclusion of the thrashing the recipient remarked, as he lugubriously rubbed his aching limbs, that though there might be some grounds for doubt as to the mental balance of the proprietor of the tall hat, he personally entertained none whatsoever respecting the perfect development of his friend's biceps!

In common with many of otherwise widely divergent opinions, the Zulus to some extent believe in the transmigration of spirits, owing to which they refuse to slay any snake, no matter how venomous, that may have wandered into the precincts of their places of abode. Such intruders are invariably accorded the greatest respect, being looked upon as deceased relatives, in the shape of serpents, harmlessly revisiting the scene of their one-time human form. But these same natives have not the slightest compunction in summarily putting to death any reptiles they may meet with at a distance from human habitations, such not being regarded in the light of possible brothers or sisters, fathers or mothers.

Apropos of snakes, it might be mentioned that Kaffirs affirm that no serpent can die, even though it be beheaded or beaten into a pulp, before the setting of the sun. This peculiar belief is shared by many Boers, while even some of the more superstitiously inclined British colonists also give it credence. Doubtless the muscular contractions of the reptile after death are responsible in a great measure for the prevalence of this idiotic belief, and in the case of ignorant Kaffirs it can be condoned; but that intelligent Europeans should credit any animal with such a miraculous tenacity of life is almost past understanding.

The Zulu custom of disembowelling fallen foes is now pretty generally known. Few are aware,

however, that such mutilation is not practised on account of innate cruelty, but in order to liberate the spirits of the deceased warriors. It is maintained that if the slayer inadvertently omit to perform this last act of charity he will be haunted and eventually driven into his grave by the insulted ghost of his victim.

The following is a quaint custom: After a battle all the surviving warriors are carefully dosed with *muti* (medicine) brewed from herbs by the witch-doctors of the tribe. This is to purify and fortify them against any sinister designs on their welfare that may be entertained by the spirits of their slain enemies.

A pleasing feature in the character of the Zulu is his generosity and willingness to share with his immediate friends and companions any of the good things of life that may happen to come his way. Frequently the writer, in order to test the dispositions of various natives, has purposely chosen one Kaffir out of a number, and, without permitting the remainder to observe, has presented the favoured individual with some article of confectionery, such as a piece of cake, a few chocolates, or a handful of biscuits. Never once, however, has he noticed a Kaffir secrete his treasures from his comrades, although every opportunity for so doing was given. No; the recipient, in every case, after profuse expressions of thanks, invariably shared whatever edibles he had obtained equally with all his companions, in many cases leaving the merest 'bite' for his own delectation.

But this excellent principle of share and share alike is sometimes extended beyond its proper limits, and often sadly overdone, as housekeepers in the colonies know to their cost. Unless all eatables are kept under lock and key, a mistress soon discovers that her particular kitchen Kaffir is regaling all his chums and relations with the best the house provides; and when accused of giving away what does not belong to him, he does not seem to think he has been guilty of any very serious misdemeanour. In fact, he feels aggrieved at exception having been taken to so minute a detail. It must be borne in mind that it is only where *skoff*, as all food is called by the natives, is concerned that he is unable to distinguish between *meum* and *tuum*; otherwise he is, as a rule, honesty personified.

One word in conclusion. Many people seem to think that the Zulus have no religious belief whatsoever. This is a mistake, for there is no doubt that some form of a future state is implicitly believed in, although the natives do not themselves appear very clear about the matter. Nevertheless, the existence of a Good and an Evil Spirit is acknowledged by every one of these merry, good-natured, and intelligent members of the human family.

THE PARSON'S LETTER-BAG.



TIME—a winter evening; place—a village schoolroom; occasion—a lecture by a clerical friend on the General Post-Office and its working. At the close I was, of course, able to move the usual ‘hearty vote of thanks,’ for he had given a really interesting sketch of a great national institution. But I fear I did not quite follow him in his warm praises of Rowland Hill and the incalculable benefits which the Post-Office confers upon us all; for there are moments when the contents of my letter-bag demand all my patience, and make me just a shade sceptical of the commonly received doctrine. What with general directories, local directories, and clerical directories, it is so easy to find me out, and so many people think it worth their while to, that I feel myself almost persecuted by the unfailing attentions of the post-man; and there are even times when familiarity with his ministrations tends to produce its well-known result. In some of these matters, no doubt, I am only a sufferer in common with most of my fellow-men; others are the special privilege of clerics.

First, then, come the prospectuses; and they do come, plenty of them. The benevolence of all manner of titled and dignified capitalists is simply astonishing; and the wealth they are anxious to pour into my lap is fabulous—perhaps in more senses than one. Only they one and all begin by wanting some of my money in the first place! Sometimes it sounds very like, ‘Just to show your confidence, you know.’ But my confidence has had some very cruel shocks; and many of these fascinating documents now go to their doom unopened. It might have been better for me had they all done so.

Then follow the circulars on every conceivable subject, as it seems to me, that is capable of being advertised or recommended. Most wonderful tea and cocoa, with occasionally a sample enclosed that I may make trial of its merits, and sometimes reduced terms if I will purchase largely. Patent medicines with marvellous powers and infallible efficacy; and here also a sample is kindly provided! Why will people foolishly persist in dying when they can be cured so certainly and so cheaply of almost ‘all the ills that flesh is heir to’? But more pleasant topics are touched on, and in the most persuasive manner. Beautiful bells, handsome organs—especially American organs—and fine clocks with mechanical chimes, all appeal to my imagination and tantalise my poverty. Various enterprising tailors, too, are very anxious to adorn my outer man, about which I admit I am deplorably careless; their suggestions as to what is most correct and becoming in clerical attire have almost a touch of rebuke or satire in

them—for me. But some of these gentlemen evidently have large faith in human nature, for they send me ‘instructions for self-measurement.’ Now, if ‘the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client,’ what will be the condition of the country parson wearing a suit for which he has *measured himself*? Had he not almost better go with Gulliver to Laputa, and be fitted with a coat by the aid of quadrant and sextant? I am not too particular about my millinery—far from it, my wife says; but it certainly would require more courage than I possess to go about in garments for the fit, or misfit, of which I was personally responsible! Not to be able to grumble at one’s tailor! No; ‘the line must really be drawn somewhere.’

The number of coal-merchants and coal-agents who compete for my custom is embarrassing. How can they all manage to get a living? Or do they accomplish the feat? The drapers, too, favour me with most elaborate lists and captivating illustrated appeals; sometimes even with patterns of fabrics which I do not in the least understand, but which I must assume to be very admirable and excellent, or of course these worthy men would not say so. I used to turn over all such documents at once to the *placens uxor*; but I regret to say that this led to so many appeals, and such pitiful statements about ‘nothing to wear,’ that I have quietly discontinued the practice. The wine-merchants also take a friendly interest in my table and my health. There are various palatable and nourishing wines which, if I will only drink them, will counteract the strain and pressure of clerical life, will strengthen my nerves, and preserve my digestion unimpaired to a healthy and vigorous old age. Then there is wine for sacred uses—the *only* wine that should ever be so employed, according to my advisers. And the last of the circulars on this subject has a somewhat authoritative tone; it presents to my notice an unfermented and non-intoxicating wine for sacred purposes, and gives me to understand that the gravest responsibilities will attach to any disregard of this intimation.

I am invited to furnish my modest dwelling as completely and elegantly as I please, and on the most reasonable terms; several firms or companies are anxious to do this for me, and each of them, it seems, will do it more reasonably and expeditiously than the others. I and my belongings can be removed anywhere at the shortest notice—also by a variety of agencies. Nor does the vigilant care of some of these unknown friends cease even with life. Some years ago the blinds were drawn down in my house for several days, and during this time there arrived a variety of sketches and prices of stone memorials

to mark the final resting-place. But the *ne plus ultra* of advertising must surely have been reached when I received an extremely neat note, very well written on tinted paper in a rather elegant feminine hand, and strongly perfumed, to inform me that Mr Blank, a neighbouring tradesman, had 'a regular supply of excellent sausages from the country three times a week,' and respectfully solicited my custom.

These various communications have one point in their favour, and to a busy man it is a very strong one—you need not answer them; and in many cases you will certainly be better off if you don't. But those long envelopes with official seals and inscriptions—they are quite of another order, and cannot be played with by any means. Some demand returns; others are from various commissioners, or from 'My Lords' who so kindly interest themselves in education, or from their various deputies; but as to the purport of all this somewhat elaborate and laborious correspondence, discretion counsels complete silence. Still one may say, without violating confidence, that it often adds a fair and sometimes a heavy item to the day's work.

Then come the appeals for help or charity. What *do* these good people take me for? Croesus, Midas, and Mæcenæas, or, to come to later times, Peabody, Astor, and Rothschild—all rolled into one, surely—to judge from the number and urgency of their requests. Will I subscribe to this, that, and the other—to all the societies, funds, and associations under the sun, as I am sometimes tempted to put it to myself? Now, the value of my living is not an entire secret, nor is it one of the great 'prizes' of my profession; but perhaps I am credited with large private means; at any rate I am assumed to be generous; but this does not in the least help me to find the money. But if I cannot give, perhaps I can help in other ways. Will I make collections on Sundays, or hold a meeting during the week, or both? Or will I allow the eloquent and energetic secretary to come and do these things for me, supporting the movement by my own presence and personal influence? My dear people, there are only fifty-two Sundays in the year, as a rule; and of these, local objects and certain universally accepted claims have already bespoken a good share. Then we *must* have a certain number for our own work; and of those that remain, one can hardly help saying, 'What are they among so many?'

Private begging letters also come into the same class; and I am free to confess that, after many years' experience, I am still sometimes perplexed to distinguish genuine appeals from those of impostors. What tales of sorrow and want, struggles and suffering, some of these letters unfold! It is very hard to refuse; but if, on the other hand, you give at all freely, how quickly this is discovered, and you simply become a target

for every scoundrel to take a shot at. But when you cannot give, you are not allowed to forget that you have 'influence.' Your 'vote and interest,' at least, are requested. Will you help to get an orphan into an asylum? Yes, indeed, most gladly if possible. Only there are nineteen vacancies and seventy-six orphans; and, as you read the successive appeals, each one seems more deserving and distressing than the last. What is to be done—draw lots or take the first that applied? You finally make a selection, and send off your vote with a secret conviction that you are a very cruel man, having in effect said 'No' to a host of piteous appeals. Moreover, you have offended, or at least disappointed, the patrons of many of the other candidates, who are sure to think 'you certainly might have helped their case.'

You are also in great request for testimonials and certificates. Every one who has served with or under you, in any capacity, claims the right to your recommendation, at almost any distance of time, and with a view to any and every kind of employment. 'You knew me at —,' or, 'We were together at —,' is an unanswerable argument. And sometimes people whom you do not know at all, but whose *friends* knew you, still request help of this kind. Former servants, too, want characters, even if, like the legendary Irishman, they would probably 'do better without one.' Various good people, more or less qualified, have established schools, and wish to refer parents of possible pupils to you; these requests are sometimes very embarrassing. Certificates from registers you of course expect to furnish as required; but occasionally you are invited to a sort of 'general search,' with very incomplete data to guide you.

Miscellaneous correspondence 'crowns the edifice.' Some remarks of yours in a recent sermon require to be explained, and perhaps vindicated. Another discourse has been much appreciated, and the loan of the manuscript, or some notes, would greatly oblige. Can you recommend a book which will dispose of all sorts of religious difficulties, and reply to the latest attacks upon the faith? Or, better still, can you give your correspondent a summary of the defence, stated in your own clear and pointed way? Why do you not preach oftener on some given subject in which many good people are just now greatly interested? Can you not give a course of lectures, dealing thoroughly with—&c. Will you please to avoid special subjects entirely, and always deal with wider aspects of truth possessing general interest? Will you publish a given sermon? By this, as experience may have taught you, you will probably lose a little money, and may also bring the critics down upon you.

Having duly attended to these various claims, I may now turn to my own private correspondence. I have still some friends left, thank Heaven; but I hope they do not measure my

affection by the number and length of my letters, or I shall soon count them on my fingers, and not require all of those. My children, bless them ! like to hear from me, and are goodness itself in excusing the rarity of their letters from home. Births, marriages, and deaths in the circle of my acquaintance call from time to time for letters which must not, especially from me, be too brief and formal. Letters of advice, and sometimes letters asking for it, must also be written. At times one has to endeavour to relieve religious melancholy, to minister to the mind diseased, and I have had some letters the writer of which was evidently insane. Anonymous letters are, happily, few and far between. Should they appear to be taking a malignant or scurrilous turn, the waste-paper basket is handy, and large ; better still, perhaps, the study fire.

My readers may rest satisfied that among the penalties of an official position, even if humble, is a correspondence the extent, variety, and pressing character of which are often very imperfectly

realised, and constitute a heavy addition to the responsibilities of life. A wild thought has sometimes crossed my mind—to pocket a clean collar and a tooth-brush, grasp my trusty umbrella, and, having seen that something still remained in my purse, start off for a walk that should last a week ; staying at country inns, and sending home post-cards to prevent anxiety as to my welfare, with the strictest injunctions that no letters should be sent after me. Visions of breezy downs, green woodlands, shady lanes, rippling streams, wild flowers, and music of the birds float before me as I plod away at my desk. A week without letters—it is ‘too good to be true !’ Then comes the second thought—prudent, necessary, but rather dismal—what a stack I should find on my table awaiting my return ! However should I fetch up the arrears ? For it is among the peculiar experiences of life—with me, at any rate—that the attempt to take even a short holiday seems to galvanise my correspondents into a most troublesome activity.

THE MONTH: SCIENCE AND ARTS.

COAST-LINE PROTECTION.



IT is well known that in many places round our coasts the sea is constantly nibbling away at the land, encroaching in some places at such a rate that in the memory of living persons wide reaches of land have altogether disappeared. On rocky coasts the action is so imperceptible that it may be neglected ; but where the soil is friable, the constant attack of the sea is a matter of serious moment to land-owners and occupiers in the vicinity. At present there is no authority to take note of impending danger from this cause ; and as a rule no expert advice is sought until a building is in actual jeopardy or a tract of land has been suddenly submerged. Mr Allanson-Winn, a member of the Society of Engineers, did well to call attention to the need of some public department whose duty it should be to make reliable records of the changes taking place in our coast-line ; and his paper read before the recent meeting of the British Association is worthy of earnest attention. It is almost certain that, as he claims, a large saving in the future would result from the adoption of the remedies he suggests.

ARTIFICIAL INDIGO.

Eighteen years ago Professor Bayer discovered how the valuable vegetable dye, indigo, could be built up in the laboratory synthetically ; and this discovery, followed by improvements in the pro-

cess, has led to the production of artificial or ‘synthetic’ indigo on such a large scale that the natural indigo industry is threatened with extinction. This advance of science falls terribly hard upon the indigo-planters of Behar in Northern India, where hundreds of thousands depend upon the growth of indigo for their daily bread ; and the rivalry of the chemists’ production is likely to lead to something like a public calamity. Those interested in the natural product assert that the synthetic indigo cannot compete with it in permanence ; but careful tests show that this contention cannot be maintained. The new indigo, while possessing all the good qualities of the old, is preferred by dyers because it is more constant in its composition than that which comes from the Behar planters.

BALLOONS IN WARFARE.

Preparations for war in South Africa include the provision of several captive balloons and the apparatus wherewith to make hydrogen gas to fill them. Each balloon is furnished with eight photographic cameras pointing in different directions, so that when the pictures are developed and pieced together the General in command will have at his disposal a complete panorama of the country in which he is operating. This is expected to be of special value in South Africa, where bush and hills hide much from the observer on *terra firma*, and where ambuscade and guerilla tactics are the recognised forms of warfare. Military ballooning may be said to be on its trial in the

Transvaal; and it is a matter for regret that it is a system which so much depends for its success on the caprices of the weather.

THE FEATHERED POST.

The carrier-pigeon—the most ancient representative of wireless telegraphy—is probably employed to a greater extent to-day than ever before in the world's history. It has been demonstrated more than once that these wonderful messengers can cross the wide surface of the Atlantic Ocean with safety, and now the useful birds are in regular service on the steamers of the trans-Atlantic company which run between Havre and New York. It is often a matter of the most urgent importance to be able to communicate with the shore. We can easily recall many instances in which a broken shaft has so delayed a steamer that much anxiety has existed as to her fate—
anxiety which would have been at once allayed by a reassuring message by pigeon-post. The system is open to any passenger who will go to the trouble of writing a post-card. These cards are reduced to tiny dimensions by means of photography, and the pigeon carries the film bearing the reduced messages in a quill beneath its wing. Upon arrival at its home, the messages are despatched to their destinations by post or wire. This system of communication between ship and shore is likely to become universal.

THE SAFETY OF RAILWAY TRAVELLING.

The risks of railway travelling are much exaggerated, a reflection of the old times when a man thought it necessary to make his will before undertaking the coach journey from, say, Edinburgh to London. Now we travel the same distance in hours instead of days, and think little of speeding along the lines at a mile a minute. That travelling at this rate is not accompanied by a tithe of the dangers which lurked around the old coaching system is easily capable of proof; but an interesting piece of evidence on the subject was recorded the other day, in the retirement of a North-Western engine-driver after fifty years' constant travelling. Mr Thomas Beck is now seventy-four years of age, and has travelled on his engine, during the past half-century, more than three million miles. This is equal in distance to one hundred and twenty voyages round the world, or to twelve excursions between the earth and the moon.

THE NEW CONSUMPTION CURE.

Some interesting facts are recorded in a recent report of the Hospital for Consumption at Hampstead, London, where the open-air system has been established since last January. The number of patients treated up to the end of September was

one hundred and eighty-three, and they are accounted for as follows: 43·7 per cent. were cured and returned to their work, 32·3 per cent. were distinctly improved, 7·6 per cent. slightly improved, 4·3 per cent. received no benefit, and 3·9 per cent. died. This is altogether a remarkable result, seeing that only a short time ago phthisis was regarded, except by quacks, as incurable. It is a common occurrence, we are told, for patients to enter the Hampstead hospital with all the usual indications of the malady, and to leave a few weeks later with the symptoms abated, and with an increase of many pounds in their weight. The medical officers in most cases keep up a correspondence with discharged patients, and they report that in cases where the improvement has been marked, and the necessary hygienic principles are properly carried out, there are no signs of any relapse.

MODERN BRANDY.

The Royal Institute of Public Health, recently assembled in congress at Blackpool, discussed, among other subjects, that of brandy; and according to the evidence of experts most of the French cognac which finds its way to this country does not owe its origin to the grape. The definite statement was made that 'the new kind of brandy did not fulfil the hopes based on the old-fashioned liquor ordered for patients by medical men.' Facts and figures are stubborn things, and a glance at the statistics available show that in the past year France produced only forty thousand hectolitres of alcohol made from wine—that is, real brandy—while she exported to this country above eighty-thousand hectolitres of brandy, so called; to say nothing of the two hundred thousand she sent to other countries, and the two millions she herself consumed. To put the matter in another way, the natural product was multiplied fifty-seven times by the aid of art. The art appears to consist in coaxing alcohol from corn, molasses, beet-root, wine lees, apples and pears, and 'other materials,' and the *phylloxera* which twenty years ago ruined so many of the vintages is credited with having founded the new industry.

BEEES AND THEIR HONEY.

At the Grocers' Exhibition at the Agricultural Hall, London, which closed in October, a department was devoted to English honey, and many improvements in its production were demonstrated. The old method of letting the bees do as they like, and killing them when their work is finished, crushing the comb, and draining the honey through coarse cloth, has given way to a far more scientific system. The lives of the insects are preserved, and they are induced to construct the comb in square sections. This comb is unsealed by shaving off the waxen ends of the cells by special apparatus,

and after the sweet contents have been extracted the empty comb is once more returned to the hive to be refilled by the busy workers. The modern plan is based on the observation that the bees can make honey much quicker than they can build the cells to hold it.

REMEDY FOR THE LOCUST PLAGUE.

The *German African Gazette* is responsible for the statement that a Mr Cooper, of Richmond, Natal, has discovered a new method of destroying swarms of locusts. The plan consists in catching and smearing a few of the locusts with 'locust fungus,' a preparation which is cultivated in the Bacteriological Institute at Grahamstown, Cape Colony. The insects are then allowed to return to the swarm, which they infect with what is presumably a fatal disease. The same preparation applied on damp soil in places where it is known locusts will swarm leads to their complete destruction. Twenty swarms are said to have been destroyed in this manner. Although this statement is open to doubt, it may be remembered that a celebrated bacteriologist once proposed to deal with the rabbit-pest in Australia in much the same way. It is quite possible that a similar remedy might be found for the malarial mosquito, for it is only by such means that its extirpation could be brought about.

WIRELESS TELEPHONY.

Marconi's wireless telegraph has already a rival in the system of telephonic communication with which Sir William Preece has been experimenting at Carnarvon. At the south end of Menai Strait, near Llanfaglan Church, four high poles have been erected; at some distance away other poles have been set up; and still farther off, at Belan Fort, is a high pole supporting a coil of wire, which finds its terminal in deep water. Between these points communication is easily carried on without intermediary wires, a series of taps at one station being very plainly heard by means of the telephone at the other. It need hardly be pointed out that by means of such taps the Morse alphabet can be employed, and words conveyed from point to point with the rapidity of the ordinary telegraphic apparatus. In point of speed, therefore, the system is better than Marconi's wireless telegraph; but as yet the sounds are not so distinct as is thought desirable.

MACHINERY versus HAND-LABOUR.

Cassier's Magazine, which devotes itself to engineering subjects, calls attention to the steady growth of machinery employment with the corresponding reduction of hand-labour, and points out how both in Europe and America enterprise

has profited to a remarkable degree by the change. As an example of the saving effected, the case of the English blast-furnaces is quoted, where pig-iron casting-machines have led to a saving of about twopence per ton. This does not seem much; but a saving of that amount on the whole of the pig-iron produced throughout Great Britain last year would represent an economy of seventy thousand pounds. It was further pointed out that the introduction of mechanical applications to the mining and quarrying industries might have a remarkable economical effect, inasmuch as the saving of only a penny per ton in the cost of the limestone quarried in 1898 would represent a little nest-egg of fifty thousand pounds, while a similar reduction in the cost of the coal raised during the same period would mean a lump sum of one hundred thousand pounds. Never was the wise policy of taking care of the pence more strongly put, and the matter cannot be too strongly urged upon British manufacturers in view of increasing foreign competition.

A METROPOLITAN SUBWAY.

We are all accustomed to hear of secret passages beneath old castles and churches, and most ruins have some tradition of the kind. But few persons were aware, before Mr Threlfall called attention to it the other day, that beneath the busy streets of London there is an iron tube some four feet in diameter and more than two miles long—which was at one time used, on the pea-shooter principle, for the despatch of mails between the General Post-Office and some of its sub-stations. The scheme was abandoned because of the heavy expense involved in working; but the tube still remains, and Mr Threlfall suggests that it might once more be utilised by the Post-Office. Instead of the old pneumatic arrangement, he proposes to employ electric traction—an electric railway, in fact, that should be devoted to the carriage of mails and parcels only. The matter has already been brought before the officials concerned; but it is a matter for consideration whether the plan—in view of the small distance covered—could economically displace the horses and carts at present in use for the same duty.

MOTOR VEHICLES.

It seems to be part of the sturdy Briton's character that he should be conservative in his suspicion of new-fangled devices; anyhow, he is extremely slow to adopt inventions and discoveries which other nations are willing at once to assimilate. The habit has its drawbacks; but it has the pretty constant advantage that we leave the great expense and trouble of experiment to others, and profit much in the end by their labours. It has been especially so with the motor-car

business, which, although so popular in France and other countries, has been so slowly taken up here that the sight of a motor-car in our streets still attracts attention and excites remark. A new era has, however, recently dawned for the Metropolis, where motor-omnibuses are now in regular use. It remains to be seen whether these mechanically propelled road-vehicles will so familiarise the public with their use as to cause a greatly increased employment for them. One of the difficulties in the way is to familiarise horses, as well as human beings, with the appearance of the new vehicles.

DESTRUCTION OF SMALL BIRDS.

The question of the slaughter of small birds, to whose labours in keeping down insect pests the agriculturist owes so much, again and again comes up for discussion. Some good has been done in persuading ladies not to buy bird's plumage for the decoration of their headgear; but the birds have other enemies besides the milliners. A correspondent of the *Times*, who dates his letter from Padua, complains of what he rightly calls the grievous sights to be seen in the market-places of many Italian towns. In these towns hundreds and hundreds of singing birds, many of them migrants from the British Isles, are daily sold for the dinner-table: wood-peckers, kingfishers, goldfinches, wrens, robins, larks, and blackbirds; indeed, all the songsters of our hedgerows are found there for sale. The Italian law forbids this slaughter of small birds, but it goes on nevertheless; and until the people refuse to eat such fare, as all right-minded people will, the mischief must continue. Unfortunately the right-minded persons do not form the majority, either in Italy or anywhere else.

THE FOOD OF SOLDIERS AND SAILORS.

Much difference of opinion has existed as to the best kind of ration for soldiers and sailors in tropical climates; and in order to get the best opinion on the subject a prize of a hundred dollars, or a medal of that value, has been offered by Dr Louis L. Seaman for the best paper on the subject. The title of the paper is to be 'The Ideal Ration for an Army in the Tropics,' and the competition is open to all commissioned medical officers of the American army and navy, regular and volunteer. The prize is offered through the Military Service Institution of America, and all papers must be submitted by the 1st of March next year.

A NEW CYCLE LOCK.

Messrs Tranter & Co., of Trowbridge, have introduced a clever little device, which will be

welcomed by cyclists, under the name of the 'cyclok.' It can be affixed with great facility to the steering-head of any machine, and adds only one ounce to the weight which the rider has to carry. The chief feature of the appliance is a bolt with a milled head, a quarter-turn of which will lock the steering in the ordinary way; but a complete locking can be effected by giving the bolt another quarter-turn. From this fully locked condition the machine cannot be released without the use of a key, so that the introduction of the new device will not be applauded by the light-fingered fraternity who devote their attention to the abstraction of bicycles.

'WIRELESS WONDERS.'

Under this somewhat sensational heading some of the experiments with wireless telegraphy in connection with the British Association meeting at Dover were described. But there was absolutely nothing new introduced, and the experiments were, as usual, confined to the Channel. Communication was made with the South Foreland, 'through,' it was stated, four miles of cliff; but expert opinion is divided whether the electric waves do not *pass over*, rather than *penetrate*, an obstruction of this kind. Special importance was attached to the fact that a message was received from Boulogne in three minutes, as compared with 'invariably not less than an hour' occupied in getting a cable message from Boulogne or Calais to Dover. On the face of the matter, this is rather crushing for the cable, because it is difficult to get the newspaper-reading public to understand that there is all the difference in the world between pre-arranged experiments, specially laid out for success, and ordinary, everyday practical working. If a cable could be cleared of its ordinary traffic, and operators were seated at either end ready to transmit a single message, it could probably be got through in even less than three minutes; it being the number and length of the messages, and not the passage of the electric current, which occupies time. If a comparison is to be made with cables, let us suppose that half-a-score, or even half-a-dozen, Marconis are trying to signal across the Channel at the same time—would not babel be the result? The drawback to 'wireless telegraphy,' so called, is that it requires a monopoly of the sea, and that is rather a large order. But you may lay as many cables as you like across the Channel, and each may contain as many wires, and you may be 'speaking' to half the capitals of Europe at the same time, and there would not be the least misunderstanding or confusion. This it is which constitutes the advantage of tying the electric current to a wire. The public has made up its mind not to be instructed in this matter, and has been throwing away its cable shares to the tune of some millions, on the chance of cables becoming useless and antiquated.

Well might the newly-appointed electrician to the Post-Office exclaim, as he did to an interviewer the other day, 'People seem to have gone wild over wireless telegraphy!' The Americans have taken the matter more philosophically, for while

the *New York Herald* admits that its Marconi messages in connection with the yacht races worked perfectly, it adds: 'No practical advantage is apparent, the accustomed methods being quite as good.'

FENLAND COLLIERIES.



Afternoon fades into evening on a late autumn day a peculiar note, almost of sadness, strikes a visitor for the first time to one of those hoary old villages which dot the borders of the Fenland district of south-west Norfolk. The old church, towering gray and silent up into the murky air; the cottage doors close shut, with suggestions of inmates indicated by shadows thrown fitfully by the flickering firelight on the drawn blinds—shadows mostly moving round and near some central object, doubtless the tea-table, waiting the husband's return from the rapidly darkening fields and homesteads. These features produce in one an almost melancholy impression of homelessness, which happily is not of long duration when once 'mine inn' opens its hospitable doors, and welcomes the wanderers with blazing fire and good cheer.

In passing down the almost deserted streets—for the children have been home from school a good hour—one cannot have failed to notice a peculiarly pungent odour permeating the heavy autumnal atmosphere; and upon entering the cosy room and drawing near the cheerful blaze, the source of this wholesome pungency is at once discovered; for the fire which glows so cheerily on the hearth is fed with fuel locally obtained—that is to say, dug from the fen hard by. The peculiar odour impregnating the air arises from this 'turf'—as it is called here, not 'peat'—and is locally considered, perhaps with some amount of truth, a great preventive of chest attacks.

Nearly all these villages we have mentioned are situated on the shoulder of the high ground rising from and keeping sentry over the Fenland; and, should the morning be a bright one, a walk to the crest of the upland will show a considerable area of the land of dikes under panoramic conditions. The fen itself hardly ever receives justice when viewed from a distance, even in the summer. Under these circumstances a peculiarly sombre tint makes itself apparent in the herbage, and a grayness in the foliage. But down there among the ditches—drains they call them—with the sun shining brightly, and the breeze softly caressing the waving ramparts of sedge, reeds, cat's-tails, and moisture-loving plants of all kinds that rise tier above tier from some neglected drain—under these conditions, the

prodigality of natural beauty is a revelation. Here in this overgrown ditch is a creamy, swaying mass of meadow-sweet, foaming high over the heads of the other and lesser growths, its almond-like perfume floating afar on the breeze.

The birds like the fen, too. Here they are to be seen in myriads; at times many species of great rarity. These large gatherings are doubtless attracted by the varied insect-life thronging every leaf and bloom.

But we are not here botanising or bird-hunting, but to see how and whence the 'turf' is obtained which forms such an important item in the economy of the district.

Large areas of the fens have a thick substratum of blue clay or gault. This, when raised and spread over the land, with which it becomes amalgamated by frost and mechanical means, is not only the most natural but also the most efficacious fertiliser of this class of land. The 'turf' obtained from above this clay is the hardest and best. Unfortunately the layer is a thin one, more frequently but one turf (twelve inches) deep. The next best locality, with no clay beneath, though not yielding quite so good a quality, shows a stratum sometimes three turfs deep. There is another class of fenland which yields no 'turf' at all, but consists (till black, slimy depths are reached) of nothing but loose, friable black earth of poor fertility.

The operation of 'turfig' is carried on during spring and early summer. The locality where digging is to commence having been fixed upon, the first operation is to clear from a space one yard wide and the length of the intended turf-pit the loose top-soil called 'moor' to the depth of ten or twelve inches, when the turf is reached, which has a soapy kind of solidity. A special tool is now brought into requisition, known as a 'becket'; this tool is a kind of wooden spade, shod with a steel cutting-edge, and ganged, by a slip of steel at right angles to the blade, to the correct width and thickness of the brick or 'hod' of turf required; the length of each 'hod' is the depth of the spade (twelve inches). Nine of these bricks are taken from the whole width of the pit (thirty-six inches). As they are dug they are deposited on the ground beside the open pit, where a regular wall is built of them, with interstices left between them for the admission of air and sunshine to dry them.

After lying in this wall for a week or two, according to the weather, they are turned, and as soon as thoroughly dry are either carted home to be deposited in sheds, or are stacked up on the land in large squares, with the tops well protected; as, if they get wet after being once dried, they break and crumble very easily, and much waste is occasioned by handling them.

Turf-diggers frequently have their operations not only hindered but entirely stopped by the numerous portions of long-submerged trees which lie deep down in the heart of the 'turf' stratum. Many of the gate-posts in the locality are made from logs of oak unearthed in this manner, the wood being in splendid preservation and extremely hard. One peculiarity attaching to these buried trees, and which affords much scope for scientific speculation, is that they all lie in one direction, much as though some terrific tempest-blast had smitten them to the earth at one and the same moment. Other odds and ends of antiquarian interest have been found.

Many of these turf-diggers and others hire a small piece of this fenland, which not only yields litter and coarse fodder for pony or donkey, but keeps the cottage fireside bright and cheerful; and the contemplation of the out-house, packed to its tiles with these black bricks, brings many a smile to the mother's

lips that would not otherwise be there, as she thinks of the tiny hands and faces that will not seek in vain its warmth and brightness.

DEATH OF THE OLD YEAR.

Thy life is ebbing fast, thou aged Year!
This night that wintry sun of thine will set,
To rise no more. Thy days are told; and yet
It seems but yesterday thou didst appear!
But yesternight we watched, all silent, here,
The old Year's dying hours, while backward rolled
Its story, page by page; and now, behold!
Thy course is run. Even now thy moments wear
The fading hue of death. Farewell, old Friend!
Fain would we linger by thy side awhile,
And gather up thy memories, one by one,
While, in the vacant chairs, dear faces smile
Upon us, as of old. But ever on,
Life's current bears us—swifter to the end!

M. C. C.

* * TO CONTRIBUTORS.

- 1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'
- 2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.
- 3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.
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CHRISTMAS 1899.

THE BRANCH BANK AT MOOROOBIN.

By JOHN ARTHUR BARRY,

AUTHOR OF 'STEVE BROWN'S BUNYIP' AND 'IN THE GREAT DEEP.'

CHAPTER I.

THE man at Moorroobin's shot himself, Chesney; and you have to take charge. For goodness' sake do the best you can for us, and see if you can't change the luck!' In such words did I receive my promotion as manager of a branch of the Bank of New Carpentaria at a far-in-land Australian township. Some people might have been proud of the chance. But I was not particularly so. Indeed, I would much rather have stayed at headquarters in Brisbane. Moorroobin had a shocking reputation amongst us. In the two years since the opening, four managers had come to grief there. One poisoned himself with strychnine; one died in *delirium tremens*; one wandered away into the bush, to be found dead and almost naked weeks afterwards. And now, to finish up in sympathy with them, Mostyn must go and blow his brains out! No wonder that I did not show much elation as the chief spoke, or that my fellow-officials took as solemn a farewell of me as if it were for the last time.

When I eventually reached Moorroobin I did not altogether wonder at the way those other fellows had carried on, for a more hopeless place you never saw in your life. In the heart of the back-blocks, nearly two hundred miles

from the nearest railway, dumped down on a bit of dusty plain fair in the sun's eye, stood the couple of score or so of shanties that constituted the township.

To every point of the compass, far as the eye could reach from the highest elevation attainable, stretched a sea of *brigalow* and *mulga* scrub interspersed with great swamps of polygum, or, as the local term went, *lignum*. A deep crack in the earth, running in tortuous bends no one knew whither, was called the Mooroo River. At times there was water in its bed—perhaps once in three years; at others it was merely a dusty, burr-lined furrow, with sides rounded by the trampling of stock passing through in hundreds of thousands, both sheep and cattle, on their way to southern markets. And indescribably dreary and mean as the place seemed, in reality, so far as our business went, it was of importance, as being not only the centre of a vast pastoral district, but including within its boundaries a new and promising goldfield. The bank itself, like many of the others, was a 'frame structure'—that is, one formed of boards brought up by teams from the railway terminus, and each piece marked ready to put into position; the roof was of galvanised iron; and there were, in addition to the business apartment—furnished with a broad counter, a

few desks, and a second-hand safe—a couple of small bedrooms. Both my accountant and myself slept in the house, but had our meals at the hotel across the road—a nondescript building of iron, weather-boards, round saplings, and calico. There were other three 'hotels,' varying little in style of architecture, but all giving the *pas* for fashion to the 'Imperial,' in which the bank manager took his meals in the 'parlour,' mostly in solitary state, except for the company of a million flies, unless a 'boss drover,' the ubiquitous 'commercial,' or a stray squatter or two should happen to drop in.

Rolleston, my assistant, was a nice lad of about nineteen, drafted out of the head office to gain experience. A native, and an uncommonly good-looking one—blessed, too, with a huge fund of animal spirits that enabled him to cheerfully swallow flies, and treat fleas, ants, mosquitoes, dust, heat, and the general abomination of the place in a Micawber-like spirit that made me envious—he speedily explored the resources of the surrounding country as regarded social pleasures.

'Mostly bachelor stations,' he declared after a few Saturdays and Sundays of conscientious riding in every direction. 'Awfully slow shops, where they can talk nothing but stock, stock, stock; live like hermits; up at daylight, to bed at dark; no music, no singing, no nothing.'

'No girls anywhere, Charlie?' I asked.

'Only at Flett's,' he replied, the quick blood crimsoning in his fair cheeks. 'My word, Esth—Miss Flett—is a beauty, if you like. Better come out and see her for yourself,' he added, noticing my rather incredulous smile.

'I've seen her brother,' I answered, 'and don't think much of him at any rate. You know, of course, he is a customer of ours, and a precious bad one at that. From what I can make out, Mostyn advanced him more than his whole place and stock are worth; and now he wants more money still. He certainly won't get it from me until I can be sure of how matters really are at Koortani. I expect I shall have to visit the station presently, but not altogether to see Miss Flett. And, Charlie,' I continued, 'if I were you I wouldn't get so thick with them. It will be rather awkward—won't it?—if the bank has presently to take possession. I have no objection to an occasional visit; but I don't care about this Saturday till Monday morning business you are going in for of late.'

Perhaps I spoke rather sharply, but I disliked William Flett intensely, even from the little I had seen of him at our first interview, in which he had, when refused an advance on a block of freehold already held by us at what I had ascertained was more than its value, asserted that 'the — bank was robbing him.' Charlie made no reply, but I could see that

for the rest of the evening he was thoughtful—a rather unusual mood for him.

To my surprise, the next morning Miss Flett herself turned up, and attempted to succeed where her brother had failed. It being a slack time, Charlie had gone over to Bundarubba, a township of much the same size and quality as our own. Thus I was quite alone when I saw a woman ride up to the door, and, springing lightly off a bay horse, tie him to the rail, gather her habit over her arm, and enter the bank. About twenty-two or twenty-three years of age; tall, with an almost perfect figure; dark oval face, out of which flashed a pair of great black eyes; a large but well-formed mouth full of fine teeth, now showing in a pleasant smile as she met my, doubtless, inquiring gaze. Esther Flett was, as Rolleston had said, a beautiful girl, and quite unlike anything I had pictured to myself from my knowledge of her uncouth brother.

'I have come,' she began at once in a clear, loud voice, 'Mr Chesney, to apologise for William's behaviour the other day. I'm afraid he must have been too long at the bar of the "Imperial" yonder. Anyhow, he's sorry now for what he said. And he made me promise to ride in and tell you as much. And, Mr Chesney,' she continued, leaning both arms on the counter and smiling most bewitchingly, whilst making great play with those wonderful eyes of hers, 'you really must let us have that five hundred pounds on the Wilga block. Surely you couldn't refuse such old customers as we are?'

Although only a few years older than herself, I was born a long way north of the Tweed, also was rather unimpressible as regarded the sex—with one exception. And the latter fact it was, perhaps, that enabled me, having recovered my first surprise, to answer coolly enough, 'Thank you for the apology, Miss Flett. I should have thought more of your brother, however, if he could have seen his way to bring it himself. As to the advance, I regret to say that the utmost I can promise is to lay your proposal before my directors.'

I suppose the tone I spoke in sounded final—I know I tried to make it so—for, as I finished, the full voluptuous lips tightened gradually, whilst in the middle of the broad, low brow appeared a deep vertical furrow, and the big eyes simply blazed with fury as her gauntleted hand pressed the silver hammer of her whip deep into the soft pine barrier between us.

For perhaps a minute she stood staring intently at me. Then all at once the great threatening frown relaxed and smoothed out, the fierce light in her velvety eyes smouldered down, the scarlet curve of her lips showed again, and, with a laugh, she said saucily, 'Well, Mr Chesney, you're a hard man. I suppose we'll have to go over to Mr Mayhew at Bundarubba—the

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opposition pawnbroking establishment, you know—and see what he'll do for us. Poor Harry Mostyn wouldn't have served me so meanly.'

'And where is poor Harry Mostyn now, I wonder?' I asked grimly, and perhaps pitilessly, as she lowered her veil and turned away.

'At rest, I hope and trust,' she replied in a low voice, facing me and crossing herself devoutly. And for just one moment I felt myself a brute. Then, mindful of the look, by turns cajoling, languishing, tempting, then almost tiger-like in its intense fierceness, that I had seen in those eyes of hers, I turned impatiently to my ledgers as she sprang into her saddle and cantered away down the street in a cloud of dust. But I could not fix my attention on the work, as ever between my gaze and the long columns of figures rose that beautiful face, one minute distorted by passion, the next shining in careless smiles. Truly an extraordinary creature to find in such a place!

Just then an old hawker came in with a bundle of dirty cheques on half-a-dozen different banks that he wished to place to his credit.

'I met that Flett gal,' he presently remarked, with bush freedom, as I carefully scanned his paper. 'She was goin' like thunder down the road yonder. 'Speck,' he continued, chuckling, 'she'd been tryin' to work the horacle off on you same's she used to try it on afore with the others. You bet she's a smart un is Esther! So was her dad. I knowed him thirty year ago—ole Flett—when he was carryin' on the roads. Made a bit o' money them days wi' loadin' at five pounds a ton. Then he took up Koortani, an' got switched to Susie Penton as kep' the "Bushman's Joy" over at Pine Ridge. Ay, ay, I mind him well. Hard ole nut he was. But, from all I can hear, it's close up a cooey with the station.'

'Cheques are all right, Dickson,' I said presently, 'except this one of William Flett's. Account's overdrawn here. However, it's on the New Guinea branch at Bundarubba. There may be enough to meet it. Better take it to Mr Mayhew and see. I can't touch it.'

'Well, blow my Moses!' exclaimed the old man, in huge disgust. 'Now, I wonder who rung that thing in to me, knowin' my eyes is gettin' cronk? Well, well! it's only thirty bob, so it won't make nor break me. Catch me takin' paper o' Bill Flett's if I'd knowed it. Not much! Why, even in his bes' days you couldn't trust ole Pablo, an' his son's a dashed sight slipperier!'

'Pablo!' I exclaimed. 'Why, that's a foreign name—Spanish or Portuguese?'

'Well,' replied old Dickson grumpily as I handed him his deposit receipt, 'wasn't ole Flett a furriner? A Spanisher, or a Maltee, or a Carthelic, or somethin' I forgi's what now. An' his proper name wasn't Flett neither, but Valetto. Then in time they shortens it same 1839.]

as it is now. Can't ye see the furrin blood in the children? That there Bill's mean enough to skin a flea for the sake o' the taller. But the gal ain't bad-earted. There's no traveller ever leaves the station wantin' a bit o' ration when Miss Esther's about. Well, I mus' be gittin'. Got to push on to Cubby to-night. So long, mister.'

CHAPTER II.



'ES,' the sergeant said, 'I expect it's safe enough. The district's a quiet one; and even if anybody knew, they wouldn't be likely to meddle. Still, if I were you, I'd feel more comfortable if somebody was in charge—say Mr Rolleston, now? Of course Cat-eyed Jim's right as rain. So are all the drivers on the line. And'—

'I've got to obey orders, sergeant,' I replied, 'exactly the same as yourself. Only my bosses are stricter, if anything, than yours. I confess I'd be easier in my mind if there was a man with the money. But the people below say expressly to book as ordinary merchandise through Cobb & Co.'s agent. So there you are! I'll just put the stuff in a couple of boxes—two thousand five hundred pounds in each—and send them away. As it came safely, so it may return.'

Some weeks after Esther Flett's visit the sum of five thousand pounds had arrived from the capital in anticipation of a contingency that never came off. I am writing of the time of the '93 banking troubles. During these a run was fully expected by the parent bank and its country branches—fortunately very few in number compared with some of the others. Therefore, all precautions had been taken to provide against such an event. But although the public rushed other and larger banks, they never once troubled that of New Carpentaria. Now, so much specie being unnecessary, in addition to the rather large sum in hand for gold buying, I was about returning my share of the defence fund to headquarters. Hence my talk with Sergeant Devine on the veranda of the 'Imperial.' Besides myself, the sergeant, of course Rolleston, and, at the last minute, Cobb & Co.'s agent, I was perfectly certain that no one knew the gold was to be despatched. On the boxes were merely the letters 'B.N.C.' in black paint; and in the way-bill was an item, 'Bank of New Carpentaria, Brisbane; two packages.'

As at ten o'clock one dark night the coach stopped opposite our shanty, and Rolleston and I carried the boxes out and stowed them away in the body of the vehicle under a mass of mail-bags and parcels, Cat-eyed Jim—so called from his

supposed ability to see in the dark—chuckled, and remarked from the box-seat that he'd 'take 'em for his year's little cheque, strike him bandy if he wouldn't'; whilst a Chinese, the only passenger inside, grunted and swore as the corner of one dropped on his toe.

In another minute the whip cracked and the four fresh horses plunged away with the mass of steel springs, hickory, and leather that went to make up the Royal Mail, as if it were a feather-weight behind them.

Of Miss Flett I had of late seen nothing, for she seldom came into the township. Her brother, however, had often been at the 'Imperial'—a tall, awkward, knock-kneed fellow, swarthy as a gipsy, and even in his cups dour and sullen. But with it all there was a look of his sister about him, especially in eyes and scowl. I never spoke to him, and on his part he seemed anxious, if anything, to avoid me. Nor was ever any reference made to that errand of his sister's. Rolleston, I was sorry to notice, continued his visits to Koortani. But of course, beyond a certain limit, my authority carried no weight with him. In his own time he was able to do as he pleased. And I was grieved to perceive that every minute he could spare was passed at the station which, only a couple of miles from the township, was so easy of access, well supplied as he was with horseflesh by the Fletts. Of late Charlie had changed from the light-hearted, cheerful lad of former days into a morose, gloomy-tempered one, whose rare laughter sounded forced and unreal. He grew thin, too, and all the bright colour forsook his cheeks; he lost his appetite, and, as I could plainly hear, moaned and babbled in his sleep.

'The first calf-love,' said Devine, one of the few men with whom I enjoyed a chat. 'Takes 'em all so. It's like prickly heat—throw cold water on it and it'll itch the more. Best way to let it run its course. The young woman up there's only playing with him. It's her nature to. Last time she had the manager. No go this shot—eh? So took second best.' And the sergeant laughed and darted a quizzical glance at me as we sat smoking in his quarters.

The third morning after the departure of the mail I was awakened by some one pounding heavily on the door of the bank. Rising and unlocking it, I saw the sergeant, his eyes sparkling with excitement as he exclaimed, 'Mr Chesney, the coach has been bailed up and all the money stolen!'

For a minute I thought he was joking. But a second look at his earnest face undeceived me. Hurriedly dressing, I followed Devine over to the 'Imperial,' where at a table sat Cat-eyed Jim, very pale and worn, eating ravenously; whilst about the room and doors, early as it was, clustered Moorobin—man, woman, and child—black, white, and yellow.

'Now,' said the sergeant as at last Jim, with a sigh of repletion, leant back in his chair, 'let's hear all about it.'

'Well,' said Jim, leisurely shredding tobacco into his palm as he spoke, 'you know since the company shifted the stage it's a good thirty mile from 'ere to Deep Crick. Howsomever, I gits to the Crick about 'arf-past three. It were a fine night enough; an' I whips my 'orses up the steep bank outer the dry gully, when, jest as I gits to the top an' stands for a spell on the cleared line, a 'orseman comes outer the scrub to the right 'and an' shouts, "Bail up, or I'll blow a 'ole through ye!"

"Oh," sez I, larfin', an' thinkin' it was one o' the blokes from the stage lookin' fer 'orses, "shut yer silly mouth; do, an' don't go actin' the goat at this time o' night." Well, I 'adn't 'ardly spoke when bang goes a pistol, an' ping goes a bullet jest parst my ear'ole. Well, a joke's a joke; but yer knows, sargint, as there's a meejum.'

Pausing at this, the cat-eyed one commenced to deliberately fill an old briar pipe whose bowl bore signs, in charred and ragged edges, of many a windy night. I was writhing with impatience.

But the sergeant, touching me on the shoulder, said, 'Give the beggar rope or he'll turn dog on us and sulk like a Jew lizard. I know him. He's had a pretty tough length to split, too, these last twenty-four hours. Patience!'

Amongst the crowd at the door I could see Rolleston's white face peering with eager, haggard eyes. Over all their heads the flaming sun rested on the top of a clump of silvery *brigalows* somewhat higher than their fellows, and shot hot beams across on the iron roofs; the hum of early legions of flies filled the room, foul with overnight fumes of rum and tobacco; on the veranda squatted a dozen black fellows with their gins, stolid and speechless except for an occasional grunt of 'Gib it bacca?' 'Gib it chillin'?' It was only 5 A.M., but I knew that the mercury was rapidly climbing up the nineties, for already the crowd was sweating freely, and glasses were beginning to clink and clatter in the adjoining bar. But at last Jim got his pipe in going order, and resumed:

'Well, as I sez, there's a meejum. An' two quid a week don't run to bullet-'oles. So when I sees another 'orseman ride outer the scrub an' collar the leaders, I chucks it, an' ups with my 'ands. Inside I hears John Chinaman screechin' like a bloomin' 'possum as the fust feller hauls 'im out an' ties 'im up like a killin' wether. Meantimes, t'other feller's got the 'arness off o' them 'orses quick an' lively, an' turned 'em loose inter the scrub.

"Come down outer that, driver!" is the nex' performance. Down I comes. It's dark o' course. But it ain't so dark but what I kin

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see they've got thick black veils on, an' that one o' their 'orses 'as four big white stockin's. John's a-grumblin' an' cursin' like billy-ho, an' one o' the chaps fetches 'im a wipe over the nut that quietens 'im. Then they ties my 'ands—soaked green 'ide strips, all nice an' ready—marches me away inter the scrub, an' lashes me up 'ard an' fast to a saplin'.

"If it's the mails yer after," I sez, "take what yer want, but don't destroy nothin'. That'll make it all the easier fer ye bimebye when ye gits yer fifteen stretch fer rob'ry hunder harms."

"Shut up, ye cat-eyed cow!" sez one perlately, "or Cobb & Co. 'll 'ave a drivin' wacancy."

'So I shuts up. Then they marches John off inter the scrub on t'other side o' the road, drags the coach outer sight, an' presen'y I 'ears 'em go tramplin' off down the bed o' the crick.

'Well,' continued Jim after tossing off a tumbler of rum and water, 'arter a bit I starts cooein' like anythin', an' John he answers from t'other side. An' I thinks, "Surely somebody mus' come along presen'y an' 'ear the shivoo the pair of us is makin'." But you knows traffic is scarce this time o' the year, an' I got that 'oarse I 'ad to give in at last. Likewise the greenhide ties begins to dry and shrink an' cut like blazes. All that night an' nex' day till sundown we was there till Bill an' Joe from the changin'-stage, gettin' scared at no mail a-comin', started out to look fer 'er, an' picks up 'er tracks; an', a bit arter, 'ears John a-singin', off his 'ead. Presen'y they 'ears me likewise a-ravin', bein' pretty bad with the 'eat an' the cuttin' o' them 'ide strips. 'Owever, arter a drink o' water an' a mouthful o' johnny-cake, I soon bucks up to the mark, an' leavin' John to go on to the change-hut, I gits Bill's 'orse 'an comes along 'ere like thunder. The mails ain't touched, ne'er a bag of 'em. All that was took is Mr Chesney's two boxes. Enuff, too, I 'speck!'

'Evidently they knew you, Jim,' remarked the sergeant, motioning for silence as a babble of comments and guesses broke out amongst the crowd when those inside retired and related what they had heard. 'Are you sure you didn't recognise either of the fellows—their voices, now?'

'Couldn't swear to neither of 'em,' replied the driver. 'An' as fer their voices, why, they didn't talk much, an' then they mumbled and muttered like as they 'ad the toothache awful bad.'

Half-an-hour after listening to Jim's story, the sergeant, myself, and Boney the black tracker were cantering along towards Deep Creek.

'What's the weight of five thousand sovereigns, Mr Chesney?' asked the sergeant as we 1899.]

sped through the bush, following Boney, in short cuts that took miles and miles off the distance.

'About as much as one man could carry, and give him all he knew how,' I replied.

'Umph!' said the sergeant, relapsing into silence, and evidently thinking hard.

Landscape there is none in far-western Queensland—only a monotony in greens, differing in shade from the silvery-sage of the *brigalow* to the deep, dull hue of *yarran* and *mulga*, with an occasional brighter glimpse of drooping *wilga* or lightwood. At times across the track taken by Boney on his old flea-bitten grey, a mob of kangaroos would go thud-thudding, or a flock of emus waddle swiftly with outstretched necks and quivering bodies; whilst now and again a score of white tags would flash out of sight as we disturbed a colony of rabbits feeding on some sandhill. At times we travelled over miles of *ligum* swamps, rough and honeycombed with holes out of which grew thick clumps of wiry polygonum, whose tender tops, when green, stock are fond of; then for miles again our course lay through scrub. Umbrella-*mulga* and the evil-smelling *gidyea*, with its yellow blossoms; feathery *brigalow*; an occasional leopard-tree; emu, cotton, and *budda* bushes with leaves of deep green, shining as if newly lacquered; willow-like *wilgas* and spiny needle-woods, together with dozens of minutely-flowered shrubs, mostly bearing blossoms of a white and lilac colour, that no botanist has yet named. Squatter pigeons whirled like rockets from the seeding *brigalows*; thousands of pink-breasted *galahs* rose from the *nardoo* patches to the sound of our horses' hoofs thumping on the sandy soil. And always above us the hot sun and blue sky; ever to right and left, ahead and behind, the monotony of greens.

'You're certain, Mr Chesney,' asked the sergeant, breaking silence after his long spell of thinking, 'that nobody except us three—yourself, I, and Mr Rolleston—knew that the gold was to leave at any particular time—say a day or so before it was actually put in the coach?'

'Positively certain,' I replied.

'Umph!' muttered the sergeant once more.

All at once with a quick wheel Boney bore to the left through a clump of hop-bush, and, before we knew it, we cantered out into the main road. Then, descending and ascending the banks of a dry creek, in another minute or so we were at the scene of the 'sticking up,' with the black fellow off his horse and nosing about like a hound at fault. At fault, decidedly; for though he could show us where the bushrangers had waited on their horses till they heard the mail coming, he could do no more. There were tracks in every direction around where the released coach-horses had fed on the scanty

tussocks and then wandered down the creek-bed, probably looking for water after their heavy stage.

'Baal mine tink it find that pfeller,' said Boney after circling about for an hour or so. 'Too much *yarraman tinna* [horses' feet] alonga this country.'

Certainly Boney was not the black tracker of fiction, able to run a lizard's trail over a mile of rocks at a full canter! At the changing-place—merely a rough log hut, rougher stable, and a small paddock—whither we presently rode, we found only the Chinese and Bill, one of the grooms, whose mate, Joe, had gone on with the coach.

The former was quite recovered, and showed us with pride and exultation a ten-pound note, half-chewed, which at the first alarm he had stuffed into his mouth. But to all Devine's inquiries as to his having recognised the men it was simply, 'No savee.'

And yet it was from 'John' that the sergeant obtained the clue that led to the final discovery and its accompanying tragedy. As, after a rough meal, we were about to depart, I saw him beckon the sergeant, and, with a grin on his lemon-coloured visage, whisper something in his ear, to which Devine only answered severely, 'Rot, John! You've been dreaming. D'ye take me for a new chum?' At which John only grinned the more, and blandly remarked, 'All li! You no b'lieve me. You tink Ah Kee fool—eh?'

And I noticed that the sergeant bothered about no more tracking, but whistled and talked and chatted in a way that bothered me not a little, full of concern as I was, and anxious to be doing something towards finding the lost money. Half-way to Moorrobin, Devine and the tracker struck off across country towards a mining township lately sprung up some forty miles distant, leaving me to jog home alone and in a very bad temper.

Of course I was not to blame, for I had executed my instructions to the letter. And amongst bank servants, as with seamen, it is a pretty safe maxim to 'obey orders if you break owners.' Still, I knew—none better—that, although my superiors said never a word, the business was very far from conducive to promotion, and the consequent possession of the only girl in the world.

Since the days of the 'Kelly Gang' it was the most important haul of the kind—indeed, almost the only one—and therefore made some noise in the colony. The Bank of New Carpentaria offered one hundred pounds reward; the Government followed suit with a similar amount. But the robbers had disappeared utterly. Nor in the whole district could any horse be found carrying four white stockings. And if Devine suspected anything, he kept his own counsel very closely.

CHAPTER III.



MAITERS presently became more complicated. Mayhew, the manager of the New Guinea branch at Bundarubba, rode across one Saturday to condole with me on my ill-fortune. At least that was his ostensible mission; but in reality he was only too pleased to get a chance of crowing over one of the opposition men, and one, too, who had diverted a lot of business from his bank to the Bank of New Carpentaria. However, I received him hospitably, and listened with the best patience I could whilst he laid down the law as to the safe conveyance of specie, and remarked that in the course of a similar New Guinea transaction such a loss would have been impossible, all its officers being allowed a free hand in taking any precaution they might think fit.

'Why,' said he, 'I've got three thousand pounds in gold now at home that I am going to send down next week. But, you bet! M'Grath and a loaded "colt" rides with it in the coach. Indeed, I don't know that, now, after your affair, Chesney, I won't apply for an escort.'

When, however, poor Mayhew reached Bundarubba next day he found his accountant, M'Grath, strapped to his bed, blindfolded and nearly dead from suffocation by gagging with a towel. Also, the safe had been opened and looted bare of every coin it contained.

Late on Saturday night, it appeared, Mr M'Grath, while reading in bed, heard a horse stamping outside on the veranda, as at times stray ones would do, seeking refuge from mosquitoes. As he opened the door to drive the intruder away, two masked men had rushed in, and in five minutes had him fixed up very snugly. The building stood well back from the street, and was nearly hidden by trees, so there was no fear of the robbers being disturbed by the occupants of any of the straggling residences around.

As to the men, M'Grath could give positively no information whatever. The whole affair was so sudden that, as he expressed it, 'Be jakers! it was all over in a flash—so it was. An' me lyin' trussed up nate loike a turkey at Christmas-toime.'

Then for a while the district fairly swarmed with police and trackers, who scoured the scrub for miles around. But they found nothing except the visionary 'clues to the perpetrators of the daring outrage' that the metropolitan papers credited them with.

About this time I received a second visit from Esther Flett. Of late we had been buying a fair quantity of gold; and even as she entered the bank young Rolleston was busy weighing a

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parcel that had just come in. He looked up as she walked over to the counter, and I caught the swift, alluring, passionate glance she shot at him out of her splendid eyes, and noticed how the lad's colour came and went, and heard the delicate scales chink in his trembling hands. But the woman was a born actress, and the next minute she was speaking to me in the quiet, subdued voice of a client aware of being deeply on the wrong side of the ledger.

'My brother is unwell, Mr Chesney,' she said, with a deprecating little smile and downcast eyes, 'and as we are thinking of putting Koortani in the market and leaving the district, he asked me to call and ascertain the total amount of our liabilities with your bank. Of course,' she added hurriedly, 'we should be quite unable to redeem the whole of the original mortgage. Still, the sale ought to enable us to pay the greater part of it, together with the interest up to date.'

Now, I was very angry at the manner in which she had snared, and, as I was only too certain, was playing with Charlie, solely, I thought, for her own amusement, and nothing more serious. Thus there was perhaps a spice of exultation in my voice as I replied, 'I am afraid, Miss Flett, that, with respect to Koortani, the time for entertaining terms from its owners has long gone by. Indeed, I have quite lately received advices from headquarters intimating the directors' intention of presently taking over the station and installing a manager of their own.'

I had expected, and perhaps rather wished, to provoke an outburst with this bit of information. But, to my surprise, she only laughed carelessly, and looking me full in the face, replied quietly, 'Dear me! How kind of them! Well, then, I suppose the sooner we start for Western Australia the better, if you are going to put a bailiff in. Nor need we trouble about liabilities now. Many thanks, Mr Chesney. I was sorry to hear of your misfortune. I hope you haven't debited that to the Koortani account! Good-morning to you.—*Au revoir*, Mr Rolleston,' she continued, crossing over and shaking hands with Charlie. 'Will would like to see you at the station to-morrow, and will send a horse in. You know we may not have many more chances of meeting if the bailiff is so soon to arrive.' And, giving me a parting nod of indifference, she glided out, followed by Charlie, who put her on her horse and stood talking for a few minutes.

'Was that a fact about the bank taking over the station?' he asked as he returned.

'Of course it was,' I replied gruffly. 'Do you think I would be likely to joke on such matters?'

'I'm sick and tired of this business,' he replied irrelevantly. 'I'm going to sling it. I'll send in my resignation next week.'

'Yes, do,' I said angrily, 'and follow the 1899.]

family to Western Australia. Don't be so silly, Charlie,' I continued in a softer voice, for the sight of the boy's face drawn with grief distressed me more than I cared to show. 'Are you going to ruin yourself utterly for the sake of a woman like that?'

'I won't hear a word against her, Mr Chesney!' he exclaimed, stiffening defiantly. 'She's an angel, and I'd follow her all over the world. What I've done has been for her sake, and of my own free will.'

'Well, I don't see that you've done very much except make a fool of yourself,' I replied dryly. 'Better go back to your work.'

The next evening Devine strolled in.

'I suppose,' he remarked after some talk, 'that you'll be sending gold away soon. I've noticed you've been buying pretty freely of late. And if so, I wish you'd do me a favour.'

'Yes,' I replied, 'I have a parcel ready now, as far as that goes. And this time I'll see that it gets to the railway in safety, anyhow. But what's the favour?'

'Well,' replied the sergeant, 'I wish you not to let a soul know about the matter except myself and—oh yes, of course, Mr Rolleston. Fact is,' continued Devine, 'I've got an idea, and perhaps if you'll help me to work it out, between us we may chance to recover that five thousand pounds. You'd not object to that, would you?'

'Indeed I wouldn't,' I replied. 'But this idea, now?'

'Well,' he went on, slowly puffing at his cigar, 'I'd rather not tell you the whole theory I'm building on, if you don't mind. It's a sort of trap, in fact. Probably it may fail. Still, you can help me to bait it. The coach comes through on Saturday night, under the altered table. Well, we can put the gold on board, and you'd better come yourself. Oh yes, and Mr Rolleston also. There might be some fun. Steele, my trooper, is back from Trycutta, and we'll leave him in charge of the bank. So that'll be safe enough. I've been waiting patiently for this chance, and meanwhile allowing others to try their luck. I don't promise, mind, to restore the lost money, but if you'll follow my lead I think there'll be a bit of a show.'

'Very well,' I replied after a few minutes' thought. 'It's a responsibility on my part—leaving the bank, I mean. But I'll chance it. It can't hurt me more than the first mull. But why bring Rolleston?'

'Well, you see,' said Devine in a preoccupied sort of way, slowly, and as if searching for a reason, 'he's young, and the experience may be of use to him in the future.'

'Oh, very well,' I made answer; 'please yourself.' All the same, I couldn't just then see the force of his reasoning as regarded Charlie. And Devine pressed the point, too. 'The youngster,' said he as he turned to leave, 'may not be willing to come. But, remember, I

depend on you to see that he does. You need not say that I shall be with you; indeed, I don't mean to show up till the coach reaches the bridge. Bring your pistol. Of course I'll see that there are no other passengers. However, don't forget it's only an experiment.'

Next day, as Charlie and I packed the gold—nearly five hundred ounces—I mentioned that I had decided not only to go myself, but to take him also; and, far from showing any unwillingness, I thought from his manner that he rather enjoyed the idea of the trip. In the evening he asked and obtained permission to ride out to Koortani, as he would be unable to go there on the following Saturday.

'I hope we shan't be stopped this time, anyhow,' he remarked as we drove the last nails and painted the 'B.N.C.' on the cover of the box. 'I expect I had better bring my six-shooter, though, in case of an accident.'

The driver of the mails this night was a stranger, Cat-eye being on a fine and long-sustained spree at Bundarubba and various bush 'pubs,' where callers 'shouted' willingly and often for the hero of the 'sticking-up at Deep Creek.'

At the approach to the long, white, wooden bridge that crosses the Mooroo, and that nobody ever uses except in those infrequent years when, fed by flood-waters from the wide flats, the dry gully assumes for a brief while the size and rolling volume of a great river, the mail drew up, and, with a word to the driver, Devine sprang to the box-seat, whilst the coach, turning off, lumbered down the steep bank and up the other side. Almost any bush whip prefers earth under his horses' feet to planking.

'Another passenger,' remarked Rolleston, peering out into the darkness, dimly lit by a second-quarter moon.

'Good-night!' called the sergeant from under the leathern hood. 'I'm going a bit of the way with you—just for company.'

'Police protection,' laughed Charlie back again. 'No need this time. I'll bet you a new hat on it!'

'Are you certain?' asked the sergeant sharply, turning to where the pair of us sprawled amongst a litter of mail-bags, boxes, and parcels.

'How could I be?' replied Rolleston, with, I thought, a defiant note in his voice. 'And, anyhow, it's nice to have you, you know, sergeant.'

'Umph!' grunted Devine discontentedly, and said no more. The coach lamps shed a splash of yellow on either side, falling now on some wheel-grazing tree-trunk, now on a bare patch; then for miles together thrusting vainly into solid masses of black scrub that seemed to stand up in the night like built walls. The leather curtains were looped up all around, for the air was full of heat, as, in spite of the nest of springs underneath us, we banged and jolted and bumped over ruts and ridgy swamps hard as road metal

with twelve months of drought. At times we plunged into soft sand, and then the noise of our progress deadened; you could hear how still and calm the night was, broken only by the driver's hiss and cluck of encouragement, or the sharp crack of his whip and the admonition to 'Git up, Jerry! Whitefoot, up! Star! Plover! Git *hup!*'

Bump, bump, swing, swing, jerk; sixteen iron-shod hoofs beating out a rough tune to an accompaniment of wild lurches and sways, and slipping of stiff limbs braced against slippery cushions. Then suddenly I awoke from a restless, comfortless doze to the sound of the grating, hissing brakes as the coach took an almost perpendicular position, and the horses, backed into their breechings, slowed down to a walk.

'Deep Creek at last, thank goodness!' I muttered.—'We'll have a snack and a stretch presently, Charlie.'

'I'm ready for both,' he replied sleepily, gathering himself up from the bottom of the coach.

Looking out, I saw that the little moon must have long set; but the stars gave a faint light. Panting and straining, the horses were breasting the thirty-foot bank at the top of which, according to custom, was their five minutes' resting-place.

'S-s-s-s! Plover! Star! Tchik! tchik! Jerry! Together now, my beauties!' and with one mighty drag the coach stood on level ground again.

'Come along, sergeant,' I called to his back on the box-seat. 'I think it's a fair thing for a taste of "John Walker."'

Following on my words like an echo came a sharp, stern order from ahead of 'Bail up, there! Up with your hands! Quick!'

Then, on top of the driver's oath of dismay and astonishment as he raised his whip, I saw a streak of flame spurt out of the scrub and heard the report of a shot, followed instantly by two more from the box that made the startled horses plunge and rear all of a heap in their traces. Then Charlie, with a cry that came to my ears like a death-wail from the intense misery of it, leapt clean over the half-door. Across this I also scrambled the next minute to find him supporting a body in his arms, covering its face with kisses, and moaning, 'Oh Hetty! Hetty! And you promised you wouldn't—you promised you wouldn't!'

Close by stood the sergeant silently surveying the scene, his smoking revolver in one hand and his left arm hanging down in a curiously limp fashion.

'Will you please bring me one of the lamps, Mr Chesney?' he said, striving, as I could hear, to speak calmly. 'My arm is broken, and I wish to see who did it.'

'Oh Charlie!' exclaimed a voice that made me jump again as the light fell full on a beautiful pain-racked face and great staring black eyes,

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'Oh Charlie, I'm dying! It serves me right, too! But you—poor lad! No, never mind; it's no use,' as with frantic fingers he strove to unbutton the vest at a spot that showed already a big purple stain. 'Poor lad! poor lad!' she repeated as, putting up a hand, she gently stroked his cheek; 'I've ruined you, Charlie dear, and broken my promise—and I die.'

Her broad felt hat with a fringe of crape attached had fallen off, and a great mass of hair flowed in black waves over the lad's knees as he knelt supporting her head and shoulders, a world of agony in his smooth young face finding expression only in little inarticulate moans and choking noises—a spectacle that stirred my soul to tears as I turned aside.

Presently the sergeant spoke for the first time.

'Ask her where the money is, Mr Rolleston,' he said in low, cold tones, 'before it's too late.'

But Charlie never heeded. Esther, however, heard him, and, opening her eyes, made an effort to raise herself, saying as she glanced around, and with a faint return of her old manner, 'Why, it's Sergeant Devine! And the obliging Mr Chesney too! I never thought, sergeant, you could shoot so straight. Have you done for my brother also?'

'I think he got my second bullet,' replied Devine calmly. 'But he's not in sight just now. I'm sorry I shot you, Miss Flett. Still, you know, men and women dressed alike are much the same in the dark. If you are badly hurt—which I hope isn't the case—wouldn't it be as well to tell Mr Chesney where the money you stole last month is planted?'

For answer she looked up into the sergeant's hard set face with a mocking little smile on her own, from which, every now and then, Charlie so tenderly wiped the death-sweat. Then, as she half-turned and saw me kneeling, gazing at her with God knows what emotions of sorrow and pity and regret at work within me, and showing in my eyes, her hand feebly sought mine; and, obedient to a look, I knelt still lower and put my ear to her mouth, just catching a faint whisper of 'Under the big stone in the Koortani dining-room fireplace. Good-bye! Be good to poor Charlie.'

Then a convulsive tremor shook her frame, her head sank back again in the lad's arms, and a wild and wayward soul fluttered forth into the warm, close night.

'She's gone, Charlie, poor old chap!' I said as I spread a handkerchief over the calm white features and took the weight of the body out of his arms.

'Gone!' he replied vacantly as, without re-

sistance, he gave way to me and rose to his feet. 'Gone!' he repeated. 'Then I'll follow her.'

As he spoke he snatched the sergeant's revolver from his hand, clapped it to his head, and the next minute fell dead across the corpse of Esther Flett.

As the sergeant and I stood there, stunned at this fresh tragedy, the driver, who had sat all the time like a statue, uttering a cry of horror, brought the whip down on his horses and galloped away from us, never halting till he covered the five miles to the changing-stage, where he told such a tale as sent the two grooms racing thence along the road to look for us. And, that nothing should be wanting to complete the sad business, on the next morning the trackers found William Flett lying wounded to death a mile or two down the creek-bed, his horse feeding near him, and another one caught in a bush by his bridle not far away. This last was Esther's favourite, Nero; and around his legs were sewn four stockings of white stuff so neatly and closely as at night to simulate well enough such natural markings.

Under the great hearthstone at Koortani we found not only the money belonging to my own bank, but also that of the New Guinea people—every sovereign of it.

Since that time, however, the B.N.C. has never had a branch at Moorrobin. Not a man in the service but would sooner leave at a minute's notice than attempt to take charge of one.

I went there once after I was married; and before I left I visited the three graves that stand side by side in the open at the back of the township, fenced from straying goats and sheltered from the scorching heat by a clump of drooping *wilgas* that Devine, with much care and trouble, planted and fostered.

He is an inspector now, and long ago transferred to the capital; and frequently when I meet him we have a chat over old times. But of that midnight tragedy at Deep Creek we never speak. Once only I asked him a question.

'You remember the Chinaman?' he replied. 'Yes? Well, when he whispered to me that day at the thirty-five-mile stage he said, "One feller no man. One allee same girlee. Me feel the ling on fingah while she tie lope." The rest, of course, was simple guess-work. God knows I was sorry enough that it turned out so badly! I'd ha' cheerfully gone without a braided jacket if some other body had done the shooting. Still—well, you know,' he concluded after a long pause, 'perhaps it was better so for the three of them.'

And perhaps it was.

THE BEAUTY-MARK OF NURSE JONES.

By RICCARDO STEPHENS.

CHAPTER I.

SHE giggles,' Muir told me. 'A woman who giggles is a fool. I hate fools.' 'Poor thing!' I said, referring not to Muir, but to the object of his hatred; and, reaching up from the sofa on which I was having an after-dinner cigarette, I pulled down a couple of dictionaries. The first book, being a medical vocabulary, gave me no help. The second explained that to giggle is to laugh with short catches of the breath, or to titter. I then looked up 'titter,' and found, of course, that I was referred to 'giggle;' but I was also told that to titter was to 'laugh restrainedly,' which rather surprised me, for I thought that tittering was supposed to show lack of restraint.

I like precision, especially in accusation or argument, and I read these definitions to Muir, though with some difficulty on account of his impatient snorting.

'I might look up "fool" too,' I told him patiently; 'but I think I know pretty well what you mean.'

'If you don't,' he said, 'I needn't go far to find another illustration.'

'You underestimate your abilities,' I replied; 'I wouldn't call you a fool,' and then hurried on in somewhat louder tones, so that I really can't say what his answer was.

'If you accept "titter" as the equivalent of "giggle,"' I declared, 'and take it as meaning "to laugh restrainedly," I am prepared to dispute the matter with you. When Tommy Dodd lashed out and kicked that basin of corrosive over your legs this morning, Nurse Jones didn't laugh "restrainedly" at all. She shrieked hysterically.'

'Pretty discipline, when that sort of thing is allowed from a probationer in a hospital ward,' growled Muir.

'My dear boy,' I retorted, 'let me point out that you, by the merest accident of birth, as a virtuous democrat might say, are my junior here—some two years my junior, in fact. But this morning you were so kind as to criticise my method of dressing young Tommy's leg.'

'I only said I thought I could give you a tip.'

'Quite true; and I was quite ready to take it—wasn't I? Only, unfortunately, Tommy isn't used to your fingers, and spoil the show. Nurse Jones evidently thought she saw some humour in Tommy.'

'She's a fool!' Muir repeated with double emphasis.

'She's a very nice-looking one, anyway,' I said contentedly. 'I think she's only a bit nervous.'

'Nervous! She's got the cheek of a golf-caddie;' and, it being his night off, Muir flung out of the room to get ready for a dance, only poking his head in again to say that, since his dancing-pumps looked rather shabby, he had borrowed mine, and wished I wouldn't wear them so tight. He's an inch or so taller than I am, and big in proportion, so I rose blessing him. But he slammed the door in my face, and the pumps, tight or no, didn't prevent him from clearing out of the place altogether before I could reach him.

That night, when I went my rounds through the wards of our little hospital, I found that the probationer was once more disregarding discipline. Tommy Dodd, from whose miserable little leg we expected to take a piece of dead bone in some few days, was fretful and feverish. Nurse Jones, who ought not to have been there, had switched on the light over his cot, and was swiftly drawing pigs for his comfort. Because she and the child together made a picture that was pleasant to look upon, I, wrongly, loitered in the shadow of the doorway and looked at them.

'There!' said Nurse Jones, giving a dig at the paper with her pencil. 'That's the great-grandfather of all pigs; and he's Irish, and there's his eye, Tommy. Now, that's thirteen pigs to the dozen that I promised you, so you're going to sleep like a good boy.'

'More!' said Tommy at once.

'Not a pig more,' Nurse Jones told him.

'What's his name?' asked Tommy, obviously to gain time. 'You've given all the rest names.'

'Oh, we'll call him what you like,' arranging the tumbled clothes over him.

'No; you choose.'

'Oh, well, he's Irish, you know,' said Nurse Jones, considering gravely, 'so we'll call him Patrick, or Dennis, or Terence'—

'Terence!' The imp caught at that. 'That's my doctor's name,' he reminded her—'Terence Connell.'

'Very well, then,' Nurse Jones agreed carelessly, 'Terence Connell it is; and a nice, fat, good-tempered Paddy of a pig he looks, too.'

At that moment a gurgling from the woman in the opposite bed made artist and critic look up together.

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'There's my doctor!' announced Tommy Dodd gravely, and held out the pigs for my inspection without the least shadow of guilt. But Nurse Jones, after a second of petrified dismay, fled down the ward. Whether or no the faint echo of a giggle came from among the shadows at the far end I cannot say. I only know that I could not make up my mind to assert my authority and call her back.

I myself switched off the light over Tommy Dodd's bed, after, at his urgent and loud request, signing my full name under the last pig. He then curled up happily with the thirteen porkers clutched in his fist under the pillow, while the woman in the next bed came perilously near suicide by cramming bedclothes to an extraordinary extent into her wide mouth, that I might not hear the laughter which set her bed creaking.

I saw the probationer no more that evening. The night-nurse presently hurried in, and explained that Nurse Jones's duties not being yet defined, she was doing odd jobs, and had been left alone in the ward for a few minutes while the night-nurse fetched something.

For some time after that evening things went on in much the same way as usual. Patients came—and went; some jubilant and unreasonably grateful, with fresh leases of life and fresh capacity for hope and fear; some silent and still, with that look of mysterious knowledge which the faces of the dead often suggest.

Muir and I worked together, ate together, and wrangled together. We made joint resolve to go to bed earlier, which we never accomplished; and whenever there was nothing and nobody else to discuss, we could always fall back upon the subject of Nurse Jones.

That young woman avoided me as much as possible ever after posing as an artist. Twice, meeting me in the corridors between the wards, she showed some hesitating wish to say something; but I am rather more nervous with strangers than you might suppose, and I always bolted past her with a nod, and some remark according to the time of day.

Muir, being in some ways extraordinarily juvenile, showed plainly that he had never forgiven her early insult to his dignity. I vainly tried to persuade him that this in itself was undignified. The memory rankled; and Nurse Jones, finding apparently that he would be censorious in any case, occasionally seemed to go somewhat out of her way to show how little she cared for his good opinion.

'She's a self-willed hussy,' Muir often informed me in the lazy evening-time between dinner and the night-round of the wards.

'Any time that you have to report Nurse Jones for any disobedience or neglect of her duties,' I always said in my best official tone, 'I will see that the matter is brought fully before the Board.'

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'Do you think I'm a heartless beast?' Muir once asked me hotly when I gave him my usual formula. 'Do you think I'm a Bounder? Do you think I want to injure the girl's prospects? I suppose a chap may have a growl if he likes.'

'Apparently he may,' I allowed. 'Whether or no you're a heartless beast, as you put it, I can't tell. I've found most men, including myself, are sometimes.'

'It's all very fine for you to play the cool philosopher,' he told me. 'She hasn't taken it into her head to poke silly fun at you behind your back;' whereat I grinned, remembering the thirteenth pig, and judging that Muir had not been told of the same.

I myself took a very friendly interest in Nurse Jones, though we never met except in professional relations. I was able to allow this—to Muir—the more freely because he knew I was engaged; though sometimes you would not have thought I had told him of my condition had you heard his apophthegms on love and marriage, with which he regaled me at times when I was too lazy to start a more interesting subject. It seemed to me sometimes that he gave such matters far too much of his lordly consideration, seeing that he voted them generally a folly and a failure.

'Early marriage especially,' said this aged philosopher one night, 'is a terrible mistake. So is an early engagement. It presupposes silliness or selfishness—probably both. The fellow who asks a girl to be engaged to him before he has a settled income of at least four hundred a year insults her, and is a scoundrel.'

Now, this little speech seemed to me to show an extraordinary want of tact, and I suppose it struck me the more forcibly because my own engagement often weighed upon my conscience.

'I am sorry,' I said politely, 'if I have deluded you into supposing I had four hundred a year.'

'You never did,' Muir allowed. 'What has that to do with it?'

'I believe I have told you of my engagement?' I said. 'But of course there is no reason why you should remember it.'

It was never easy to embarrass Muir; but he certainly did seem to feel that this time he had been a trifle inconsiderate.

'Of course there are cases,' he allowed vaguely. 'Still, I feel I must say, Connell, if you ask me'—

Now, I knew from experience that what Muir felt he must say was invariably something it was pleasanter not to hear.

'I don't ask you,' I pointed out, and plunged at once into my interrupted task of setting down some memoranda upon an obscure brain-lesion. But I confess that I did not forget these and similar axioms, nor did Muir.

Meanwhile Nurse Jones, though the Staff-nurse Morgan confided to me that she found

her 'a handful,' was a favourite with most of us, including her cases. Indeed the Staff herself owned to a weak fancy for her.

'Such a strong, willing creature she is,' said the Staff admiringly. 'Just look at her arms!' Nurse Jones had turned up her sleeves (quite against all precedent, I fancy) to do some bit of her work, and now her strong bare arms were wrapped round the convalescent Tommy Dodd. He was always her favourite, and I could fancy at times that I saw a sort of dumb challenge to me when I found her petting him, as though she defied the memory of the thirteenth pig to make her shift from Tommy's bedside again.

Just now I found myself speculating vaguely as to the appearance those round arms would present in other garb—say a ball or dinner dress.

'Does she dance?' I asked innocently, and did not notice my own question until the astonished glare of the Staff brought me to my senses.

'Does she dance attendance on Tommy too much?' I demanded, with a brave attempt at austerity; and the Staff, to all appearance somewhat relieved, said that she ought not to complain, for, whatever Nurse Jones might be doing, she was always ready to leave it, and to help anybody else who wanted help.

'All the same,' she told me, with her eyes fixed gloomily on the abundant reddish back-hair of Nurse Jones, who was now moving away swiftly down the ward with Tommy in her arms, 'I'm not sure that she'll stay long.'

'Why's that?' I asked, somewhat startled. 'Doesn't she like the work?'

'Like it!' sniffed Nurse Morgan contemptuously. 'Why, she's just *made* for it, Dr Connell—even if she *will* try to do things in her own way instead of ours. But she says that she can't stay where she doesn't give satisfaction. I tell her that's just a deceitful form of pride. She says it's self-respect;' and Nurse Morgan, who had emphasised every other word with both voice and gesture, bent down to smooth the already unwrinkled coverlet of an empty bed, and heaved a little sigh that somehow made me imagine she had said something which had been upon her mind for some time.

'Who's dissatisfied, if it's not you?' I asked. 'She doesn't fancy I've anything against her—does she?'

'No, Dr Connell,' Nurse Morgan allowed, eyeing a speckless glass basin with severity, and then picking it up to give it extra polish. 'No, it's not you. Though, if I might speak non-officially, you know, with the understanding that I was just speaking to *you*, you know, and not, as one might say, to the Senior Resident'—

'Oh, of course,' I agreed, though I could not think of Nurse Morgan as anything but official. 'I want a cup of tea, nurse, and yours always tastes better than ours. I suppose it's the way

you make it. If you can give me a cup in your room now, without too much trouble, you can tell me all about it.'

We went into Nurse Morgan's little sitting-room, just off the ward, and she moved quietly about and got out her tea-things. I sat in one of her basket-chairs, and stared, as I had often done before, at portraits of former visiting-physicians and surgeons and long-gone residents, and wondered secretly whether Nurse Morgan did not feel some kindly contempt for the ignorance of new-comers, and whether her stately respect for the residents was not often more official etiquette than anything else.

When I had begun to sip my tea, and had asked her, once more, exactly how long she thought it should stand, and whether she did not, really, get a higher-priced tea than we did, Nurse Morgan was as far non-official as she could be. So we returned to the matter of Nurse Jones.

'You said,' I reminded her, 'that she did not seem to suppose you or I was seriously dissatisfied with her?'

'No,' Nurse Morgan assured me, sipping her own tea critically, and then adding more cream; 'although I did understand, from what she said, that you might have complained when she came first, if you had chosen to do so. After all, she's only a girl, Dr Connell. We must make allowances.'

I assumed, to the best of my ability, the impartial mien of a patriarch. I put aside, with a wave of the hand, any idea of my having a personal grievance against the probationer.

'Only a girl,' I agreed benevolently, and refused to wonder how far Nurse Morgan might consider me past boyhood. By the way, I find that the interesting riddle, 'When is a girl no longer a girl?' is answered entirely according to the age of the person asked. I also find it to be a riddle with more tragedy in it than one might suppose; but that was no particular concern of Nurse Jones at that time. Probationers come earlier to our little hospital than to most others, and Nurse Jones's claim to be considered a girl was unquestionable. Indeed, I fancy she aspired to the appearance of a greater age than that which she rejoiced in.

'Any one of the cases complaining?' I asked, after consideration, and still unofficially.

'Not a word, Dr Connell,' Nurse Morgan assured me, and pursed her lips as though to let me know that, whatever the dangers of high pressure, nothing except an absolutely direct question would wring anything from her.

'Of course you always find Dr Muir considerate,' I told her, with an air of decision. I knew that Muir was far more afraid of Nurse Morgan than he would ever acknowledge himself to be of any one human.

'I do—always,' said Nurse Morgan with unnecessary emphasis.

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'Ah, yes!' I said; and then, after further deliberation, 'He's young too, you know, nurse.'
'Just so, Dr Connell. That's just what I told Nurse Jones;' after which we silently agreed that the subject was as far thrashed out as was desirable, and I had a second cup of tea while Nurse Morgan favoured me with reminiscences.

I had very little time that evening for any chat with Muir, or even for consideration of whether I could chat at all with him on the subject of Nurse Jones. After all, if she chose to go she must do so. Her grievances against him could not be very great, or a formal complaint would have been made. Nurse Morgan would not stand by quietly to see any one of her assistants bullied. Muir and Nurse Jones were probably both a little too careful of their dignity; and Muir, being young, not quite sure of his position, and with no great sense of humour, would be the more likely to take offence at Nurse Jones's independence, and at any attempt on my part to act as peacemaker. As it was, I reminded him of my seniority as seldom as might be.

CHAPTER II.



IN any case, that night I was too busy to consider the matter. A countrywoman of mine, one Grace Sullivan, who had already been in one of the wards, sent begging me to call and see her—for the sake of Ould Ireland,' as she put it; and I went, doubting very much whether the 'distressful country' would profit greatly by my attendance, or by Mrs Sullivan's hoped-for restoration to health.

Reaching one of the poorest quarters of the town, I had more than once to step from the footway to avoid drunkards who—it being Saturday night—spread themselves regally over it, or tacked across like spirit-laden smuggler-craft beating up against the wind. But I steered clear of them all, and at last toiled up the filthy stair to Mrs Grace Sullivan's combined sitting and bed room—all the rest of her house being packed like a rabbit-warren with lodgers of the lowest type.

Having driven several good Samaritans, or curious idlers, out of the room, I proceeded to question and examine my patient, who alternately petitioned all the saints to bless me for coming, and cursed things in general, and sometimes me in particular, when I handled her.

'Two ribs and a collar-bone broken, Mrs Sullivan,' I said at last. 'Who did it?'

'Och! I had a fall, docthor dear.'

'Yes, so your messenger told me,' I allowed.

'But what made you fall? Were you drunk?'
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'An' it scarcely foive in the afternoon when it happened!' said Mrs Sullivan, greatly pained at the suggestion, although the black neck of a whisky-bottle poked out cheek by jowl with her head from under the pillow. 'No, I was *not* drunk, docthor dear. I'd hardly begun to drink, when Sullivan'—

She hesitated, and I finished her sentence for her. 'Knocked you down?' I suggested.

'I don't see, afther all,' said Mrs Sullivan, with as much *hauteur* as circumstances would permit—'I don't see, afther all, that the tratement of two ribs—an' a collar-bone—will be th' betther for sich questions. Between man an' wife'—

'You're right,' I interrupted. 'I'll leave it between you and him and Father Munro; but I want to make sure of a quiet night for you, at any rate.'

'A quiet night, is it?' groaned Mrs Sullivan, rolling her head from side to side on the pillow. 'Wid him an' the company he kapes, how can I have that?'

'Turn them out,' I told her. 'The room's your own.'

"'Turn 'em out!' ses you," quoth Mrs Sullivan. 'It's just what Sullivan himself tells me. "Turn 'em out," he ses, "or they'll have me down." But, docthor dear, how can I turn out folks what I can't see, an' hopes I niver may see?'

I whistled softly. 'Oh, they aren't your lodgers, then?'

'Lodgers! They're more like landlords—from the lordly ways of 'em,' said Mrs Sullivan mysteriously, with a quick glance round. 'It's no rent *they'll* pay.' She turned her mouth to the whisky-bottle, and was drawing the cork with her teeth, when I took the bottle away.

'None of that,' I told her. 'Tell me about these folk your husband brings here. Who are they?'

'Divils!' said Mrs Sullivan abruptly.

'He's drinking hard, then. Is that it?'

She nodded fiercely at me. 'That's it. All day an' most all night. An' where he goes they go, he ses.'

'That can't last long,' I told her, with some grim idea of consolation.

'Can't it? It's lasted these six months. An' there's more of 'em every night, till where they find sittin'-room I can't think. He ses they're as thick as peas on the flure, an' he goes about pickin' his way like a cat, for fear of touchin' 'em. Else he sits still over there'—and she pointed to a seat in a dark corner—'an' he fends them off. Look!'—she pointed to a splash on the wall near her head, where some plaster had fallen away—'that's where the whisky-bottle struck two nights back. He said the Father of all Divils was makin' a long arm for 'im right acrost the flure, an' he flung the bottle in his face, shoutin' that 'twas holy wather.'

'Where is he now?'

'When he—when I fell he wint down the stair screechin' murther. He an' they'll be back soon enough.'

'You won't be afraid of them, anyway?' I said.

'Och! I don't know that,' she retorted, laughing uneasily. 'Folks ses 'tis just the drink, an' no doubt they're right. I'm an ignorant owld sowl anyways. But what if the drink jist opens the eyes of a man, an' makes him see what's always there?'

I did not feel competent to discuss that point at a moment's notice, and contented myself with issuing orders that Sullivan, if he returned that night, should be given a bed elsewhere.

It turned out, however, that I was to see more of Sullivan before long. But, first, other affairs had their turn; and for the time he passed from my thoughts altogether. When I reached the hospital I passed straight to my little side-room on the level of the Female Ward. I intended to make a round, and was shrugging myself into an old coat, when there came a tap at the door, and Nurse Morgan followed.

'Good-evening, nurse. Anything to report?' I asked; and then, looking up, found myself confronted by a most tragic face.

'What's wrong?'

'It's happened, just as I said it would,' she told me, with a certain air of gloomy satisfaction.

'Good heavens! What?'

I tried to remember hurriedly which of the patients was likely to have taken a turn for the worse; but, as I tried to think of them all at the same time, the attempt was not a success.

'Quick, my dear woman!' I said. 'Am I too late?' And Nurse Morgan said she thought so.

'You *think* so,' I echoed angrily, catching up a hypodermic. 'Come away quickly! Who is it? What have you done?'

'I've done nothing, Dr Connell,' Nurse Morgan told me with dignity. 'I wash my hands of the whole affair.' And then, while I glared at her, thunder-struck at her coolness, 'They can settle it between themselves,' she added; and I suddenly had a suspicion of the truth.

'Pah!' I scoffed, putting down the hypodermic. 'Nurse Jones again, I suppose! Is that all?'

'Yes, that's all, Dr Connell,' Nurse Morgan answered, with an air of some severity. I don't think she was quite pleased at the flippant way in which I took the news. 'You won't be troubled with her much longer,' she added. 'She tells me that she means to give notice to-morrow morning.'

'Well,' I grumbled, 'if she can't make herself comfortable here, I suppose that's the best thing to do. It's not my business, nurse—anyway. The superintendent must settle it,' and I picked up my stethoscope and turned to leave the room.

Nurse Morgan stepped back to let me pass, but at the same time heaved such a sigh that I stopped, feeling a heartless brute.

'I suppose you want me to think it's Dr Muir,' I said plaintively; 'but, even if it is, what can I do? You know very well that if he has been unfair you've only to report it, and the thing will be dealt with. I can't believe he'd do anything really unfair, either.'

'Yes, it's Dr Muir,' Nurse Morgan said with sudden passion; 'and if I had my way with a boy like that, I'd'—

'Nurse!'

I was astounded at her fury—so astounded that I did not wait to hear what disciplinary treatment she would have suggested for Muir had she been in authority. My open consternation brought her to her senses. I saw the colour rise to her hair and then fade away, leaving the thin, rather angular face paler than usual, while the lower lip was nipped firmly under two large front teeth. We both stood silent for a moment, and I wondered vaguely when Nurse Morgan had blushed last, and felt guilty at having seen her now.

'The fuss must have upset me,' she said presently. 'I hope you'll forget my silly talk, doctor. I'll take a dose of bromide presently.'

'Do,' I told her. 'I'll prescribe for you, nurse. We must get on your nerves awfully sometimes. Now, let's see if I can help at all about Nurse Jones. What is all the fuss for?'

So Nurse Morgan, who was now suffering from reaction and on the verge of tears, let herself be coaxed into a chair and be dosed with a drachm of sal-volatile; after which she gave her account of the evening's performance.

It didn't amount to much when all was told. She was going round the ward with Muir when told of a visitor whom she wished to see. She had asked Muir to excuse her for a moment, and went away, leaving him to perform a minor operation, with Nurse Jones for his assistant. When she came back ten minutes later the mischief was done. Nurse Jones, who was proud of her skill in bandaging, had ventured to use a turn not absolutely orthodox. Muir had sniffed at it, and with elaborate politeness had suggested that 'while in this hospital' she might be so good as to carry out his directions.

Nurse Jones, with the smiling retort, 'That will not be for long. I shall give notice to-morrow,' had carefully unwound her bandage.

[Christmas Number.]

'And she couldn't put it on again because she wanted to cry,' Nurse Morgan told me. 'And that—I mean Dr Muir—stood over her and laughed.'

'Laughed!' I said. 'Surely not.'

'Well——' Nurse Morgan considered, and then modified her statement. 'She said she was sure he must have laughed; it looked so foolish of her.'

'That's rather different,' I suggested. 'What next?'

'When I got back,' said Nurse Morgan tearfully, 'they had nearly finished the beds. They must have *raced*, Dr Connell. They went along with their noses in the air, like some of the visitors who come here, don't you know—and it was "nurse" this, and "doctor" that, all the way down. I *knew* things were all wrong, because they were so stiff and quite polite. Then Dr Muir went off without a word for anybody; and sometimes he'll set the ward screaming with his nonsense. Then I heard all about it.'

'What can I do, nurse?' I repeated. 'I'm sick of the whole business. After all, if they hate one another so much'——

'If!' Nurse Morgan repeated sarcastically after me. 'If!'

'Well, *since*, if you prefer it,' I told her with considerable impatience; but she was no better pleased.

'Supposing they don't hate one another at all?' she suggested, and, folding her hands in her lap, watched my astonishment with grim satisfaction.

'Nonsense!' I told her. 'If they don't hate one another, what does this cat-and-dog bickering go on for?'

This I thought was a poser; but Nurse Morgan only smiled in a sort of superior and melancholy manner, and shook her head with decision.

'There are so many little things, Dr Connell,' she told me; 'and, after all, if you'll excuse me for saying so, you're only a man. Now, I've seen your young lady's photograph in your room. She'd have understood it if she had seen half as much as you and I have. But then a woman *does* see things when it's not her own happiness that's concerned.'

'Thank you,' I snorted; 'and a man doesn't, I suppose? Now, look here, nurse'——

I was about to show Nurse Morgan how utterly unscientific and irrational this popular (feminine) theory was, when I was interrupted. There were alarms and excursions down about the Receiving-room, mixed with occasional yells and snatches of song.

'There's a Saturday-night case,' Nurse Morgan predicted; and presently the porter came for me, and I had to leave Nurse Morgan's absurd delusion to be demolished at some more convenient season.

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CHAPTER III.



ON going into the Receiving-room with Muir, whom I met on the way, I found that Nurse Morgan had prophesied rightly. Tied down to a stretcher lay the cause of all the racket, now occupied in shouting, at the top of a shrill voice, his opinion of the two policemen who had brought him, and who stood by, stolidly amused.

The man's face was so swollen and blood-crusted that I did not recognise it until I had used warm water and a sponge freely—during which time I also was classified as one of his 'destroyers.' Before I had finished, however, I found that I was operating upon the bullet-head and snub-nose of an old acquaintance, Micky Sullivan, the husband of the woman I had seen that evening.

'How did this happen?' I asked his convoy.

'He was offerin' to fight the sthreet and the pollis,' explained the sergeant, an Ulster man. 'It's lucky for himself,' he added philosophically, 'that Micky wears a Connemara head on him, as I've heard 'im say before, for he fell under the wheel uv a thrap, an' nothin' but a Connemara head wud 'ave stud it.'

I felt carefully over the 'Connemara head,' but found no trace of serious injury.

'Maybe it's the wheel that's the worse!' suggested the younger policeman, with a broad grin at his own sparkling wit.

'We'll keep him here for the night, though,' I decided. 'I know he has been drinking hard, and there's no telling how things may turn out with him.'

I decided this the more quickly because by this time Sullivan had drifted into maudlin tears, and was calling upon his 'darlin' Gracie' to help him against the Powers of Darkness; and I wanted to be sure that she had nothing of his society until he was sober and I had seen her again.

So Sullivan was packed off to Side-room No. 2, secured to the bed until his sleeping-draught should have had time to act; and Nurse Jones, who somehow always seemed available for emergencies, mounted guard, with the understanding that presently a man would take her place.

What followed was never thoroughly accounted for. Muir volunteered no explanation, and I decided not to ask for one. This, however, is what I know. Sullivan having been attended to, and Nurse Jones having settled down near him, with a watchful eye upon his antics, I went off to get some supper; and Muir left me with a promise that he would give a look at the man again before going to bed. That, I imagined, meant somewhere about

two hours later—for we of the medical staff did not keep early hours.

My theory is that Muir's conscience began to give him a bad time for his treatment of Nurse Jones. I'm sorry if what I have said of him gives the impression that he was an unmannerly cub. He really wasn't at all. But he thought a good deal more of his own dignity and position than the rest of us could; and I fancy now that he had started with a particular desire to impress the fascinating Nurse Jones, and was proportionately offended when he found that she did not seem to take him as seriously as a lowly probationer should, if she be wise, take a newly-capped medical.

Now, Nurse Morgan took care that evening to let him know, without any comment except such as is expressed by pursed lips and telegraphic curttness of speech, that our probationer meant to leave. That may be the reason why Muir strolled into Side-room No. 2 less than half-an-hour after he left me.

Upon his entry, according to Nurse Jones, Micky, who had been lying quite quiet, with his eyes shut, 'plotting'—so she fancied—became frantic. He begged Nurse Jones to observe that this was the Evil One come to take him at last. When she tried to soothe him, he wanted to argue the matter in detail; and he pointed out such characteristics in their visitor as he thought were convincing proofs of his origin, begging her especially to notice 'th' ugly black scowl of 'im!'

Now, Muir was scowling a little, it being perhaps difficult for a young and self-conscious man to stand and look pleasant while various possible slight personal defects are being enumerated by a sharp Irish tongue to a lady with a sense of humour.

On being requested to look particularly at the 'ugly black scowl' she confesses that she may have laughed, which probably made poor Muir feel it needful to assert his authority.

'Lie quiet, and don't talk nonsense!' he told Micky, stepping a little nearer to the bed; and Micky, either because he was out of breath or because he thought it safest, lay quiet, and probably looked very small and harmless.

'This isn't hurting you, is it?' Muir asked him, with a finger on the webbing; and at this point Nurse Jones acted foolishly, as she afterwards confessed, with tears, to Nurse Morgan.

'Oh, don't touch that, please!' she hurriedly entreated Muir. 'It mustn't be taken off until there's a man here.'

She became hysterical afterwards in Nurse Morgan's room when she reached this point of her story.

'A man!'

Muir bent and began to loosen the buckles one after another, talking as he did so.

'If you are nervous, nurse,' he explained,

'you may leave your patient to me. I will do my best with him until—as you say—a man comes;' and the last buckle was loosened, while Nurse Jones stood tongue-tied. 'Where we show confidence we gain trust,' Muir went on; and took his eyes off the bed, probably to cast a more or less dignified glance at his audience.

'Ye divil!' was Micky Sullivan's comment; and, snatching at the chair by his bedside, he bowled over the rash theorist.

When, warned by a shriek of Nurse Jones and a continued yell from Micky Sullivan, I hurried to Side-room No. 2, closely followed by the porter, things were decidedly lively. On the floor lay the victim to the confidence-trick, stunned and bleeding profusely from the nose. Half in, half out of bed, Micky Sullivan brandished a fragment of a broken chair in vain efforts to get another swipe at the unlucky loser of his bonds. He was only prevented by Nurse Jones, who, having caught him from behind by the left wrist, had pulled his arm backward between the bars at the bed-head. She was now hauling lustily, having gained a cunning purchase, and left Micky to do the yelling, though little broken giggles came between her clenched teeth.

Just as we dashed in Micky seemed to realise what it was that kept him pinned. He turned, and, aiming an awkward blow at Nurse Jones over his shoulder, sent her reeling against the wall.

CHAPTER IV.



HALF-AN-HOUR later, when Micky had dropped off to sleep, with 'a man' to watch him, and when Muir had begun to show some confused wish to know where he was and what had happened, I went to Nurse Morgan's room, and put the finishing touches upon the fairly deep cut above Nurse Jones's left eye.

'The scar,' I promised her, 'shall be just as small as a scar can be, nurse. I'm glad to find that you've kept quite cool with it all. Now, you had better be off to bed, and let me see you in the morning before you get up.'

'Nurse Jones is on night-duty, doctor,' Nurse Morgan reminded me—rather sharply, I thought.

'Was,' I suggested mildly. 'We mustn't let her run any risks.'

'Are there any?' demanded Nurse Morgan.

'Oh, I hope not,' I admitted. 'Still, she had a shaking, you know, and deserves a rest.'

'Of all the unfeeling creatures,' I told myself privately, 'give me a woman to beat the record. And of all women!'—

'We're short-handed, you know,' Nurse Morgan persisted.

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'We always are,' I snapped.

'And some one has got to watch Dr Muir,' she went on, frowning sternly at me over Nurse Jones's shoulder. 'I really don't know who else can be spared to do it.'

'Oh, in that case'—— I said feebly; and Nurse Jones went with, at any rate, the side of her face next to me showing a remarkably fine colour.

I imagine that from that date a better understanding arose between the probationer and the Junior Resident. I know that twice, in supporting theories of treatment which the young woman put forward at the little nurses' clinics held by me, she declared, 'Dr Muir says so,' and seemed to think that final. I also know that Muir, after he got over a pretty severe concussion, and before I let him up, found that the holding of skeins of Berlin-wool for the probationer to wind was an extraordinarily exciting occupation, and one which never palled.

As for Nurse Morgan, she clothed herself, as with a garment of homespun, in a mixture of triumph and mystery that excited much wonder and comment in the Female Ward. I noticed, too, that when she met Nurse Jones there were little passages of endearment, which one might imagine showed a slackening of discipline and something terribly like favouritism.

Of all this, however, I made no remark, but waited. I was obliged to put up with a great deal of temper from Muir while he was kept on his back, and did not feel it safe to retaliate. When, however, he had been a couple of days on the sofa in our common sitting-room—where he lay and smiled idiotically at a set of hospital regulations—I felt justified in working off a little of the irritable feeling due, perhaps, to double-duty and want of exercise. I sat down by the couch after dinner that night, and drew his attention gently from the hospital regulations.

'I have an apology to make to you,' I told him. Now, this was a perfectly simple statement, and I don't see that Muir was justified in regarding me with suspicion, as he immediately did.

'What for?' he asked shortly.

'I'm afraid,' I said, 'that you've had a considerably uncomfortable time lately.'

'Pray don't apologise!' he told me, with a fatuous grin at the regulations.

'Oh, but I must,' I insisted. 'You must have had an awful time, with no one but that Nurse Jones to wait upon you. But you know I couldn't very well say how much I knew you hated the girl. Anyway, it's over now.'

'Yes, it's over now,' he agreed, with another grin, which turned into a huge sigh—of relief, doubtless.

'She'll be going out, I suppose, before you're in the wards again,' I said consolingly. 'I understand that she spoke of going just the very 1899.]

evening, as it happened, that Sullivan went for you.'

'I was a brute,' said Muir, with conviction.

'Really?' I asked innocently. 'I never heard, you know—Sullivan made no complaint.'

'Sullivan!'

Muir turned to glare at me, and then jerked round on the couch again.

'You're an awful ass!' he said, with fine compassion.

'I dare say,' I agreed philosophically. 'By the way, Nurse Jones was giggling when we came in upon the three of you that night.'

'She's a hero,' Muir announced hurriedly.

'Nonsense, my dear fellow. Heroine, you mean, if you mean anything,' I suggested, with a finger on his pulse. 'She only did her duty, you know. She had charge of the case. I think she giggles worse than ever. I heard her only to-day from my room. If she were not leaving I really should have to speak to her about the silly habit. It begins to annoy me as much as it does you.'

The grunt that Muir gave as his only answer was hardly intelligible; but I accepted it, and said 'Quite so' cheerfully.

'You said just now that I was an ass,' I went on presently. 'I quite agree with you. Somehow I've often been reminded, during the last few days, of what you told me not long ago. I'm afraid you're right. I'm afraid I'm worse than an ass.'

'Oh, I don't know,' Muir stammered apologetically. 'I say what I think sometimes without thinking.' This seemed to suggest a curious psychological condition; but I let it pass.

'Oh, I dare say you were right; and I shan't forget it,' I told him with humility.

'Well, a fellow's friendship isn't worth having,' Muir allowed, 'if he hasn't the pluck to say disagreeable things sometimes. A fellow can't always be sure that they'll be taken as they're meant, though. I'd speak oftener if I thought I'd be understood. What was it I said that you've come to believe in?'

He was interested now. Appreciation of one's wisdom, especially by any one slightly one's senior, is always pleasant, I imagine. He twisted round upon the sofa to face me; and I gave him time, so that he might lose nothing of his own treasured words.

'You said,' I told him slowly, and as if repeating a well-learned lesson—'you said, "Early marriage is a terrible mistake. So is an early engagement. It presupposes silliness or selfishness—probably both. The fellow who asks a girl to be engaged to him before he has a settled income of at least four hundred a year insults her, and is a scoundrel." By-the-by, you should get to bed soon; your pulse is about a hundred.'

I then left the room, and a sofa-cushion, which just missed my head in the doorway,

convinced me that my appreciative quotations had been taken in the spirit which I intended.

My good humour was renewed by the sight of Nurse Jones in the little side-room, where I went for a chart. She was about to go, when I looked up from the table and asked her to wait a moment.

'I wish to congratulate you, nurse,' I told her slowly—'on being rid of a very troublesome patient.'

Nurse Jones blushed scarlet, and murmured something about taking cases as they came.

'Quite so,' I agreed. 'I know you made the best of it. Since it is no secret that you are going, nurse, one feels that discipline need not be so carefully considered. I wish to apologise to you for the task which has been put upon you lately. Dr Muir is my friend; therefore, I am quite aware of his failings, and know that you must have had a great deal to put up with. I consider myself justified in telling you—since you are, I understand, about to leave—that I feel his behaviour to you before his accident was quite unwarranted.'

At this point Nurse Jones began an anxious search in the nearest drawer for something apparently so minute that her head was plunged almost out of sight.

'I have told Dr Muir what I think of it,' I went on magisterially.

Nurse Jones's head reappeared sharply, and she faced round to stare fixedly at me, her face still flushed, and her hair ornamented with sundry small pieces of cotton-wool and two safety-pins.

'What did you tell him?' she demanded, and I emphasised my accusations carefully by pencil-taps upon the table.

'I told him,' I declared, 'that his conduct had been inconsiderate, ungentlemanly'—I hesitated, she eyed me so intently.

'Go on, please,' said she, leaning forward a little, with both hands on the opposite side of the table.

'Cruel, disrespectful,' I added; but got no further, for the lady I had championed raised a firm hand and dealt me a ringing box on the ear, collapsing into a chair immediately after, whence she stared at me dumbly with mixed terror and defiance.

I confess that I was mentally as well as physically staggered. I dare say, on consideration, that I have sometimes deserved to have my ears boxed. But I cannot recollect that it had

happened before this occasion. It would have been a relief to rub the side of my head; but dignity—such as I had left—prevented me from doing so. I sat and tried to consider the situation carefully, while I listened to the respiration of Nurse Jones, which was irregular, and, I imagined, symptomatic of her mental condition. Then, because I could not help it, I began to laugh.

'It's a good thing that you're lighter-handed in the wards,' I told her. 'But I don't think I got more than I deserved. I want your help in dressing the hip-case. Shall we go round?'

As Nurse Jones silently rose, and stood aside for me to pass out, I noticed the deep red of the fresh scar above her eye, showing out against a face from which most of the colour had gone. It was not, however, until Tommy Dodd commented upon it that I knew my own face was marked. He announced loudly to the ward that his doctor's face was red on one side, and he asked persistently whether Nurse Jones had poulticed it, as she sometimes poulticed his leg.

Nurse Jones fled in confusion just as Muir wandered in. Muir, being still on the sick-list, had no right to be there, and I said so; and I did not think much of the feeble explanation that he gave, to the effect that he had been anxious to see how everything was going on.

'Jove! your face is scarlet on one side!' he agreed when the eager Tommy Dodd drew his attention to it. 'Has it been next the fire—or what?'

'I think it was due to heat,' I acknowledged feebly, as Nurse Morgan, unconsciously cruel, bustled up Nurse Jones with a tray of dressings.

'It's as red,' squeaked the incorrigible Tommy, 'as the ugly red mark on top of Nurse Jones's eye. What's that, Dr Muir?'

'That's Nurse Jones's beauty-mark,' Muir told him, with a stare that defied me to contradict.

'Is Dr Connell's a beauty-mark too?' piped Tommy.

'Mine is the mark of beauty,' I said politely.

Muir (who has for some time been settled in the north) now declares that his wife never giggles; otherwise I should have been ready to swear that her shoulders shook with the most innocent of giggles at that moment.



THE VISION AT THE MENHIR.

By E. J. ROCKE SURRAGE.



YVES PENGAVEREC was ill at heart.

It was but an hour ago that old Mathurin, his foster-father, had dispelled the dream-cloud which had hovered like a glorious nimbus about the young man's head for close on three years past. Ay, and had dispelled it roughly enough, too—the grim, sour old man—without a trace of tenderness or remorse, with only a crease of amusement across his withered chops and a cackle of anger rising in his shrill voice.

‘What! Thee marry Anne?’ he had rasped. ‘Go on with thy work, my son, and blow thyself sober. The cider has been too strong for thee. Thee marry Anne? Why, she’s but a chick; and thee—thee a great hulking loon that is indebted to me for every morsel of rye-bread that goes into thy great mouth!—thee that I have reared out of charity, only at the bidding of my sainted wife—the Blessed Virgin be her helper! Thee marry Anne? Show me thy pouch with twenty gold pieces in its bottom, and I will say ay; but—till then. Go on with thy hoeing, lad, and talk sense.’ And so the old man had hobbled off down the sun-browned slope of the field, tittering.

It was a cruel blow to Yves Pengaverec. It shattered his hopes, his happiness, his very life and reason—so thought the swarthy, wild-eyed young peasant as he clutched his strong hands on the top of the well-used hoe, and dug his chin into the knuckles of them. It was unjust, mean, brutal. And yet it was so true.

What was he—an alien, a nameless stranger, whose very face betrayed him no true Breton, but a native of the South—what was he, to look up to Anne Pengaverec, the daughter of the wealthiest peasant in all the valley of Polniac? Ay, the wealthiest; for had not Mathurin Pengaverec two broad fields of rye, and a cow of his own on the common pasturage, and a cottage of hewn granite, when none of the others dwelt in more than hovels of baked mud? Yet this same Mathurin had adopted him almost as a son, and had reared him, when he might have suffered him to starve and become food for the kites on the desolate *landes*. There was gratitude due for that, to be sure; though the old man need not have blurred it so coarsely.

It was twenty years ago that it had happened; but Yves had not forgotten. Twenty years ago in this very month of September

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Mathurin Pengaverec—then a middle-aged widower, with his young wife but one week buried in the little hillside cemetery of the chapel of St Gildas—had been tramping home from the market at Pontivy with his baskets over his arm, and his thoughts running on the little month-old baby girl whom he had left with a neighbour that morning when he started for Pontivy; and he had turned aside, as the harvest-moon crept over the edge of the *lande*, to do a reverence at the foot of the crucifix which surmounted the lonely *menhir* on the crest of the heath—the great granite *menhir* that had once been a heathen giant, so they said, whom St Gildas himself had stricken into stone with that token of Christendom on his brow. And as Mathurin Pengaverec had drawn nearer to the *menhir*, he had seen a figure, which he took to be one of the market-women, prostrated at the foot of the stone; but the figure never stirred. Then he saw that the clothing was not that of a Bretonne; and he had touched the arms that were clasped around the rough stone, and they were cold and stiff; and the dusky face—the dusky, rounded face of a Southern woman—was rigid in death. And beneath the crouching figure, laid, as it were, in the shelter of the crucifix, sprawled a sturdy four-year-old boy, whimpering in a strange tongue.

Mathurin Pengaverec was a God-fearing man. He had led the frightened child back to Polniac, and made a comfortable bed of straw for him in the shed where the cow lay. And on the morrow the neighbours had set forth, and buried the body of the stranger woman—the wandering outcast of whose faith and origin naught was known—decently at the foot of the great granite *menhir* in the midst of the *landes*. And there their care had ended. But in the night a vision had come to Mathurin Pengaverec. His dead wife had appeared to him and bidden him bring up the boy as his own, to be a brother to the motherless babe Anne; and Mathurin had obeyed the bidding unquestioningly, though his inner self grumbled.

It had not turned out such a bad business for him after all, he had confessed later on. The little mother had been right; a second pair of hands was not amiss in the fields. And so the boy had grown up, and fallen in with Breton ways and the Breton tongue, and been endowed by common assent with the name of Yves Pengaverec—his own being unknown.

Of late, as years and stiffness had crept over the older man, the harder part of the field-work had fallen to the lot of Yves, and he had bargained for a wage; but Mathurin was grown saise and grumbling with age, and the wage was pitifully small.

Twenty good gold pieces in his pouch, had he said? Blessed Mary! how was that to be done? Two golden napoleons, indeed, he had had—scraped and starved and hoarded out of his meagre pay—until the Pardon of St Gildas last gone; and then one of the twain had melted away. There had been a kerchief for Anne, that she might go smart on the fête-day, and a taper to be burned at the shrine of the good saint in memory of his mother, and a new felt hat—broad and sweeping enough to strike defeat into the hearts of all the other lads—for himself. And so there was but one gold piece left. Nineteen more to be got before he could have Anne! Merciful Father! How?

And Anne—smiling, teasing, tantalising Anne! Would she wait? Would she wait until the gray began to come in her tossing black hair, and the crow's-feet lined her soft cheeks, and the passing-by of years had dulled the ardour of his wooing? Would she wait while he hoarded together these accursed nineteen napoleons? Or would she give herself to another? The tyrant, the worse than tyrant, to make this cruel condition!—this condition that he knew to be hopeless, impossible. A tyrant, look you, whom he had worked for all these years with all his strength, like a slave! But he would work no longer.

The Southern birth-passions of Yves Pengaverec had come uppermost. His body shook; he gnawed fiercely at the knuckles of his hands as they lay clenched on the handle of the hoe; his eyes sparkled with a quick anger. He would get the cursed money—somehow; and then he would come back and claim Anne from the old man. And meantime, away with this slow-coach work! He must think—think; and there was nothing like a cup of cider to think upon.

Yves flung down his tool, and strode unsteadily across the scorched stubble-field. He leaped over the high mud-fence into the sunken cart-rut which formed the only highway through the valley of Polniac, and descended its rugged length. At the bottom—close to the spot where the tumbling Scorf, dwindled by the drought, crawled beneath a rude stone bridge—stood the old *auberge* 'Aux Chouans,' the crazy hovel that sufficed to dispense refreshment to man and beast in the remote valley of Polniac. A couple of unkempt fellows were sprawling on the wooden bench before the house; and they growled a surly greeting as Yves stumbled to the bench beside them and called for a cup of cider.

This cider was capital. It put heart into a man, and courage, and wits. Only nineteen napoleons, after all. 'Twas not much. And

then—Anne! But how to get them? One must think—think—think. Another cup of cider and the thought will come.

The sharp-visaged, slatternly landlady put the second cup of cider in his hands; and then she paused.

'Tis not often we see thee here, Yves Pengaverec,' she commented.

He grunted something, and took a deep draught.

'I suppose a night's trudge across the *landes* would not be to thy liking?' the woman continued hesitatingly. 'A courting-walk with thy maid is all you young men can think on.'

He looked up sharply, and asked her what she meant.

'It will mean money in thy pocket,' she nodded shrewdly.

'Ah!'

'Tis nothing but a jaunt to Loudéac or so,' she explained; 'and the pay will be for thee to fix. A traveller—an English sea-going man from the coast, wandered from his road—called here but an hour ago with his horse foundered. He had ridden it as if our Breton lanes were the Royal Road itself—the fool! He must needs get to Loudéac, says he, in time for the morning's diligence; and, as there be no horses here at his disposal, he must take a guide. See you?'

'And he will pay?'

'Aha, my child!—he will pay. He is but now in the guest-room, swilling wine like cider and throwing about his gold pieces as if he were made of them.'

'I will go, my mother.'

The chance had not been long in coming. He knew that it would not be long. He would get a whole napoleon, perhaps—perhaps two—for his night's work; a mere tramp of forty kilomètres across the *landes*, little more than the journey to Pontivy on market-day. Why, this was something better than the slave's work which he had been used to doing!

'Best have an eye to the weather, mate; there's a pretty storm brewing.' This from the rougher of the two peasants on the bench beside him, growling and pointing to the evening sky.

The woman turned upon him fiercely.

'Hold thy tongue, Daoulaz!' she screamed. 'I dare say the job would have fitted thee better—eh? 'Tis likely I would have asked an ugly fellow like thee—is it not? Why, the stranger would have had his weasand slit, I reckon, 'fore ever he came out of the Fairies' Wood! I know thee, Daoulaz—but little to thy credit.'

The man laughed hoarsely; and the landlady, eyeing him with disfavour, passed into the *auberge*.

Yves sat indifferent, the half-emptied mug on his knee, his crowding thoughts running a steeplechase through his brain. Two napoleons for a night's work. Ay, the traveller could well afford as much—a man who could throw

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about gold pieces like that! *Two napoleons was none too much for the job—no, nor yet three, if you came to think of it. And then there would be but sixteen to make. But sixteen—between him and Anne! The gentleman should pay him as a gentleman should; or, by St Gildas, he would wring it out of him! The *landes* were wide; he had but to lose his way, and the gentleman would pay him well enough to find it.

Yves drained his mug with a loud laugh, and called to the landlady for the reckoning.

She came out to the doorway, followed by a man—a short, thick-set man, dressed like a seaman. He rolled across to the bench where Yves sat brooding, and slapped him on the back.

‘So you’re to be the lad that’s to pilot me across country—eh?’ he roared. ‘Well, we must look spry, my man; no missing the diligence for me. But another bottle of Bordeaux won’t hurt us before we start. Here, mother, another bottle!—and of the best, mind ye.’

The red wine, vile as it was, was a novelty to Yves Pengaverec. It ran through his veins like fire, set his blood tingling and leaping, chased the thoughts in a wild scramble through his brain. The stranger filled his glass once more with a liberal hand.

‘No fear of me as paymaster, my lad!’ he shouted jovially. ‘I’ll treat ye well. See here!’ He hauled a leather bag from his pocket, loosened the string, and poured its contents—a jingling, glittering shower of gold—into the hollow of his other hand. ‘We’re but just paid off at Lorient,’ he chuckled; ‘and there’s more where that came from.’

Yves sat transfixed. His eyes glistened and sparkled as they fixed themselves on the glimmering pile. His hand clenched itself convulsively around the glass in which the red wine swam. His head craned forward eagerly. The stranger poured back the money with a careless jerk into the leather pouch; and Yves’s face fell. A scowl, black and savage, came between his eyes; but his face was bent so low that the stranger could not see it.

But one there was on the opposite side of the way who saw and noted it. A group of girls, brave in clean white caps and bright-hued fête-day dresses, loitered on the old stone bridge. It was the Feast of St Mathieu; and the vespers-bell of the little chapel of St Gildas, higher up the valley-side, was already tinkling. The girls strolled on, chattering lightly. But there was one among them on whom the eye of Yves Pengaverec had never before failed to fall, to whose side he had never before failed to saunter; and she had seen that look. And her heart grew suddenly cold and fearful.

The red wine was drained—that bottle and another—to the last drop. Yves’s head swam; his hand shook beneath the weight of the traveller’s valise; his legs almost failed him as
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they two set out upon their way. But his thoughts were busy.

The sun was sinking in an angry purple sky as they crossed the trickling Scorff and mounted the track that led out of the valley of Polniac upon the open *landes*. The solemn melody of the vesper-psalm reached their ears as they passed the hillside chapel. Yves Pengaverec crossed himself devoutly and shivered a little; but his brow was as black as the western sky.

Not through the Coët ar Groach—the haunted Fairies’ Wood—that lay dark and mysterious on the hillside above them. Not through there, though that was the nearest way. Yves recalled the bitter words that the woman at the *auberge* had spoken to Daoulaz, and they sounded in his ears like a hideous forewarning. Not through there. Rather keep to the track right up the valley—though it were a mile farther—than pass through there.

He did not mean to harm the man—no, no! But he would have a share of those golden napoleons that the stranger knew so ill how to take care of—a share that he could carry to the old man Mathurin when he asked him again for the hand of Anne. He would have a share of them—by fair asking, if it could be so. And if the stranger would not yield them up, why, then—Yves scanned with lowered eyelids the sturdy bulk of the man who trudged by his side, and compared it critically with his own wiry build; and a grim smile passed over his lips.

The stranger tramped on all-unheeding, noisily familiar. The silent, glowering figure strode at his side. And so they passed up the valley and out on the bare *landes*.

Darkness was falling around them—darkness that gathered no illumination from the cloud-muffled sky. The desolate heath stretched out before, vague, gloomy, illimitable. No flutter of air passed over the great solitude; no cry of bird or beast broke into the night; a vast ineffable stillness lay heavy upon all the world.

Yves Pengaverec’s conscience stirred uneasily. A vague sense of awe weighed upon him. There was something unearthly in this intense hush. He tried to whistle; he urged his companion to sing; but the sounds died away in their throats, and they strode on together in silence.

Big drops of rain began to fall with a splash on the crisp heather. The night grew blacker and blacker still, till he could scarcely see the figure of the man who walked but an arm’s-length from his side. But an arm’s-length! He had but to stretch out his arm and grapple with him, and the leather pouch—But no! Ten thousand times, no! Not there. Wait till they had passed the great *menhir* on the heath, where Mathurin had found him that night twenty years ago, where his dead mother lay buried. Mother of Mercy! not till they

were past that! The drops of sweat stood upon his brow at the thought.

Of a sudden a blinding flash, flickering, lambent, swept across the sky; a crashing peal of thunder burst above their heads; and at the same instant, as if set loose by the sound, a cataract of rain descended. The storm that Daoulaz had predicted had come.

Hissing and seething and spluttering, the torrent streamed down. No pause, no change, no intermission. The thunder rolled and clattered incessantly. The lightning leapt and flickered over the face of the heath. Tongues of flame, blue-tinged, quivering, lit on the trembling heather and shed a ghastly fitful glare over the solitude. The deep stillness had given place to a very hell of discord.

Yves's superstitious terrors gripped him closer, and his blood stood still. Was this tempest by chance a sign, a portent, a divine warning? Was he to be consumed by the wrath from above, devoured by some celestial messenger of vengeance, with that sin—that sinful design of his—unshriven upon his soul? He was a Breton by training if not by birth, with all the Breton beliefs grown deep-rooted in his brain; and his nature fought stoutly with the mocking hardihood which the red wine had engendered in him. But the red wine conquered. Bah! The storm was nothing; it had been expected all day; it was usual at the time of year. And he meant no harm to the man. Storm or no, he would have his share of the money—once they were past the *menhir*.

They could not be far from it now. With lowered heads and bent shoulders they were gaining the crest of the heath, where the *menhir* for centuries unknown had kept its solitary watch. A flash of dazzling brilliance zigzagged down the sky and irradiated the sombre plain. Ah! there it was in front of them—black and massive and irregular, with the tall crucifix on its summit in outline against the sky. Another flash, and another; and they could see it quite distinctly.

Stay! What was that? The flash had fallen on something pale at the foot of the stone. Was it— Or was it but his fancy? Yves's knees shook; the sweat started, cold and clammy, upon his brow; the flesh along the ridge of his back shuddered and crept. He waited for the next flash, his dry lips muttering a prayer. The flash was long in coming. There was a lull in the tempest; the rain abated, the heavens remained black. Then all at once the fury of the storm burst out upon them once more. Flash followed flash; the plain was lit with a thousand flickering sheets of fire; the thunder rolled like some avenging spirit. And he saw.

They were but thirty yards from the base of

the great *menhir*, and the lightning-flashes lit it with a fierce, changing intensity. A woman's shape stood outlined against the stone, her arms thrown around it, her face turned from the travellers. It was no mistake, no illusion, no deception of the eyesight; the steely, quivering light played around the pale-robed figure and illumined it in keen contrast with the darkness of the granite. A woman's figure clung there, sure enough. And *whose? Whose?* The prayer would not come now. It had died away upon his nerveless lips, and his tongue groped for it in vain. He could only watch—watch—watch, with starting eyeballs and fluttering breath. Then, as he still stood gazing, horror-stricken, paralysed by a growing awe, the figure seemed of a sudden to turn and beckon to him; and in a lull of the thunder-rattle there came a long wail floating upon the storm, calling the name of Yves Pengaverec.

He stayed no longer. With outstretched arms, praying, supplicating, groaning, in a very ecstasy of supernatural fear, he ran blindly forward. He ran blindly forward, with that glorious shining figure standing in miraculous radiance before his eyes, and cast himself at its feet, sobbing passionately.

Yves Pengaverec is an aged man now; and he and his old wife Anne, faithful companion of his long life-voyage, are content to look forward with patient eyes to the time, not far distant surely, when they shall both be laid to rest in the quiet hillside cemetery at the back of the old chapel of St Gildas. Fortune has done well by them. From the day when old Mathurin, stricken down by a sudden paralysis, promised his daughter in marriage to the penniless young peasant who was willing to work the fields for him, till now—when modern usages begin to interfere sadly with the primitive husbandry of La Basse Bretagne—the world has prospered with them. They are hale yet, and frosty-cheeked, and cheery. And the old couple will speak sometimes still of that terrible night when Anne, frightened by the look in her lover's eyes, had slipped away from the rest when vespers were done, and had fled through the Fairies' Wood and out upon the *landes*, hoping vaguely to overtake and speak with him; of how the storm, remembered to this day, had come upon her just as she reached the great *menhir*; and how the travellers, toiling round by the longer road, had appeared like a providence to save her in her need. But there is ever yet a secret which Yves Pengaverec will bear with him to the grave. His lips have never breathed word of the strange mistake that he made that night, or of the dark sin that his soul was saved from by that miraculous vision at the *menhir*.

THE HIDDEN PRINCESS.

By TOM GALLON, Author of *Tatterley, Comethup, &c.*

CHAPTER I.

THE MURDER OF THE KING.

IN those days known as the 'good old times'—or the bad old times—there existed, somewhere near the south-west of Europe, a certain kingdom known as Sylvania. You will find no trace of it on any map, new or old; it has long since been swallowed up and parcelled out among the great countries upon whose borders it once flourished. It was a thriving country, and a prosperous; and the name of its capital was Arboream—a strange, old-world city, with crooked, ill-paved streets, and queer overhanging houses which seemed to be for ever thrusting their heads against each other to whisper strange things by the light of the moon.

At the time of which this faithful history speaks there was a certain King upon the throne of Sylvania, known as Ulphius—an old and kindly man, beloved by his people—a gentle and wise ruler; his Queen had died years before, leaving behind her an only daughter. This daughter the King, out of love for his country, had named Sylvia; she had grown up from girlhood to young womanhood—riding out through the streets of the old city by her father's side, attended by the courtiers and ladies-in-waiting—the fairest girl in a country noted for the beauty of its women. She was, indeed, of so gracious and tender a nature, although possessing, as became a princess of high degree, that touch of queenly dignity which seemed but to add to her charms; and she rode so fearlessly and so often—as princesses did in those simple times—among her father's people, that there was scarce a man or woman or child of the city who had not seen her, and on whom at some time or other her kindly, gracious smile had not lighted. For in those days kings and queens and princesses reigned in the hearts of their people, and knew much of their joys and sorrows, and rooted their thrones, it might almost be said, in the hearthstones of their subjects.

King Ulphius had reigned wisely and well for nearly a quarter of a century, and, being a man who loved peace better than war, and who liked rather to hear the hum and busy clatter of a prosperous city about him than the clash of arms, had given opportunity to one man in 1899.]

the kingdom to take a power to himself which no one suspected or thought seriously about. That man was Glavin, Prime-Minister and chief adviser to the King. Glavin was a man of a dark and sombre countenance, a man of much courtesy and suavity of manners; and, as the King had from time to time rewarded him for his services with gifts and honours, this man had, as the years went on, grown exceedingly rich and powerful. He had a great castle just outside the city, to the strength of which he had added from time to time; and, in the easy-going and pleasure-loving city and court, no one seemed to recognise that the men at the disposal of the Prime-Minister were greater in number and better trained and armed than those about the palace of the King. Sometimes, as Glavin sat in the King's cabinet, advising his master, the thought would come upon him that, in the event of the sudden death of Ulphius, it would be an easy thing to seize the throne and reign in Sylvania by force of arms; and this thought grew and grew with him as time went on.

Years before, when the Princess Sylvia was but a beautiful child of eleven, there had been in the palace of King Ulphius a handsome boy, of some fifteen years of age, named Gareth. This youth was the son of the King's dead younger brother; and the King, having no male issue, had decreed that Gareth should succeed to the throne. But, being a wise old man, he determined that his nephew should have an education which would fit him for so responsible a position; and, with this end in view, he sent the boy, with many letters of recommendation, on a journey through Europe, determining that he should see something of other courts and kingdoms, and their fashions and manners, before reigning in Sylvania.

Now, Prince Gareth had, even as a boy, an affection for the beautiful child, his cousin Sylvia; and the thought that they might one day be joined together and reign together in Sylvania was very pleasing to the King; and, although he had laughed at the little, innocent, childish love-making, he yet liked to see the children together, and often watched them wandering hand-in-hand in the palace gardens, or sitting silently, looking into each other's eyes in

adoring fashion, and listening to the songs of the birds and the plash of the fountains.

The little Princess Sylvia shed many bitter tears when her boy-lover started out upon his travels, for travelling was a serious business in those days; and it was a greater matter even for a prince to journey a few hundred miles than for an ordinary man in our days to go to the other side of the world. It had been arranged that the young Prince was to extend his travels as far as possible, and was to make a considerable stay in whatever country he happened to be; so that it was probable that he would not return to Sylvania for some years to come. As a matter of fact, he did not return for nine years; for, through hot-headedness, he got into serious trouble with a state which was not on the most friendly terms with Sylvania, and was kept a close prisoner for some time. So that when, after many adventures, he finally set out for his own country, his retinue had disappeared, and he travelled alone.

In the meantime the Princess Sylvia, as has been said, had grown to womanhood; the old King had left the reins of government more completely in the hands of Glavin, the Prime-Minister, who, being an ambitious man, felt that, in spite of all his power, he was not yet powerful enough.

One dark and moonless night a compact body of sturdy men-at-arms marched silently into the city, and halted at the palace gates; they were Glavin's men. The porter of the palace gate must have been in the pay of the Prime-Minister, for he let the drawbridge down without a word, and the men passed silently across, and were drawn up, waiting and fully armed, in the courtyard. Glavin sat late with the King that night, discussing affairs of State; and when the silence was broken by the tramp of the men-at-arms in the courtyard below, the King started from his seat and looked at Glavin.

'What means this noise?' he cried. 'What men are these?'

Glavin, the Prime-Minister, bowed mockingly, looking at him with an evil smile. 'The men are mine, sire,' he said. 'They come here at my bidding.'

The King smiled perplexedly. 'So great an escort, surely, is beyond the need even of the chief Minister of Sylvania,' he said.

'True, sire,' replied Glavin; 'but not too great, methinks, for the escort of the King.'

King Ulphius looked at him with a frown. 'Thy words are puzzling, Glavin,' he said. 'Explain thyself.'

The Prime-Minister came nearer to him, no longer bowing before him, but looking at him with a new and unveiled light of insolence in his dark eyes. 'This night,' he said, 'a new King sits upon the throne of Sylvania; thy course is run, Ulphius. This night thou shalt join thy sainted Queen in heaven.'

He sprang towards the King, who wheeled about suddenly, and made a dash for the other side of the cabinet, where his sword lay upon a table. But Glavin was too quick for him; he caught the old King by the throat, so that he could not cry out, and there about the room they rocked fiercely, hugging each other in that deadly embrace. Glavin was the stronger man, and younger, and he forced the old King to his knees, and then upon his back on the floor, still with that deadly grip upon his throat—a grip he never relaxed until King Ulphius lay mute and lifeless at his feet. Then he sprang across the room, flung open the door of the cabinet, and shouted to the guard:

'Quick! Bring hither the physician. His Majesty the King is ill of an apoplexy.'

The man, without waiting to hear anything further, ran at once to the apartments of the King's physician and raised the alarm; in a few moments the old man came shuffling along to the King's cabinet, half-dressed, and followed by a crowd of frightened waiting men and maids. Glavin was at the door of the cabinet, and he drew the physician within, and closed the door on the others. And the next moment the astonished man felt himself held in a grip of iron by one shoulder, with a dagger pointed at his heart.

'Cry out—and I strike,' whispered the Prime-Minister. 'Thou seest the King; look well on him. Tell me—as thou wilt tell all other men—how did the King die?'

The trembling physician felt himself drawn nearer and nearer to the body of the King and forced upon his knees by that tremendous grip.

'Look well on him,' whispered Glavin again, 'and tell me—as thou wilt tell all men—how did the King die?'

The physician knew well how the King died; he saw, as he knelt there, the marks of the cruel fingers upon the swollen throat; yet, with that dagger at his breast, he dared not speak the truth. 'His Majesty has died,' he muttered in a low voice, 'of an apoplexy, as thou hast said.'

Glavin laughed, and pulled the man to his feet. 'Go,' he said, 'and proclaim it to all men: issue a writing, which may be set upon the castle gate, that all who can may read it. In the morning I will send forth the heralds to proclaim it to the city, and to proclaim that a new King reigns in Sylvania.'

The Princess Sylvia, hearing the tumult in the castle, had run quickly to the door of her apartments, fearing that something had happened to the King, her father; but at the door stood two strange men-at-arms, whom she had not seen before about the castle, and who barred her way.

'What means this?' she asked haughtily.
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'There is a noise and clamour of tongues within the castle. I would seek the King, my father.'

But they told her doggedly enough that they had orders that she was not to leave her apartments; and, greatly wondering, she went within again, and waited, trembling, with her ladies all about her.

Presently a heavy step sounded in the outer room, and Glavin came in and stood before her—not bending, as he had been wont to do, to kiss her hand, but standing there, looking at her grimly and in silence. There was a long pause before he spoke.

'Send thy ladies from thee, Princess,' he said sternly; 'there is trouble in the palace, and I would speak to thee alone.'

She waved her hand to dismiss the women, and then stood watching him, with all her nerves strung to the keenest tension to hear his news, to understand his strange behaviour. He came to the matter in hand brutally enough.

'The King is dead,' he said.

She started, and clasped her hands, and took a step towards him, looking at him with wild eyes.

'Dead!' she breathed. 'I left the King, my father, well but an hour since. Ah! let me go to him; let me see him. He loved me; there is a chance that he may wake again at the voice of my love. Let me go to him.'

He put his hand up to stop her, shaking his head.

'Stay,' he said. 'Thou must not see the King now; the physician is with him, and his attendants.'

She drew herself up, and stamped her foot imperiously, even though her eyes were swimming with tears. 'Thou forgettest,' she said, 'the obedience due to me. I am the daughter of thy King; I demand to see my father.'

'And I refuse to grant thee leave to see him. I owe thee no obedience now; a new King reigns in Sylvania, and I am that King.'

She started back from him in astonishment.

'Thou the King!' she cried. 'If my father is dead, and Prince Gareth is not here to claim his own, then will I hold the throne until the Prince comes to take it. Thou dost most strangely abuse the position the King, thy master, gave thee.'

'Might rules stronger than all else at such a time as this,' cried Glavin, laughing. 'Thou shalt rule in Sylvania; but thou must rule with me. This is no time for tender speeches or honeyed words; long have I desired thee, Sylvia, even as I have desired the throne thy father filled. Now that throne is within my grasp, and thou and I will rule together.'

She shrank from him, terrified and appalled at his audacity.

'Thou mayest wrest the Princess Sylvia's kingdom from her; thou shalt not seize the Princess Sylvia also,' she said.

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Glavin caught her suddenly by the wrist and looked into her eyes.

'Who is to aid thee?' he cried fiercely. 'My men-at-arms far outnumber those of the dead King, and are stronger; the palace now is within my grasp, and to-morrow the city of Arboream shall hear the new King proclaimed. See'—he caught her hand and ruthlessly wrenched a ring from one of the slender fingers, and held the glittering thing up to the light—'see, here is thy ring, to proclaim to all men that thou art plighted to Glavin, King of Sylvania.'

'Give me my ring,' she cried hoarsely. 'Tis not mine to give. Prince Gareth placed it on my hand nine long years since, in token of his boyish love for me. Give me my ring again.'

'Twill better serve, then,' said Glavin, laughing. 'Prince Gareth comes no more; but thou shalt reign in Sylvania with a worthier mate. Thou art my prisoner here until such time as thou shalt choose to ride through the city with me on thy bridal-day.' He slipped the ring on his little finger, turned on his heel, and went out of the room.

He had reached the King's cabinet again—from which the body of the dead King had been removed—and was pacing up and down there, when one of his men came hurriedly to him, and told him that a young man waited outside the castle, demanding admission.

'Who is this man?' asked Glavin, pausing in his walk, and frowning upon the messenger.

The man was a stranger in Arboream, being a soldier of fortune who had come there only within the past year, and knew nothing of former events.

'He cries that his name is Gareth,' said the man, 'and that he is a prince returned after much wandering to his uncle's kingdom again.'

Glavin started, and came hurriedly across the room and laid his hand on the fellow's mouth.

'Hush!' he whispered. 'Speak not so loud. Has this prince much following?'

'He rides alone, sire,' answered the man.

Glavin considered for a moment, and then turned again to the man.

'Admit him silently,' he said; 'show him much courtesy, and bring him hither to me at once. And, above all, tell no man of his arrival, or thy life shall pay the penalty.'

CHAPTER II.

THE FIGHT ON THE HILL-TOP.



GLAVIN paced up and down the cabinet for some minutes before the sound of footsteps warned him that his visitor was approaching.

He stood calmly, with a smile upon his face, until the door opened; and then, as the young Prince appeared on the threshold,

he advanced quickly, dropped gracefully on one knee before him, caught his hand, and carried it to his lips.

'Thou art right welcome home again, my Prince,' he said; 'so many years hast thou travelled that I should scarce have known thee. Thou left us a stripling; thou comest again in the pride of manhood—and crowned, I warrant me, with doughty deeds. But thou comest at an evil time.'

The young Prince started.

'Of what evil dost thou speak, Glavin?' he cried. 'Surely no harm has come to my uncle the King, or to my sweet cousin the Princess. Tell me quickly of what evil thou speakest.'

'Sire,' said Glavin, with much humility, 'my lord the King is dead; he died but an hour since, in this very room, of an apoplexy. The Princess Sylvia is confined to her apartments, overwhelmed with grief at the death of her father; and I alone am left to welcome thee. The Princess, who knows of thy coming, hath begged that she may not see thee to-night; in the morning she will greet thee.'

'Tis grave news indeed,' said the Prince. 'I would have given much to have seen my uncle the King alive. I have journeyed far, and with what speed I might, since I made my escape from prison. And now I return but to find the King dead, and my sweet cousin plunged in grief. I would see the King, Glavin.'

Glavin shook his head sadly. 'Tis not a sight that thou shouldst look upon,' he said. 'Wait rather till the physician and the women have done their duties, that thou mayest see him in the glory of death, even as thou didst know him in the glory of life. Let me urge upon thee, Prince, to get thee to thy chamber, and leave us this sad night alone with our grief. Thou hast need of rest; to-morrow thou must be hailed as King of Sylvania, according to thine uncle's decree.'

Prince Gareth was unwilling at first to accede to Glavin's wishes, but he finally went to the chamber set apart for him, and, without undressing, flung himself down upon his couch, to think of all these strange new happenings in the kingdom of Sylvania.

Left alone, Glavin lost no time in thought; he hurriedly summoned the captain of his men-at-arms, and held a long and private talk with him. It was a time for desperate measures, if he would carry out his purpose, and Glavin was not the man to shrink from anything to which he had put his hand.

Thus it happened that, long before daybreak, Prince Gareth was startled from his sleep by a rude hand laid on his shoulder, and started up to find six men fully armed about his couch. His sword had been taken from him, and he stood there unarmed, at their mercy.

'The King would speak with thee,' said one

of the men when he hotly demanded an explanation of the intrusion.

'The King!' he cried. 'The King is dead: how, then, should he summon me?'

'There is a new King rules in Sylvania—King Glavin. 'Tis he who summons thee.'

'Glavin is mad,' cried the Prince; 'the events of this night must have disturbed his reason. I go not at any such bidding.'

But they caught him roughly, all unarmed as he was, and, despite his struggles, forced him from the room, and along the passages of the castle to the King's cabinet; and there, firmly held, he stood defiantly before Glavin, who was seated, looking at him with a smile.

'I told thee, Prince, thou camest at an evil time,' said Glavin. 'To-night the King has died; to-night the kingdom of Sylvania is mine. Thou hast tarried too long upon thy travels. I have not played so deep a stake to have it snatched from my grasp by a boy.'

'There can be but one king in Sylvania,' cried the Prince, hotly, 'and that king is King Gareth, by my uncle's decree. I come in time to claim my own; to fight for my own, if need be.'

'And I tell thee, fool, that thou art too late. Within an hour or two the heralds shall proclaim King Glavin, and my men shall force the proclamation home at the pike's point, if force be needful. Listen to me—he leaned forward in his seat and scowled at the young man—'no man in Arboream knows of thy coming here to-night; no man shall know of thy going. Within an hour thou shalt pass from the city, strongly guarded; within an hour thou shalt die, and leave King Glavin to reign over the kingdom of Sylvania. 'Twas a madness indeed, Prince, to venture into thy loyal kingdom unattended; thou shalt leave it attended well enough. Six men shall go with thee, without the city wall, and there, in a lonely place that has been selected, they shall murder thee, and fling thy body into the heart of the wood; so mutilating thy fair beauty that any who may chance to find thee shall but say thou art a poor gentleman, unknown, killed by robbers for what gold thou didst chance to have in thy pouch.'

'Thou wilt not dare to do this thing,' cried Gareth; 'the city of Arboream would rise in its might against thee.'

Glavin shrugged his shoulders. 'The city will not know,' he said. 'Thou camest here when men were fast and snug in their beds; thou goest out before they wake. I dare all things in such a cause as this. To-morrow it will be proclaimed in the streets of Arboream that King Ulphius died of an apoplexy; it may be well to tell thee—thou who talkest of men not daring—that the King, thine uncle, died at my hands; that I choked out the useless life from him, as I would choke out thine if it served my humour to do so.'

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The Prince sprang forward with a cry of rage ; but the men-at-arms gripped him firmly, and, though he struggled fiercely, he could not get at the man.

'Listen again,' went on Glavin calmly. 'Thou didst think to come back here to thy kingdom, and claim thy cousin Sylvia for thy queen. She shall yet sit upon the throne of Sylvania—not as thy queen, but mine. We long have loved ; and this night, even since her father's death, she did plight her troth to me.'

'Thou liest,' cried the Prince. 'The Princess Sylvia would not mate with such as thou.'

Glavin laughed, and held up his hand, on which the ring glittered. 'Wilt thou believe that?' he asked—'the ring thou gavest her, thinking to keep her faithful to thee. Women are ambitious, even as men are ; and when a kingdom holds the balance against love, love is a feathery thing indeed, weighing nothing in the balance. Thy kingdom and thy bride are mine, Gareth, and thou art nothing from this hour.'

Long before daybreak the six men marched out of the silent city, with Prince Gareth in their midst ; he walked with bowed head, like a man from whom all dear delights of earth have been swept away ; he scarcely seemed to care, in that terrible hour, whether he lived or whether he died. The men, keeping sternest watch upon him, marched on with him out of the city, and right on to the crest of a hill, from which, looking backwards, the city could be seen just springing into morning glory in the coming sunrise ; on the other side before them was a rocky broken declivity, covered with rough and tangled woods. And at the brow of the hill the six men halted.

Now, it happened that one of the six was the soldier of fortune who had come running to Glavin with the news of the young Prince's arrival. He was a wild, daring, and reckless fellow, scarred from many fights, and a man of whom it was currently said among his comrades that he feared neither God nor man. Yet he had a passionate admiration for bravery in any shape or form ; and although he knew, like the good soldier he was, that a soldier's first duty must be obedience, he loathed the work now before him. To stand in fair and open fight with any man, be the issue what it might, was a fair and a glorious thing, whether the quarrel be a matter of the wine-cups or a woman's dark eyes ; but to slaughter a man—outnumbered by six to one, and unarmed—in cold blood was a very different matter. This man, whose name was Gobeno, determined that, so far as he was concerned, he would have nothing to do with the killing of a brave and honest gentleman who could not defend himself.

The men halted, as has been said, at the top of the hill, and suddenly caught at their weapons ; and then the lust of life swept over the Prince, and he drew himself up, and looked round upon

them, defenceless though he was, like a tiger at bay. And, while he looked round, Gobeno the scarred edged a little nearer towards him.

Suddenly Gareth pointed hurriedly to the city.

'See!' he cried ; 'what meaneth that light upon the castle towers?'

There was no light upon the castle towers ; but the men, taken off their guard, swung round to look. Gareth sprang forward like a panther, and struck one of the fellows full under the ear, catching his sword from his hand as he fell ; and then, with his back against a tree, he swung the heavy weapon in his hand, and held them at bay.

'Now, strike, ye varlets,' he cried, 'and ye shall see how a Prince can die. 'Tis five blades to one. Now who is he that will first taste cold steel?'

Then Gobeno swung his sword aloft, sprang to the side of the Prince, and faced round there with him ; and two swords were levelled against four. 'I do not side with butchers,' he shouted, 'nor stand by while an honest gentleman fights for the life God gave him. Come, Sir Prince ; let's have at the rogues!'

Gareth took heart of grace indeed then, for, though they were still two to four, he knew the strength and subtlety of his own wrist, and the man who had ranged himself beside him looked like a fighter ; besides this, the men themselves, who had expected no such strange turn of events, held back for a moment. The Prince sprang at the foremost of them, and drove his heavy sword straight down through the fellow's skull, so that he fell back, lifeless and horrible, amongst his fellows. Another man made at him fiercely ; and Gareth, driven backwards for a moment, dropped suddenly upon one knee, and thrust up at the man under his guard with all his strength ; the sword went clean through his lungs, and he fell heavily, groaning. Meanwhile Gobeno had not been idle ; he had struck at one man so fiercely that the fellow's sword dropped from his grasp, shivered at the hilt ; he turned and dashed off down the hill after the man who had been disarmed in the first instance ; and the last man, after a few futile passes, fairly turned tail, and raced down the hill after them.

Gobeno was for setting off after them, but the Prince called him back. 'Let us spill no more blood,' he cried hastily ; 'rather let us look to our own safety. If those fellows reach the city, within an hour a score of them will be hunting us. We have fought against desperate odds, thou and I ; if we stay here now I must surely be slain, and thou, good fellow, wilt hang in the market-place.'

'Have no fear, Sir Prince,' replied Gobeno, laughing. 'They dare not carry back the tale that one unarmed man was a match for six sent out to murder him ; if thy death be of such value to my late master, they will not

dare to say thou art still alive. Rest assured we are safe from pursuit.'

Prince Gareth leaned upon the sword he held, and looked down at the dead men and at the blood-stained ground; then he raised his eyes, and looked back down the hill at the city of Arboream, with the sun just gilding its roofs.

'I am a Prince—nay, a King without a kingdom. My love is false to me; my kingdom wrested from me by a villain. To return there would be a madness. How can I, with my single arm, fight against Glavin and his army? Henceforth I have no kingdom; henceforth there are none to fight my cause.'

Gobeno dropped suddenly upon one knee, and bared and bent his head.

'Nay, say not so, Sir Prince,' he cried, 'for if thou wilt but take me, I will fight thy cause till all causes are alike to me and I fight no more. Even in these times brave men are hard to find, and I—a poor soldier of fortune—do dearly love a losing cause, where the odds are desperate and a man sleeps with his hand to his sword-hilt. Take me, Sir Prince, and I will serve thee faithfully.'

'And never Prince had better squire,' cried Gareth. 'In desperate straits men find what stuff their fellow-men are made of, and find, maybe, their truest friends. How do they call you?'

'By many strange titles at times,' said the fellow, laughing; 'some scarce fit for ears polite. But my name is Gobeno.'

'Come, Count Gobeno,' said the Prince, raising him from the ground, 'thou hast chosen a sorry cause, methinks; but thou and I will stand together in it, whatever it may be.'

And so the Prince and the soldier of fortune left Arboream far behind, and fared forth into the world together.

Gobeno's words proved to be true; for the men who should have killed the Prince, returning to the city, told Glavin a wonderful story of how the Prince had turned upon them, snatched the sword, and fought lustily for his life; of how he had killed three of their number before they found it possible to disarm and despatch him; and added that he lay dead in the little wood, and that they purposed returning that night and burying him in secret with their slain comrades.

'Truly a dangerous fellow,' cried Glavin, laughing grimly. 'But a man-at-arms or two is no great thing; return after nightfall, as ye have said, and hide all traces of the slaughter.'

So they came back at night to the hill, took up the bodies of the two dead men, carried them into the wood, and buried them there; and they said nothing further about the matter, for fear of Glavin.

Thus King Glavin held the throne of Sylvania, and Prince Gareth was an exile and a wanderer in strange lands.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW KING.



ING GLAVIN was duly proclaimed by the heralds through all the streets of the city of Arboream and in the market-places of the smaller towns of Sylvania. At first the people were indignant and surprised; but they knew the power of this man, and the heralds were everywhere accompanied by strong bodies of men-at-arms, so that the people dared not cry out against the usurper—dared not even murmur. But in their own homes they fell to whispering about the strange doings at the palace, and to wondering what was to become of their beloved Princess Sylvia, and what part she would take in the new kingdom.

Once a bold fellow, a blacksmith in the city, cried out against the man who had seized the throne, and raised a shout for Queen Sylvia; he was seized, and carried before the King. And the next morning, when the people came out of their houses at daybreak, they drew into shuddering groups and pointed at a fearful thing in the market-place. For there, on a gallows fifty feet high, swinging in the wind, was the body of the blacksmith. It seemed to poison the very air of the fair city as it hung there. But after that no man dared to cry out against the King; they only hated him in secret, and kept close within their houses when he rode forth in all splendour through the city; there were no more joyous shouts and acclamations, as in the days of King Ulphius.

One day Glavin caused proclamation to be made throughout the city that in two months the Princess Sylvia, who had plighted her troth to him, would be wedded to him, with much pomp and ceremony, in the Cathedral of Arboream. It may readily be imagined with what feelings the people received the tidings; they felt that even their beloved Princess had turned against them, and had cast in her lot with a man they detested and feared. Of course the Princess knew nothing of this; the proclamation had been made without her knowledge. But that day Glavin paid a visit to her apartments, wherein she had been kept a close prisoner, and announced to her what he had done.

'This day,' he said, 'the heralds have proclaimed to the people of Sylvania that in a month's time the Princess Sylvia becomes the bride of the King; all preparations for the nuptials are completed. I am a man of my oath: thou shalt reign with me in Sylvania, even as I have said.'

The Princess Sylvia turned upon him with flashing eyes.

'I will go with thee to the Cathedral,' she

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cried, 'only if they carry me thither on my bier. Thou wilt not dare to force me to such a thing as this; the people of Arboream love me, and they will rise up against thee if I do but cry to them.'

'And the people of Arboream fear me,' he said, with a laugh—'which is a much greater thing. Pikes and swords pierce men's hearts more quickly than women's cries. I tell thee thou art powerless here.'

'I wait for my Prince,' she said presently. 'He will surely come soon, and will hurl thee from the throne, and take his own again.'

King Glavin burst into a roar of laughter. 'Thou wilt not see thy Prince again,' he said; 'thy Prince is dead.' Then, as she started suddenly towards him with her hands clasped, he added:

'Thy Prince came hither on the very night thy father died, and I, fearing that he might stand in my way, had him sent to join his uncle. There is but one Prince in Sylvania; I am that one. Wilt thou not be reasonable, my Princess? All these things have I dared for thy sweet sake. Wilt thou not grant my prayer? The power is mine, and yet I stoop to plead with thee.'

The Princess Sylvia, be it remembered, lived in strange and stirring times, and during the past few days, whilst kept a close prisoner, had had time to debate within herself on all these matters, and to endeavour to find, with her keen woman's wit, some method of escape. Her whole soul revolted at the man who stood before her; she seemed to see his hands dyed red with the blood of her boy-lover. And yet, with all the woman's soul within her strung to meet the demand, she determined, knowing her own helplessness, to match her wit against that of the man, and to gain by feminine cunning what she could not gain by prayers or strength. And she began to play her part from that hour.

She turned her beautiful sad eyes fully upon him, and then bowed her head. 'It is as my lord the King desires,' she said. 'I am but a woman; yet I fain would be a queen, and 'tis meet that a woman should bow herself before her King. I loved my Prince, although he was but a boy; but thou, by strangest fortune, dost hold the kingdom of Sylvania. I will do thy bidding in a month from this.'

Then, as he moved quickly towards her, she put up her hand imperiously, yet with some slightest show of archness, and stopped him. 'Stay,' she said; 'if I concede so much, I have the right to claim something from thee. I claim that thou shalt not demand from me any slightest privilege until the holy Church confers it on thee; and I claim my freedom from this hour.'

King Glavin looked at her somewhat ruefully for a moment; but he was well contented with so easy a victory. 'Thy claim is granted,' he said slowly; 'but thou must not go beyond the
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palace grounds. Thou shalt see enough of thy beloved people,' he added, with a slight sneer, 'when thou art Queen of Sylvania. Thou art free to go or come as thou wilt, through the palace and its gardens.'

Then he turned on his heel and left her; and from that time the guards were taken from the door leading to her apartments, and she was free to come and go as she would. She certainly made the best use of her liberty. She found many opportunities of speaking to those of her father's people who still remained about the palace; and from them she learned something of all that had been happening in Arboream. She learned that already new taxes had been made, and new tax-gatherers appointed; that the good, prosperous days of her father's reign were fast being forgotten before this new reign of tyranny which had sprung up. She heard that the people, so far from going about their business with songs and laughter, crept about the city silently and in trembling; that old punishments and penalties, long since fallen into decay, had been revived, and new ones added. And she grew to hate the King with a deeper hatred even than before, because she loved her people.

One night the Princess Sylvia crept out into the grounds of the palace, and wandered there listlessly alone. One week of her month of freedom had gone by, and she was already beginning to cast about in her mind for some way of escape from the terrible fate which threatened her; yet the more she thought about it the deeper grew her despair. And, thinking thus, she came to a little gate which led from the gardens of the palace into the city—a gate little used. As she went towards it a man sprang up out of the shadow and barred her way.

Now, it is quite certain that when the Princess first drew near the gate she had no slightest thought of passing beyond it; yet the mere fact that a guardian had been sent there to prevent any attempted escape was sufficient to rouse in her mind a sudden passionate desire to pass beyond the portals into the city. In part a feeling of bitter resentment at the injustice of her captivity, in part a coquettish desire to match the strength of her beauty and her wit against Glavin's more brutal forces, actuated her; without the slightest hesitation she advanced quickly, as though she did not see the man, and stumbled almost into his arms. He held his pike across the door, and she drew back in apparent blushing confusion.

'I did not see thee, good fellow,' she said. 'The night is dark, and men do not usually start from the shadows, even at the bidding of a princess. What dost thou here?'

'I stand here by order of the King,' replied the man in a low voice. For the sight of this fair and dainty Princess, in her white robe,

in the sombre night-time, with the wondrous beauty of her face so near to his as she spoke, was an enchanting and a disturbing vision; he grasped his pike more firmly, and drew himself stiffly upright.

The Princess stood, with one hand lightly leaning against the heavy masonry of the wall, looking at him with a musing smile.

'And thou hast orders,' she said slowly, 'that the Princess Sylvia shall not pass beyond this gate?' She laughed a low, musical, rippling laugh, and drew a little nearer to him. 'And so they fear my might and power so greatly that they set strong men, with stronger weapons, to guard the gates against me. Truly I had not known that men did fear me so!'

'Tis the King's orders,' said the man again; but he held his pike a little more easily, clasping it lightly with both hands, and letting it rest against his shoulder.

'But surely no man of strength wants arms against a woman,' she said, smiling up at him still. 'Nature gave him arms to hold a woman if he would, or keep her from him. A brave man levels not his pike at a woman's heart. His arms could hold her did she but battle with him.'

The man laughed, but said nothing; he shifted his position a little, and taking the pike loosely in one hand, rested the other on his hip.

'Truly, I seek not to escape,' she said in the same low, almost caressing voice; 'for if thou stoodst there without thy pike, and I did come against thee, thou couldst hold me with thine arms so long as it pleased thee.'

'Truly I could,' said the man, laughing again—'if I but dared to hold a princess at all,' he added.

'A princess is but a woman, after all,' she said, looking at him steadily. 'See, good fellow, set down thy pike against the door there, and I will come at thee, as if to escape, and thou shalt prove that thou canst hold me.'

The man set his pike against the wall and stood there, with his hands resting lightly on his hips, facing her. She drew herself back for a moment, and then made as if to run at him; but as his hands were stretched out to hold her she swerved suddenly, caught up the pike, sprang back against the wall, and levelled it at him.

'Come no nearer, on your life!' she cried; and they were no longer the alluring eyes of the woman which faced him, but the imperious eyes of a queen who would have her way. 'It is my purpose to go to-night into the city; within an hour, before the guard comes round, I will be at the gate here again. Thou shalt not suffer for this service; I will fill thy hands with gold. But I go to-night into the city; unbar the door.'

He fidgeted about, at the length of the pike,

watching her uneasily; but she stood there sternly defiant, and he dared come no nearer. 'Give me the pike, Princess,' he said. 'I dare not unbar the door.'

'Then will I slay thee, fool, and take my way into the city at my leisure;' and she made at him so fiercely with the pike that he dropped suddenly upon his knees.

'Nay, I will unbar the door,' he cried, 'if thou wilt return within the hour.'

'I have said it,' she replied haughtily. 'And each night, while it is my pleasure, I will pass through this gate, and will come back again within the hour. Unbar the door.'

The fellow rose slowly, went to the door, and threw it open; the Princess slipped through backwards, still facing him, with the pike levelled. Then, as she stepped outside, she suddenly flung down the pike with a clatter on the stones, and gathering up her robes in her hand, shot off down the street, and was lost in the darkness. The man stood looking after her for a moment, shaking his head; then he picked up his weapon, re-entered the garden, and fastened the door again.

The Princess Sylvia took her way through the city, unrecognised by any; the streets were dark, and she slipped along in the shadows, keeping out of the way of any groups of people she happened to pass. So for three nights—for but an hour on each occasion—she took her way through the city, her heart filled with grief at the silence and the gloom about her, relieving often with her bounty women and children, with hunger-pinched faces, who begged from her—a new sight indeed in Arboream; and at such times she drew her veil swiftly about her face, that none might know her.

There lived at this time in Arboream, in one of the poorer quarters of the city, a certain mysterious witch, held in superstitious dread by the simple-minded people, and much resorted to by love-sick youths and maidens for her fortune-telling powers and for her love-philtres. One night the Princess, wandering through the city, came upon the witch's dwelling, and made up her mind to consult her as to her own future and as to the possibility of her escape from the hated thralldom which seemed about to be put upon her. With her heart beating a little more quickly than usual, she veiled her face and tapped at the door. There was no response; listening intently, the Princess could hear the faint and mournful mewing of a cat, and could see a bright light shining through the partially curtained window. She knocked again, and then, growing impatient, pushed open the door and entered the place. It was a great, square, lofty room, with a brazier burning in the centre; the scented smoke from this floated in great wreaths about the roof. At one side of the room a curtain was suspended, and a great chair and a table stood near this. The cat—a great,
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black, fierce-eyed creature—was trotting ceaselessly in a circle round and round the brazier; and on the floor, wriggling its slow length towards where the Princess stood, was a horrible snake, its beautiful scaly skin glittering in the light.

The Princess called softly; and then, obtaining no reply, more loudly. The cat came slowly towards her, and rubbed itself, purring, against her robe; the snake stopped, and reared its head, looking at her out of its wicked eyes. But no witch was there. The Princess searched all through the place, even drawing back the curtain and peering behind it, but found nothing. The witch had gone, leaving nothing behind her to indicate the reason for her departure. Whether, as the Princess thought long afterwards, the old woman had wandered out, and, in the darkness of the night, had toppled into the river which ran near at hand, and so had been carried down by the swift current and drowned; or whether she had fled from the place in fear of threats which had been used against her; or what the mystery of her disappearance was, it is impossible to say. Suffice it that she never appeared in Arboream again.

And while the Princess stood near the brazier, wondering about it all, and irresolute what to do, there came a sudden loud knocking at the door. Princess Sylvia looked round for a way of escape, but saw none; she knew she dared not be found there, and perhaps recognised; and in an instant she had caught up a long thick veil of silk stuff, covered with cabalistic characters, which lay on the table, and had flung it completely over her head and face. Then, springing to the middle of the room, and standing behind the brazier, she cried to the person who knocked to enter.

CHAPTER IV.

A WONDROUS WITCH INDEED!



HE door was slowly opened, and a man came in, whom Princess Sylvia, peering through her veil, recognised as a man of the city, a tanner who carried on a small business in a little street just off the market-place. The man started when he saw the tall and queenly figure of Sylvia standing erect behind the brazier, in place of the bent and wrinkled hag he had expected to find.

'Truly, thou art no witch,' he said bluntly as he looked at her.

The Princess smiled behind her disguise.

'Tis the best proof that I am a witch,' she said, 'that I can change my shape at will. What is thine errand?'

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The man hurriedly crossed himself, and muttered something under his breath.

'The King,' he said at last, 'hath put new taxes upon us, and I, a poor man, cannot find the wherewithal to pay them. To-morrow, at noon, the tax-gatherer will seize my leather and the tools wherewith I earn my living if the money be not forthcoming. Tell me, if thou canst, how I may pay this sum, and how I shall avoid that which will surely bring me to beggary.'

The Princess opened the little pouch which hung at her girdle, took from it some gold pieces, and held them out to the man.

'Will this suffice, good tanner?' she asked.

The man hesitated for a moment, and looked at the gold doubtfully; then he eagerly took it, testing each piece between his teeth. The Princess laughed.

'Tis good gold,' she said; 'I have no fairy gold here, which turns to dead leaves when the sun rises. Pay thy taxes with that, and rest content.'

The fellow, with a profusion of thanks, tucked the money into his breast, and stumbled out of the place. The Princess, with a merry laugh, flung aside her veil, extinguished the brazier, and went out, and through the city streets, back to the gate in the wall of the palace garden.

But the adventure had taken a hold on her imagination; mystery is at all times precious to a woman, even though she be a princess, and she liked the thought that she was able, in secret, to do some good for the people she loved so well. And so it happened that, night after night, she went to the witch's house, and took her stand there behind the lighted brazier, with the folds of the veil concealing her features, and received the people who came to her. Now it was a girl, weeping because her lover was faithless; and with gentle words she cheered the poor creature, and sent her on her way, bidding her send the lover to her. And, with sternest rebuke, she would take the youth to task, showing him the wrong he had done, and in most cases contriving to bring those who really cared for each other together again. Now it was a mother who brought the child she loved to this most gentle witch, praying that she would heal it of the deadly sickness which had come upon it, and crying that she was too poor to seek a physician. Then would Sylvia, with gentle words and loving hands, and with such simple herbs and remedies as she found in the witch's place, minister to the needs of the ailing little one, so that it smiled up fearlessly at the veiled lady, and in many cases recovered of its malady.

Gradually it came to be known that this was no ordinary witch, such as the people had been accustomed to, but a great and gracious creature, the very tones of whose voice inspired hope in trembling hearts, the very touch of whose white

hands carried benediction ; and night after night, in the short hour the Princess stayed there, the crowds who visited her became greater, and the wonder and the mystery of it spread through all Sylvania.

Quite unconsciously, too, the Princess Sylvia was doing another thing : she was fighting against the power of King Glavin. For when she heard a tale of injustice or wrong she cried out bitterly, in scorn of the man who could thus oppress the people she loved ; when, with her gold or her gentle charity, she could undo some deed of his, she did it. All-unconsciously, too, by her deeds and by her words, she fought against the power of the King, and roused the people yet more against him. She felt that there could be no injustice in that, for the kingdom he held was her own, and she had the right to gain it if she could. So great became her power at last, and so great the love of the simple people for her, that there were a vast number in the city of Arboream who would gladly have laid down their lives at her bidding ; who would gladly have fought, at her command, against the usurper they knew she hated as fiercely as they did. There was, too, a sort of superstitious worship of her in their minds ; they dared not think who this wondrous creature could be, who came before them for but an hour each night, and then vanished again.

It came to the ears of the King at last, and although he scornfully mocked at her power, he yet was troubled ; there were so many strange rumours afloat in Arboream in regard to her. One night he rode out through the city, alone and unattended, with his heavy sword buckled at his side.

'I fear no witch,' he said, 'and if I do but find her I'll silence her mischievous tongue for ever, and show these idle vagabonds who believe in her that even a witch, with all her devilish arts, is powerless against the King.'

It was a dark night, and the King drew up his horse within sight of the witch's door, and watched the people coming and going. At last, as he sat there, he saw a white figure, with a veil wrapped round the face, steal out of the door and flit away through the darkness ; he whipped out his sword, dug his spurs into his horse, and raced off after her. The Princess would certainly have fared badly, but that as she ran she came to a narrow alley leading up between some houses, at the end of which two posts were set, that carts might not be taken through that way ; she slipped between the posts, and sped down the narrow lane with the speed of a deer. It took the King some time to get off his horse, and to secure the animal to one of the posts ; then, brandishing his sword, he also dashed down the lane in hot pursuit. But when he reached the farther end the white figure had vanished. He searched in all directions, but could find nothing of her, and at last

returned to his horse, and mounting, rode slowly back to the palace.

But even this adventure did not daunt the Princess ; she knew the man with whom she had to deal, and she knew her own power over the people. She felt that he dared not take open measures against her, for fear of a riot in the city. So she went again and again, and yet again, to the witch's house, and the people still flocked to see her.

It is now the duty of this chronicle to turn to the adventures of Prince Gareth and Gobeno. At first the Prince had made up his mind that he could not, in any case, return again to Arboream ; his kingdom had been stripped from him ; he was regarded as one dead ; and his love was false to him. He determined at first to journey again into other countries, and to endeavour to forget his unfortunate visit to Arboream. But after a time better thoughts than these grew up in him ; his love for the fair country of Sylvania beat down all other feelings ; and, after wandering irresolutely and in disguise for but a short time, he turned his steps again in the direction of the city.

'Tis but a coward's act, Gobeno,' he said, 'to turn tail and flee away when one is beaten ; let us go down again to Arboream, make our way into the city, and lie in hiding there. It may happen that fortune shall favour us ; that it may be given to us even yet to fling this usurper down and wrest the kingdom from his grasp. Besides, there is another matter. He confessed to me that he killed my uncle ; and even though I die myself, yet shall I not rest content until I have snatched the chance to kill this villain.'

Gobeno felt for the hilt of his sword, and laughed gleefully.

'Tis but tame work here, Sir Prince,' he cried ; 'and 'twould be a merry jest indeed, and a goodly ending, if we be caught like rats in a trap, to set ourselves back to back in the marketplace and fight till we could fight no longer. A man is scarce a man that whips not out his blade once a day at least ; and I like not this hiding and dodging. Mine is a carcass made to be carved. A little blood-letting never hurt any man yet.'

The Prince laughed.

'We will pray, good Gobeno, that the chance for a fight may come ; but we must hide and dodge, as thou sayest, a little longer, until our chance comes.'

Thus it happened that, late one night, two men—the one disguised as a student, the other looking like a stout and honest fellow from the country—entered the gates of Arboream, and sought a lodging in one of the smaller houses in a poorer part of the town. The student appeared to live but for his books, never leaving his room during the day, and going out only at nightfall,

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accompanied by the countryman. They attracted no attention, and lived there quietly for some days. At last one night Gobeno, who had been going about the city in his disguise, and had overheard some talk at a tavern, came in and told the Prince of the strange rumour regarding the witch.

'Men say, Sir Prince, that she is beautiful, although they never see her face; and she hath a voice like softest music, and is able to do all things that may be asked of her. The King is mightily enraged about her, and sought the other night to kill her, they say. He dares not to set out openly against her, because of the people; her power over the people is very great.'

'Tis strange that this woman should have come to fame so quickly, and have gained such power that she may almost defy the King,' said the Prince. 'I have no faith in witches; they are but ancient crones, who impose upon those weak enough to believe their mutterings. But a beautiful woman, who draws all people to her, and helps them with her bounty and her gentle deeds, is a strange witch indeed, Gobeno. There is a thought in my mind that she might help us—might tell me something of what my future fortune is to be.' He sprang up hurriedly, his face full of determination. 'I will seek her this night, Gobeno, and learn something of this fair mystery.'

'Shall I come with thee, Sir Prince?' asked Gobeno.

The Prince laughed and shook his head. 'There is no need for fighting to-night, Gobeno,' he said. 'There is naught to fear in a woman, even though she be a witch.'

As the Prince went out Gobeno muttered to himself:

'I have not found it so, Sir Prince; better a dozen blades levelled at you, and your back against a rock, than one glance from a woman's eyes.'

CHAPTER V.

THE WITCH AND THE STUDENT.



HE Princess had dismissed the last of her visitors that night, and was preparing to set out for the palace, when there came a hurried knocking at the door, which was then thrust open, and Gareth stood on the threshold. The face of the Princess was still concealed by the heavy silken veil, and Gareth, glancing quickly at her for a moment, doffed his cap, and advanced into the room. Travel had altered the Princess's boy-lover, and nine long years had gone by since she had parted from him tearfully; moreover, she had been given to understand that he was dead. So that it is small wonder that the Princess knew nothing of the name or station

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of her visitor, even though she looked at him keenly; she saw only a tall and handsome youth, in the garb of a student.

'I am a stranger in Arboream,' said the Prince, 'having only come to it within these past few days. But I have heard much of thy fame, and of thy good deeds among the people of the city'—

'And thou hast come to me that thou mayest learn more,' said the Princess quickly, looking at him curiously from behind her veil. 'There are many in Arboream who would gladly learn more of me; yet all I send from me, leaving them no wiser than they came. In what shall I serve thee?'

The Prince hesitated. He could not tell this woman his name, or what had brought him to Arboream; he could not tell her that he was a prince, supposed by some to be dead, by others to be still wandering in other lands. He had not thought of this before; he began to blame himself that he had come at all; and, seeking a way out of the difficulty, a gallant answer sprang to his tongue, and he uttered it:

'Men say that thou art beautiful,' he said; 'that no withered crone hides beneath that veil, but a woman whose loveliness is greater than the loveliness of the women of this world.'

'And thou hast come,' she said, 'with the idle thought that thou mayest look upon this beauty at which men only guess. Thou hast come upon an idle errand; go back again, and trouble me no more.' Yet she looked upon him wistfully as she spoke, as though almost fearing that he would do her bidding.

He bowed, and turned as if to leave her.

'Tis an idle errand indeed,' he said in a low voice, 'and I am justly punished. Yet, now I have heard thy voice, I know that what men say is true; that thou art beautiful above all other women; such a voice as thine could issue only from lips that are perfect. And the lips, I warrant me, do but fittingly match other features as beautiful. Lady, I crave thy pardon.'

But the Princess was loath to let him go; strange dim memories stirred in her heart; she had received no such visitor as this, and her heart trembled at the thought that he might go, and come no more; trembled, too, at the thought that he might not, after all, look on the beauty he had so accurately judged, and with so fine a sense; trembled a little too, perchance, that he might misjudge those features, and count them something less, in their perfection, than they really were. So that she stopped him with a gesture of her hand.

'Thou sayest thou art a stranger in Arboream?' she asked.

'I have been away from the city for many years,' the Prince replied, 'and have returned but these three days since.'

The Princess raised her hand to her veil, and then paused.

'I charge thee,' she said, 'that thou dost tell no man of the privilege I grant thee.' Then she slowly raised the veil with both hands, let it drop on the floor beside her, and stood looking at him across the flaming brazier. And, because women change greatly in their growth to womanhood, the Prince did not know who stood before him. He was silent for some moments, looking at her with undisguised admiration.

'In all my journeys,' he said at last, 'I have not seen so fair a face. I have not thought so much beauty could be centred in one woman. But why callest thou thyself a witch?'

She smiled upon him then, looking across the leaping flames somewhat archly.

'Am I not a witch?' she asked in a low voice.

The Prince moved slightly nearer to her. 'A witch indeed,' he said; 'and 'tis well, perchance, for men's peace that thou shouldst veil thy face.'

'And what of thy peace?' she asked, laughing.

'My peace is gone for ever from this night,' he answered, bowing low before her.

She dismissed him only when it became imperative that she should return to the palace. When he was gone she veiled her face, and sped away through the streets, lightly humming a little song to herself.

On the following evening, for the first time during her strange adventures at the witch's house, the people who thronged to her seemed somewhat tiresome, and she was glad when the last of them departed; and when she heard the knock upon the door which warned her the student was there, she flung the veil from her face, crossed the room, and opened the door herself. The Prince stepped in, and all the weariness was gone from her face, and her eyes smiled gladly and frankly at him. Each night became in time a long weary vigil, each day so many toilsome hours to be got through, until that one hour should come again wherein she would meet him. She grew to talk to him of the people she loved, and of all she tried to do for them; and when he saw the throng about her door his admiration grew for this gentle lady, who could do such deeds in secret.

She sat in the great chair one night, looking down at him with soft eyes, where he reclined on the floor at her feet.

'Tell me thy name, most gentle student,' she said.

But the Prince dared not do that. 'I am but a poor student,' he said, 'and my name is nothing, and would signify nothing to thee. But I would crave to know what they call thee, most gentle lady.'

She shook her head.

'I, too, must be nameless,' she said, 'or my power among men might be gone for ever.'

'Tell me, then,' he went on more eagerly, 'hast thou no kindred?'

She shook her head again.

'None,' she said.

'Thou art so beautiful a mystery,' he said, looking up at her wistfully, 'and thou comest here for but one hour out of all the weary day and night, and but a little time even of that hour thou givest to me, that I scarce know sometimes whether thou art spirit or mortal woman. Thou comest flitting through the dark streets to this place, when the city is hushed in silence; thou vanishest away again, and the darkness swalloweth thee up.'

'I am in very truth a mortal woman,' she said softly; and he felt her warm breath upon his forehead. 'See'—she stretched down one white hand to him—'there is firm flesh here.'

The Prince caught the hand between his own and raised it gently to his lips.

'Thou art dear mortal woman indeed,' he cried, 'and I seek to know no more of thee. The day is not lost when I can look into thine eyes for but a little time, or feel thy fingers clasping mine. Dear lady—for I may call thee by no other name—wilt thou not let me pass with thee through the dark streets at night, and see thee to thy dwelling, lest any should harm thee?'

She shook her head again, looking down at him with a smile, and still winding her white fingers about his own.

'None will harm me,' she said softly, 'and thou mayest not follow me. And why,' she added, looking at him out of her half-closed eyes—'why shouldst thou seek to protect me? Is there no other woman to whom thy thoughts may turn?' Yet she clutched his fingers a little more tightly as she spoke.

'Dear lady,' said the Prince, 'the world, however wide it be, seems to hold no other woman; there is but one face I see in my dreams, and that face is thine; there is but one voice I hear, through all the watches of the long night, and that voice is thine.'

It has been said that the power is given to a woman to read a man's heart long before a man, in clumsier fashion, may read a woman's; and so it happened that the Princess Sylvia knew well all that was in the poor student's heart, and had seen it growing there, through the few days that she had known him. And although, being a princess, she should have known that princesses mate not with poor students; yet, being a woman also, she knew that no man she had seen could sway her as this man could, and that, even though he left her to-night, never to return again, no prince of all the kingdoms of earth could be to her what this simple student was. And, greatly as she had loathed the King before, and much as she had dreaded being given to him, she knew now, when love had come to her, that she would die any death rather than go to his arms.

'Dear lady,' cried the Prince again, 'thou
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knowest well that I love thee; and even though I am but a poor student and canst not even tell thee my name, and even though I have no wealth nor power among men, still can I dower thee with a greater love than man hath ever felt for woman before; still canst thou make me rich indeed, above all the kings of earth, if thou wilt but smile upon me.'

He was kneeling before her now, with her white hands held against his breast; and all her imperious rank and power were swept from her by the torrent of her love; she was but a woman, who loved this man, and she bent to him, and put her arms about his neck, and drew him near her.

'Most sweet student,' she said—'for thou wilt give me no other dear name by which to call thee—I love thee, even as thou lovest me. There is no kingdom that I crave, nor riches, save the kingdom of thy love; there is no martial music of all the armies under heaven that can stir me as thy dear voice stirs me. Hold me to thy breast, dear love, and whisper to me all that is in thy heart and mine.'

There was a sudden loud knocking at the door. The lovers started to their feet, Gareth clasping the Princess; and then, after a pause, the knocking was repeated, more loudly than before.

'Open,' cried a voice; 'it is the King!'

The Princess clung to her lover in dismay. 'It is the King,' she whispered. 'He will surely slay thee if he finds thee here with me.'

The Prince stared at her in amazement.

'Not for that would he kill me,' he said, not understanding her; 'but for another reason. Yet will I see this King,' he muttered to himself between his set teeth; 'perchance the hour has come at last.'

He strode to the door and flung it open, and King Glavin stalked in and looked round the place, not seeing the Princess at first, for she had drawn back into the shadow; nor did he see the Prince, for he had brushed rudely past him on entering.

'I come to seek this accursed witch,' cried the King, as he stood, a splendid figure, with his robes sweeping about him, and his jewelled crown upon his brows. 'No longer shall she pester me with her vile seditious tongue. Stand forth, thou hag, and let me see thee!'

The Prince had run swiftly across the room to the side of the Princess, and they both stepped out together into the light of the brazier. The King started back with a cry.

'I am the witch thou seekest,' cried Sylvia.

'Thou the witch?' cried the King, pointing at her and frowning heavily. 'The Princess Sylvia turned witch! What madness is this?'

The Prince had started violently on hearing the Princess's name; and then suddenly the King's eyes lighted upon him, and for one long moment they stared at each other without speaking. Then the King took a half-step forward, and peered at the Prince.

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'Is this witchcraft indeed?' he cried hoarsely. 'Can the dead spring to life again; or who art thou that masqueradeth in this shape?'

The Prince looked at him grimly.

'Thou knowest me well enough, Glavin,' he said, 'and all thy arts have not prevailed against me. The blood of a murdered man cries out on thee this night; and here, with naught to aid thee save the blade thou hast so oft befouled, thou standest face to face with me at last. Nay, turn not to the door—'tis barred; and thy servants, seeing thee enter this place, and fearing for their very souls, have fled. Put off thy crown, Glavin.' The Prince whipped out his sword, and made a quick cut at the King's head, so that the crown fell from his brows and went rolling and spinning across the floor. 'And put off thy kingly robe, else it may cumber thee. Come; must I slay thee where thou standest, or wilt thou defend thyself?'

Glavin glanced hurriedly round him, and saw in an instant that there was no prospect of escape; then, gathering his courage, he flung off his robe and drew his sword, and with a cry made at the Prince.

The Princess crouched back in a corner, looking on with terror, and yet with admiration as she saw the strength and subtlety of this man she had regarded but as a simple student. For from the very first the Prince forced the King to act warily on the defensive, driving him by the ardour of his attack round and round the room, with his mouth grimly set and his blade playing like lightning round the King's head. Both Prince and King fought desperately, for each knew that no aid could come to them there, and that one of them must fall before the battle ceased. At last the King, growing weak, contrived to come near the door, and raised his voice in a lusty shout for help; but the Prince, with a cry, beat him away from the door, and renewed his attack even more fiercely than before.

'Coward,' cried the Prince, 'that canst not even fight alone, or murder with thine own hands, save old and feeble men.'

And he sprang at him, beat down his guard, and sent his sword crashing with all his force down into Glavin's skull; so that the King pitched forward on his face, and lay dead on the floor.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PRINCESS CHOOSES.



LL that night Gareth sat beside the dead King, with his sword across his knees, while the Princess slept calmly in the inner chamber, across the entrance to which the curtain was drawn. And in the morning he was startled by a great tumult outside the doors, and the

shouts and cries of a multitude of people. For strange rumours had gone about in the city that night—started first by the servants of the King, who had fled when he entered the witch's house. It was rumoured that the King had gone to the house of the witch, and had been seen no more; that men passing near had heard the clash of steel and the cries of men who fought. Then another rumour spread that the King was killed, and lay in the house of the witch, and that none dared go near. Still a third rumour sprang up, more disquieting than all others. For it was found that the Princess Sylvia was missing, that she had been absent from the castle all night, and that no man or woman in all the city had seen aught of her.

So, filled with wonder and fear and curiosity, the people came flocking to the house of the witch, and there found the door barred and all silent within. Presently, growing impatient, some of the bolder spirits broke open the door; and there, facing them, with his sword drawn in his hand, was a young student. And, in a confusion of many voices, some cried out to know what had become of the King, some cried for the witch, and others demanded the Princess Sylvia.

Now, the Princess Sylvia, who had been aroused by the clamour, knew well the power she had over these people by reason of the deeds of charity she had performed; she knew that she could sway them by the superstitious love they had for her, so that she flung the heavy silken veil over her head, and came out and stood beside the student. And the people fell back from before her, clinging to each other, and whispering, 'It is the witch! It is the witch!' She raised her hands above her head in token for silence, and spoke to them.

'Bring me a horse,' she said, 'and let me ride from this place, and I will show thee your Princess.'

'The King! The King!' cried some again; and she raised her hands once more for silence.

'The King is dead,' she cried, 'and to-day the Princess Sylvia shall reign upon the throne of Sylvania. Let me show her to you.'

Then a great shout went up amongst the people; for they had hated and feared the King, and there was no man there that did not rejoice that the Princess Sylvia was to reign over them. And they brought the King's horse—for the animal had been standing throughout the night where the King had left it near the witch's house—and the young student bent on one knee, and assisted the Princess to mount the horse.

'I will hold thy bridle,' he whispered, 'and guide thee through the people.'

So they set slowly out through the city—the poor student leading the horse, and the witch, as the people still called her, closely veiled, riding amidst them all—the people flocking

about them, and the crowd increasing as they went, until, when they came at last to the great market-place, the market-place itself and all the streets which ran into it were filled with a moving, curious crowd of men and women. There, as the horse was halted, and she looked round upon them all through her veil, they raised a great shout: 'Show us the Princess Sylvia, as thou hast said. Show us the Princess Sylvia!'

She raised her arms suddenly and swept the veil from her face, then looked round upon them with a smile. And as they fell back from her, murmuring and wondering, she cried out in a clear voice:

'Witch and Princess both, my people. I came among ye because of my love for my people, and because I dared not to come openly.'

Then the tumult raged about her more strongly than ever when the people came to understand all that she had done; men pressed to her, and kissed her robe and her shoes, and even the buckles of the harness of the horse she rode; women lifted up little children to see this wondrous Princess, who had done so great and strange a thing out of the love she bore her people. And, crying her name to the skies, and shouting and leaping and thrusting each other along, they came to the palace, and, with the poor student still holding her bridle-rein, swept with her across the drawbridge, and into the great courtyard of the castle—or as many of them as could be crowded into its space. Then the student lifted the Princess from her saddle, and, bowing low before her, led her into the great hall of the castle, where all the officers of state were gathered. Some, too, there were who had been her father's advisers, and had been thrown from their positions by Glavin; all these had assembled there to welcome her back to her kingdom again.

The Princess rose before all the people, and spoke to them in that clear, soft voice they had learned to love when she had spoken to them in the house of the witch.

'There are many things,' said the Princess, 'of which I need not speak. When ye sorrowed I sorrowed too; and now that I rejoice ye shall rejoice too. I have come again into my father's kingdom, even as he would have wished; and the man who snatched my throne from me is dead, and will trouble us no more. He kept me prisoner here; and last night he sought me out, when I had escaped, and this gentleman who stands beside me now did draw his sword in my protection and kill the King. There shall be no more hungry men and women in Arboream, and in all Sylvania there shall be no more sorrowing hearts.'

Then the Prime-Minister of the late King—who had yet at all times been secretly loyal to the Princess Sylvia—stepped forward. His name was Bleoberis.

'A Princess never yet hath sat upon the
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throne of Sylvania,' he said; 'and good King Ulphius decreed that Prince Gareth should wear the crown. But the Prince is dead; and even as our beloved Princess reigneth already in the hearts of her people, so shall she reign in very truth as Queen of Sylvania.'

Another great shout went up among the people; and the Prince, who had been standing silently apart, drew near, and dropped on one knee before the Princess, and put her hand to his lips. For the Prince, as he stood there and heard the people cry her name, had fought out a hard battle with himself; and though the victory was with the right, it yet had the bitterness of death in it. For he knew that he had been absent from his kingdom for nine long years, and that the people knew nothing of him; he knew too that, as Bleoberis had said, the Princess had long reigned in the hearts of her people. 'She has lived with them, wept with them, suffered with them; the kingdom is rightly hers,' he thought. 'Gareth the Prince is dead, and no man mourns for him now. I knew not that she was the Princess Sylvia when I wooed her. Gareth the Prince is dead; only the poor student lives, and must take his way alone.' All this the Prince had thought as he stood near her; and now, as he knelt before her and put her hand to his lips, he bade her farewell.

'Sweet Princess,' he said, 'thy poor student hath been indeed favoured in being able to do thee some slight service; and he craves that thou wilt bear him gently in thy remembrance when he is gone far from thee. Gentle words have fallen from thy lips that I would not, if I could, forget; thou hast come into thy kingdom again, and hast no further need of my services. Farewell, sweet Princess!'

But the Princess suddenly laid her hand upon his shoulder and stopped him.

'Stay,' she cried; 'thou shalt not go like this.' Then she bent a little nearer to him, and lowered her voice. 'Were all thy words false, then?' she whispered.

He looked up at her with reproachful eyes.

'Nay, sweet lady,' he murmured; 'the words were spoken from my heart. But between a princess and a poor student there is a great gap; and so I can but kiss thy hand, and carry my sorrowful heart alone away from thee.'

'Stay,' she said again; 'there is a word that I must speak to the people here.' Then she raised her head, and looked round upon the people, and her voice rang out clear and firm.

'It hath been said,' she cried, 'that no princess ever yet sat upon the throne of Sylvania; and I, dearly as I love my people, am but a weak woman, and dare not to reign alone. Surely a princess hath the right to choose a consort for herself; surely she hath the right to say what man shall claim her hand and hold her kingdom with her.'

This mightily pleased the people, who cried
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out, clapping their hands, that she should choose herself. And then, smiling round upon them all, she took the poor student by the hand, raised him up beside her, and spoke again.

'This, then, my people, is the man to whom the heart of your Princess is given; this the man she decrees shall sit upon the throne of Sylvania with her, as her lord and king.' And she took the hands of the student, bent suddenly towards him, and kissed him before all the assembled people.

A great silence then fell upon them all; and presently murmurings broke out, and they asked one another who this man was, and why the Princess had chosen a poor stranger for so great an honour as this. Bleoberis, the Prime-Minister, was the first to voice the tumult.

'The choice is thine, Princess, as Queen of Sylvania, to choose for thyself a consort; but he must be a worthy man, and a noble. Who is this man?'

The Princess flashed round upon him, still holding the student by the hand.

'Thou art indeed bold,' she cried, 'even to think that the Princess Sylvia would choose a consort who was not worthy and who was not noble. To this gentleman my heart is given; for princesses love, even as peasants. Last night he slew the King, and saved me, and gave me back my kingdom; to-day I claim him, by right of our love for one another.'

'Nay, Princess,' said Bleoberis, somewhat testily, 'thou dost not understand. This gentleman may be all that thou hast said, and still be unfit to mate with thee. For kings are not made from students, however bold and goodly-looking they may be; and no man here knows who this gentleman may be, or aught about him. Princess, thy kingdom is thy first care, and thou must choose again.'

The Princess stamped her foot angrily, still holding the hand of the student.

'I have chosen,' she said; 'and no other man reigneth in Sylvania with me but the man to whom my heart is given.'

'But thou dost not even know his name,' cried Bleoberis.

Then the poor student stepped suddenly forward, and raising his hand, spoke to the people for the first time.

'Listen,' he cried. 'My name is Gareth, and I am indeed your Prince. Nay, sweet Sylvia, start not away from me so wildly, for indeed I speak truth. I came to my uncle's kingdom on the night that Glavin murdered him.'

'Murdered him!' cried Sylvia. 'What dost thou mean?'

'I speak but the truth,' cried the Prince. 'Glavin himself, when I was a prisoner in his hands, confessed the deed to me. Fearing that I might wrest his kingdom from him, he had me taken at night to the hill-top beyond the city there, unarmed, and guarded by six men,

who had command to kill me. But by the generous aid of one honest fellow, whom I see in the crowd before me now, I escaped out of their hands, killing two of them. Then for a time I wandered round about Sylvania, and came back, and met the Princess in the strangest fashion, not recognising her; and I wooed the Princess when I knew not her station or name, and she thought me only a poor student. And now, but for her love for me, I would have gone away again, leaving her to reign in peace over the people who love her; but she hath claimed me by virtue of our love, and so I claim the kingdom with her.'

The Princess Sylvia had fallen upon her knees before the Prince. 'Dear Gareth,' she said, 'I knew not indeed that thou wert the Prince. I pray thee, take thine own again, and reign in the kingdom, as my father decreed.'

The Prince stooped quickly and raised her, and put his arm about her.

'We reign together in Sylvania, thou and I,' he said, 'or thy poor student leaves thee to reign alone.'

And the people, seeing them thus together, raised a great shout of 'Gareth and Sylvia! King Gareth!' And Gareth and Sylvia, looking down upon the multitude, knew that they had, in very truth, come into their kingdom.

So, in the end, the kingdom of Sylvania was restored to prosperity, and Prince Gareth and the Princess Sylvia reigned together as King and Queen in Arboream; and the short tyranny of Glavin the Usurper was forgotten. Gobeno fought no more; the King did not forget the promise the Prince had made, and his faithful servant was ennobled, to the general joy; and, although Gareth would have been glad to raise him to higher power, in gratitude for his devotion, he steadfastly refused all offers of promotion. But he lived about the castle for many years, and attained to a great age, and is reported to have been a great favourite with the princes and princesses who, as the years went on, made the old castle merry with their childish laughter.

THE NEW YEAR.

'A good New Year, with many blessings in it!'

Once more go forth the kindly wish and word.
A good New Year! and may we all begin it
With hearts by noble thought and purpose stirred.

The Old Year's over, with its joy and sadness;
The path before us is untried and dim;
But let us take it with the step of gladness,
For God is there, and we can trust in Him.

What of the buried hopes that lie behind us?
Their graves may yet grow flowers, so let them
rest.

To-day alone is ours, and it must find us
Prepared to hope afresh and do our best.

God *knows* what finite wisdom only *guesses*;
Not here from our dim eyes the mist will roll.
What we call failures He may deem successes
Who sees in broken parts the perfect whole.

And if we miss some dear familiar faces,
Passed on before us to the Home above,
Even while we count, through tears, their vacant
places,
He heals our sorrow with His balm of Love.

No human lot is free from cares and crosses,
Each passing year will bring both shine and
shower;
Yet, though on troubled seas life's vessel tosses,
The storms of earth endure but for an hour.

And should the river of our happy laughter
Flow 'neath a sky no cloud yet overcasts,
We will not fear the shadows coming after,
But make the most of sunshine while it lasts.

A good New Year! Oh, let us all begin it
With cheerful faces set toward the light!
A good New Year, which will have blessings in it
If we but persevere and do the right.

E. MATHESON.



THE CHETWODE HEIRLOOM.

By T. W. SPEIGHT.

There is some goodness of soul in things evil.

—SHAKESPEARE

THE London season was nearly over, and the ranks of society were becoming thinner day by day; but there were still enough persons of distinction left in town to render the Countess of Senlac's garden-party an unqualified success. The guests numbered about a couple of hundred, and the scene was a gay and brilliant one.

The weather was oppressively warm, and Lady Chetwode, one of the guests, who was suffering from a headache, was glad after a time to find an unoccupied seat apart from the crowd in the shade of one of the large cedars for which Grove Royal is famed. Although she had played her part to perfection, and had seemed as light-hearted and free from care as any one there, in reality she was in no mood for festivities of any kind. A week before, Scrope Manor, her husband's country seat, had been broken into, and among other things stolen was a valuable diamond necklace—a family heirloom which had come down to Sir James Chetwode from his great-grandmother, and was prized by him accordingly.

Sir James had blamed his wife, rather unjustly as it seemed to her, because after the Drawing-room, which she had gone to town to attend, she had not 'at once'—and he had not failed to emphasise the words—returned the necklace to the family banker to whose custody it was entrusted between one occasion of its being wanted and another. After the Drawing-room she had carried the necklace back with her to the Manor, intending next day to take it in person to the bank; but something had intervened to hinder her from doing so, and in the course of the following night the house had been broken into and the heirloom stolen. Really, she could not see that she had been very much to blame; but Sir James chose to think otherwise.

Although a week had gone by and the police seemed helpless in the matter, the Baronet, who was naturally of a stingy disposition, refused to offer any reward, great or small, for such information as would lead to the capture and conviction of the thief or thieves or the recovery of the missing property. 'If my doing so would avail to restore the necklace, I would not hesitate for a moment,' he said in his acrid way. 'But I am quite sure it has been broken up
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long since and the stones dispersed. And as for the conviction of the rascals, however gratifying it might be to see them in the dock, two or three hundred pounds is too big a price to pay for such a pleasure as that.'

But so far as Lady Chetwode was concerned, there was a secret in connection with the stolen necklace known only to herself and one other person. Were the secret in question by any chance to come to the knowledge of her husband it would be enough to cause a lifelong breach between them. As she sat there in the shade of the cedar she was very unhappy.

In age she was about five-and-thirty, and she still retained in all their perfection those graces of person, combined with that rare charm of manner, which, some ten years before, had succeeded in capturing the somewhat fastidious affections of Sir James Chetwode.

But, heavy at heart though her ladyship was, it would not do for her to sit and mope there in solitude; and she was on the point of rising and rejoining the gay throng on the terrace, when her intention was arrested by the approach of a stranger who, in leisurely fashion, was crossing the lawn in a straight line towards her. Before he reached her she had time to take note of his appearance. In age he was probably about sixty, but his figure—so compact, wiry, and active did it seem—might have been that of a much younger man. His moustache, short pointed beard, and close-cropped hair were all snow white; but his eyebrows looked as if they might be dyed. He had regular features of a rather commonplace type, but their expression—or so it seemed to her ladyship, who prided herself on her skill as a physiognomist—was that of a man who was at once resolute and wily, who was as cunning as he was unscrupulous, and who would stick at nothing in order to gain his ends. He was irreproachably dressed, carried an expensive orchid in his button-hole, and was wearing a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles. Such as he was, her ladyship had no recollection of having ever seen him before. Most likely he had mistaken her for some one else.

The stranger halted within a few feet of her, lifted his hat, and bowed courteously. 'Have I the honour of addressing Lady Chetwode?' he asked.

'That is my name.'

'Pray, pardon the question, which I assure your ladyship is not dictated by idle curiosity;

but was not Sir James Chetwode's mansion broken into about a week ago and much valuable property stolen?'—

'Such, unfortunately, was the case.'

'The greatest loss of all being that of a magnificent diamond necklace which, according to the newspapers, had been in the family upwards of a century?'

Her ladyship was sitting bolt-upright by this time. The stranger's question had touched her hidden sore.

'Your information is quite correct, sir,' she said in her iciest tone. 'But may I ask'—

'One moment, if your ladyship pleases. Should I be far wrong in assuming that both yourself and Sir James are greatly put about by the loss of the necklace, and that your ladyship especially would be prepared to make almost any sacrifice for its recovery?'

Lady Chetwode's cheeks flushed suddenly, and then paled as quickly. There seemed a certain amount of apprehension in the way she was now regarding the man before her. After a momentary hesitation she said, 'Such a question on the part of an entire stranger is nothing less than an impertinence, and I must decline to discuss the matter with you.' She rose and would have moved away; but the stranger held up an arresting hand.

'*Arretez vous, madame, je vous prie.* As already remarked, my questions are not prompted by idle curiosity. Listen. What would your ladyship say if I were to tell you that it is in my power to restore the necklace to you—on certain conditions?'

Her ladyship sank into her seat again. It seemed as if her limbs refused to support her. For a few moments speech failed her. Then, with an evident effort: 'I should say, sir, that you were indulging in a very sorry jest.'

'A jest? Not a bit of it,' replied the stranger, with a short, harsh laugh. 'On the contrary, I was never more serious in my life. To put the matter simply and concisely: I beg to assure your ladyship that I—*moi qui vous parle*—am in a position to restore the missing necklace, on certain conditions—or rather, on one condition only.'

'Which is?' queried Lady Chetwode faintly.

'That in exchange for the article in question your ladyship shall pay me the sum of five hundred pounds.'

There was an even longer silence than before.

'And what if I refuse to do anything of the kind?'

'In that case the persons in whose possession it is will be under the painful necessity of returning the necklace to Sir James, with a polite note to the effect that, as the stones composing it are only paste, it is not worth retaining.'

A death-like pallor overspread Lady Chetwode's face. For a few seconds she looked as if she were on the point of fainting. The

stranger's keen slate-blue eyes seemed to scintillate through his spectacles as he stood looking down upon her. A grim, hard smile, which his moustache served to accentuate, curved his lips. This woman, beautiful and well born, was in his power, and he enjoyed the sensation.

With a supreme effort Lady Chetwode pulled herself together. 'I can decide upon nothing just now,' she faltered. 'Five hundred pounds is a very large sum, and I see no means—none whatever—of raising it.'

'For all that, if I may venture to say so, I think it would be advisable that your ladyship *should* find the means of raising it,' answered the stranger meaningly. 'But here comes Sir James,' he added next moment. 'I am desirous of making his acquaintance, and must ask your ladyship to introduce us. Nay, I insist upon it. I am Captain Luard—don't forget the name—an old friend of your father.'

Lady Chetwode's training as a woman of the world, which had rarely been put to a severer test, stood her in good stead. She went forward to meet her husband, putting up her rose-coloured sunshade as she did so, the warm tint of which effectually neutralised the pallor of her features.

The Baronet was a plain-featured, somewhat pragmatistical-looking man of fifty, with a tall, lean, loosely-knit figure, and a slight stoop of the shoulders. His manner was dry and precise, but he could be courteous enough when he chose to unbend. He had the air of a born bureaucrat, and might have been swaddled in red-tape. Such men are nearly always self-opinionated and stand-offish; that they should be popular would be too much to expect. At bottom he was kind-hearted, just, and upright, and his good qualities were known to, and duly appreciated by, his wife.

'My dear,' said her ladyship, 'you must allow me to introduce Captain Luard to you—an old friend of my father who has lived much abroad of late years, and whom I have not had the pleasure of seeing since before our marriage—Captain Luard, my husband.'

Sir James bowed as if he had a hinge in the back of his neck. 'I am pleased to make the acquaintance of any friend of the late Mr Jellicoe, for whom I always entertained a very sincere regard.' And with that he proffered three chilly fingers.

The Captain took them and bent over them as though he appreciated the favour that was being shown him. 'I have long desired the honour of an introduction to one with whose political principles I am in such hearty sympathy, and whose parliamentary career—cut short for a brief time only, I sincerely trust—was always followed by me with unfailing interest.'

Sir James sniffed and smiled, a little fatuously as it seemed to his wife. Poor man! flattery so

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seldom came his way that he might be excused if the incense smelt sweet in his nostrils.

'And now I will leave you together,' said her ladyship. 'The dear Countess will be wondering what has become of me; and besides, I am dying for a cup of tea.'

She nodded and smiled impartially at both of them, and then moved slowly away with that graceful, gliding motion which was one of her characteristics.

Sir James, who was hot and a little tired, sat down in the cool shade of the cedar and took off his hat. How it came about he could not afterwards have told, but presently he found himself launching forth on one of his favourite hobbies—that of prison reform. It was gratifying if somewhat surprising to him to find that his new acquaintance was as enthusiastic on the subject as he himself was, and that, so far as the minutiae of prison life and discipline were concerned, he seemed considerably the better posted up of the two. He quite agreed with Sir James that the poor prisoners were much too hardly treated, and that both as regarded the food supplied to them and the labour exacted from them a radical reform was imperatively called for.

So impressed was the worthy Baronet with Captain Luard's many pleasant qualities (leaving out of question the evident respect with which he listened to the other's enunciation of his political views) that before they parted he invited him to make one at a little dinner-party at his house in Berkeley Square which he was arranging for that day week. It was an invitation that was accepted as frankly as it was given.

Not till a quarter of an hour after the two had shaken hands and gone each his own way did Sir James miss his gold repeater. It was indeed exasperating to have the fact brought home to one in such an unpleasant fashion that not even at a strictly select party like that of the Countess of Senlac was one safe from the attentions of the ubiquitous pickpocket.

Lady Chetwode heard the news of the loss of her husband's watch with a gush of dismay. Somehow she could not help connecting it in her mind with the presence of the man who called himself Captain Luard. Had her husband and he not met would not Sir James's repeater—a birthday presentation from his tenantry—have been still in his pocket? A person who was able to restore her stolen necklace, as this pseudo-captain avouched himself to be, might well be deemed guilty, the circumstances being such as they were, of this minor and more commonplace theft. But even if he were in no way implicated in the loss of the watch, he must be a person of peculiar antecedents and connections, or he would not have been in a position to say what he had said to her. Such being the case, by what occult means had 1899.]

he succeeded in obtaining a card of invitation to the Countess of Senlac's garden-party? That, however, was a question Lady Chetwode was unable to answer. She had overheard a remark to the effect that mingling among the guests were a couple of private detectives—a fact which served to deepen the mystery of the affair.

But the dismay with which she heard the announcement of the theft of the watch was as nothing in comparison with the chill fear that gripped her heart when Sir James said to her:

'You will be pleased to hear that I have given your father's old friend an invitation to dine with us on the twelfth. I felt sure it would be a gratification to you to see something more of him; and, speaking for myself, I must say that he made himself most agreeable to me. There are quite a number of questions on which he thinks exactly as I do, and he seems to possess quite a fund of information on certain subjects of much interest to me, but about which very few people, I am sorry to say, care to interest themselves. Really a superior person, and I am obliged to you for bringing us together.'

What poor Lady Chetwode murmured in reply she could not have told. For the next few seconds everything her eyes rested on seemed to be slowly rising and subsiding as though viewed from a ship at sea. A minute or two later she said a little faintly, 'I find the heat too oppressive for anything, and as soon as you are ready, dear, I shall be glad to have the carriage called.'

When Mr Jack Jellicoe, at the age of six-and-twenty, found himself 'cornered,' and in such fashion that unless within a month's time he should be able to raise the sum of seven hundred pounds he would not merely forfeit his position in society, but would render himself liable to arrest, trial, and a sentence of imprisonment, the only person to whom he could turn for help was his sister, Lady Chetwode. He had been left fatherless at eighteen, had run wild, had got through his little patrimony with a fine celerity, and had twice been helped out of monetary difficulties by his brother-in-law Sir James, who, however, on the second occasion had buttoned up his pockets and vowed he would do no more for him. Now, to crown all, Jack had floundered into a morass which would engulf him past hope of recovery unless his sister would come to his rescue, as she had done more than once already.

Lady Chetwode was several years older than Jack; and after her mother's death, which had happened when she was fifteen, a sort of semi-maternal sentiment towards the high-spirited boy had developed itself in her bosom. It was much more than a mere sisterly affection that she felt for him. He was indeed very dear to her; none the less so, perhaps, because

he had proved himself so wild and wayward, and because of late she alone had seemed to have any hold or influence over him.

Thus it fell out that when he went to her and made his wretched confession, and when she realised that without the help for which he pleaded he would be disgraced for life—and knowing, further, how useless it would be to appeal to her husband—she was like a woman driven to her wits' end. Circumstanced as she was, for her to raise the sum of seven hundred pounds was a sheer impossibility. She had brought Sir James next to no fortune, and so far as pecuniary matters went she owed everything to him. Her allowance of pin-money—which her husband deemed amply sufficient—was in reality absurdly inadequate for the requirements of a person of her social position; and as her little charities must on no account be neglected, it rarely happened that she had so much as a sovereign left in her purse at the end of the quarter. How, then, was such an impossible sum to be raised by her? She would not have known where to find so much as a fourth of it.

It was Jack who suggested—timidly and not without some inward qualms—that the amount so imperatively needed by him could easily be raised by pawning the Chetwode necklace. There would be no difficulty, he went on to observe, in obtaining at the cost of a few pounds a fac-simile of it in paste, so cleverly executed that nobody who saw it, save perhaps an expert in such things, would take it for other than the real article. It was a suggestion which by its sheer audacity first stunned his sister, and then caused her very soul to shiver with fear of the possible consequences should Sir James ever discover of what she had been guilty. In that case she felt sure he would never forgive her. But then, as Jack urged, why need he discover it? From his point of view no such danger need be feared if the affair were properly managed.

Lady Chetwode stood out for three days and then gave way. It was the one and only course open to her; and what would she not do, what risk would she not run, in order to rescue her darling brother from the black cloud of disgrace that impended over him? When once her consent had been given, she became possessed by an almost feverish anxiety to have the matter arranged and done with. She drove over from Scrope Manor to the local bank where the family jewels were deposited, and having obtained possession of the necklace, she entrusted it, not without a little natural fear and trembling, to her brother's charge.

As Jack had said, there was no difficulty about having a fac-simile of the necklace made; and three weeks later, when he placed the original and the duplicate in his sister's hand, she found it all but impossible to determine which was which. Next day the sham necklace was taken

by her to the bank, and there deposited in place of the real one. Two days later the genuine article was pledged by her at an address furnished by her brother for seven hundred pounds. Within a week Jack had sailed for the Cape.

This had happened nearly three years ago. A few months later there had been a General Election, at which Sir James Chetwode, who had been in Parliament for a dozen years, had been unseated. So extreme was his disgust and disappointment that he determined to shake the dust of his native country off his feet and go for an extended tour abroad; and both the town house and Scrope Manor were given over to the charge of caretakers, and away the Baronet and his wife went.

They had stayed abroad till the present summer, and then two circumstances had induced Sir James to retrace his steps. The first was, that an early dissolution of Parliament seemed by no means improbable, in which case it behoved him, as one who hoped to secure a seat in the new House, to be on the spot. The second was, that a favourite niece was on the eve of making her *début* in Society, and he was solicitous that she should be presented at the next Drawing-room by Lady Chetwode.

Sir James would not have been satisfied unless his wife had worn the family necklace at the function in question; but it was not without many inward tremors and misgivings that she clasped the glittering bauble—or rather, its fraudulent imitation—round her neck within ten minutes of the time she was due to leave home. The brougham was at the door, and she was buttoning her gloves, when Sir James entered the room. He surveyed her up and down through his double eyeglass with evident satisfaction; and, indeed, she made a very charming picture. Then advancing a couple of steps, he laid a finger lightly on the necklace, and said, with a pleased smile:

'How well the old thing looks! How it sparkles and seems to palpitate with hidden fire! But time has no effect upon it, and five hundred years hence it will look just as it does to-day. I had some notion of having it reset in a more modern style, but, upon my word, I don't think I can do better than let it stay as it is.'

Her ladyship breathed more freely as she went slowly downstairs.

Within fifty-six hours had followed the burglary and the disappearance of the necklace.

The evening of Sir James's little dinner-party arrived in due course. There were only about a dozen guests in all, of whom two-thirds were men. Captain Luard was nearly the last to arrive. The Baronet welcomed him with that rather frigid cordiality beyond which he never got with any one, and then introduced him to some of the other guests. That done, the Captain crossed to his hostess, whose attention at the moment of his entrance was engaged

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elsewhere, shook hands with her, and gave expression to one or two of the polite common-places customary on such occasions. He seemed entirely at his ease, and—as her ladyship could not help admitting—in his evening-clothes looked by no means the most undistinguished man there.

When dinner was announced her ladyship, to her dismay, found herself paired with the Captain, her husband having given her no previous notice of his intention.

‘As old friends I have no doubt you will find much to talk about,’ the Baronet remarked.

There was a gleam of sardonic humour in Luard’s smile as he proffered his arm and said, with a bow, ‘I am indeed highly honoured.’

How she hated and loathed the man! But she had her part to play, and must brace herself to go through with it.

At table the Captain evidently laid himself out to produce an agreeable impression. He seemed quite at home in the society gossip of the hour; he had skimmed the latest novel about which people were talking, and had made one a few evenings before at a Lyceum *première*; and, as it would never have done for her ladyship to sit mum beside him, she had to help in keeping the conversational ball rolling as best she could.

It was not till dessert was on the table that Luard said to her in a low voice, ‘By the way, in case Sir James should touch upon certain topics with me, it may be as well to be prepared. Consequently, I shall feel obliged if your ladyship will enlighten me with regard to the social position of the late Mr Jellicoe.’

‘My father was rector of Wood Overton, Midlandshire.’

‘Has your ladyship any brothers or sisters?’

‘I have one brother, younger than myself, who is now at the Cape.’

‘I am infinitely obliged. May I ask further?’

‘You may ask, sir; but I shall decline to reply to any more of your questions.’ Thereupon she rose, which was the signal to the other ladies, and a minute later the gentlemen were left alone.

Captain Luard elevated his eyebrows, showed the gold setting of his teeth for a moment, and helped himself to a few more grapes.

But he had not yet done with her ladyship. In the drawing-room, an hour later, his watched-for opportunity came. Hardly had Mr Cottesloe, the eminent banker, vacated the chair by the side of Lady Chetwode before Luard dropped into it.

‘I must ask your ladyship to spare me a couple of minutes,’ he said in cautious tones, which, however, seemed to his auditor to have a ring of menace in them. ‘Presumably I need not refresh your memory with regard to what passed between us at the Senlac garden-party. What I wish to impress upon you is that my terms remain precisely the same as 1899.]

they were then: five hundred pounds, cash down. I now find that I can afford to give your ladyship a month from the present date in which to find the money, but not a day longer. At the end of that time I shall have important business abroad, which will take me from England for an indefinite period. Here is my card, in case you should have occasion to communicate with me.’ Then, his tone changing to one of Mephistophelian mockery, he added, ‘Did your ladyship ever try to picture to yourself the face of Sir James should any one ever be cruel enough to tell him that by some strange wizardry his great-grandmother’s diamonds had been transformed into so much paste? Such a revelation would be enough to cause him to break a blood-vessel or have a fit of apoplexy. Poor dear Sir James!’

He smiled, bowed, rose, and moved away. Just then Lady Chetwode felt as if life was not indeed worth living.

The days crept on till the month specified by Captain Luard had entered its last week. Before this Sir James and his wife had left town for Scrope Manor, the family seat in Hertfordshire, where the Baronet was now confined to his room by a sharp attack of gout.

Neither to her husband nor, with one exception, to any of those about her was a change of any kind observable in Lady Chetwode. The exception in question was her ladyship’s companion, Mildred Grey, a sweet girl of twenty, whose eyes, rendered keen by affection, divined something of the torture at work below the smiling mask which was never laid aside in the presence of others. It was painful to her to have to make-believe not to see that which was so evident to her, but the existence of which it was clearly intended that neither she nor any one should so much as suspect. That Sir James should remark nothing was, under the circumstances, quite excusable. He was in almost constant pain, and consequently not in the best of tempers. His wife and Miss Grey, the latter of whom was one of his few favourites, took it in turn to wait upon him during the day, while his body-servant, Mallow, was in attendance during the night.

All this time Lady Chetwode felt as if her mind and spirit alike were being slowly hypnotised by her dread of that which the end of the month would assuredly bring to pass. She counted each day which brought her nearer the verge of an abyss from which she could discern no means of escape. That her husband, being the sort of man he was, would forgive the deception she had practised upon him when his eyes should have been opened by Captain Luard was more than she durst hope. Even if he were not absolutely to separate from her, the happy confidence in each other’s truthfulness and good faith which had hitherto subsisted between them

would be shattered for ever. How would it be possible for him ever to trust her or believe in her again? Already the hard necessities of the case had forced her into telling several lies—she who had never lied to him before. How she hated and despised herself for having to practise a duplicity which her soul abhorred!

Very terrible to her were the long dark hours when she was unable to sleep. Sir James's somewhat exacting requirements did not allow of her dwelling overmuch on her secret trouble during the day; but all the more menacing and frightful were the colours in which her imagination painted it when her nursing duties for the time being were over, and she was at liberty to seek the solitude of her own room. More than once she said to herself, 'I will anticipate Captain Luard's action by confessing everything to my husband;' but when an opportunity offered itself for doing so her courage failed her, and she kept putting off the evil moment from hour to hour and day to day. Still, she would most likely have done so in the end had not something happened which put a wholly new complexion on the affair. We are told the darkest hour is the one that just precedes the dawn.

The fateful month was within two days of its end when Lady Chetwode received by post a packet containing bank-notes of the value of seven hundred and fifty pounds, together with a letter from her brother, in which he told her that he had been extraordinarily lucky at the diamond-fields, and had now the happiness of returning the sum which three years before she had raised at such a sacrifice in order to save him from ruin, together with an extra fifty pounds to meet the charge for interest. He then went on to remark that he had indeed turned over a new leaf since leaving England, that the last grain of his wild oats had long been sown, and that she need have no fear about him in time to come; the whole concluding with many expressions of brotherly affection.

Lady Chetwode cried over the letter, and kissed it again and again. But her tears were those of a full heart. Not more happy was she made by the receipt of the money than by her brother's news of himself. Dear Jack! She had always felt sure that by-and-by he would cast his youthful follies behind him and emerge all the stronger and better for the temptations he had gone through and overcome, and now her faith in him was amply justified.

The money had come in the nick of time. Nothing could have happened more providentially. The black cloud in which she had lived and moved for the last few weeks had lifted and vanished. Life once more smelt sweet in her nostrils. She would now be able to pay Captain Luard the sum demanded by him for blackmail, get back the sham necklace, and so escape what she dreaded more than all else—

the threatened exposure to her husband. On the other hand, the real necklace would still remain unredeemed; nor did she see any likelihood of being able to redeem it in time to come. But even supposing she were in a position to do so, in what way could she account to her husband for its mysterious reappearance? She was still far from being a happy woman. The sweet content that had once been hers seemed to have fled from her for ever.

However, the first thing to be done was to extricate herself from the clutches of the blackmailing Captain. Accordingly, next day she wrote him as follows:

'Will Captain Luard make it convenient to meet Lady Chetwode at half-past four on Friday afternoon next in the shrubbery at the end of the park on the east side of Scrope Manor, and at the same time bring with him a certain article respecting which he has already spoken to Lady C.?'

The address given her by the Captain was that of a flat at a fashionable part of the West End.

Perryfield, the station for Scrope Manor, was only a short hour's run by train from town.

Sir James's attack of gout was yielding to treatment, and Friday found him considerably better, but still somewhat irritable and inclined to be captious about trifles. After luncheon he sent Miss Grey into the village to make some inquiries at the post-office about the times of the foreign mails. When four o'clock arrived, and she had not returned, Lady Chetwode began to get fidgety. Not for anything would she have missed her appointment with Captain Luard.

When twenty more minutes had gone by she felt as if she were on tenter-hooks, and could contain herself no longer.

'My dear,' she said to her husband, 'would you mind having Mallow to sit with you for a little while till Miss Grey returns? I have a wretched headache, and feel as if I must get into the fresh air for half-an-hour.'

'To be sure—to be sure. Now I look at you, you do seem a little heavy round the eyes. I've tried you a good deal of late, I know. Yes, send Mallow to me, and tell him to bring the backgammon-board. I have given him one or two lessons of a night when I could not sleep, and at last I do believe the fellow has got some glimmerings of the game into that numskull of his.'

Five minutes later Lady Chetwode left the house, carrying with her bank-notes of the value of five hundred pounds.

The shrubbery specified in her note was at the extreme end of the park, and nearly a mile from the Manor. It was an untended wilderness, given over to the raising of young timber, with a thick undergrowth of nut-trees, black-berry-bushes, dog-roses, and brambles of many kinds. Such as it was, Sir James would not

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have it interfered with. Its unpruned wildness and luxuriance was for him its greatest charm. There was an ancient right-of-way through it from Perryfield to Garth End, which, however, was but sparingly used by the country folk. Another pathway which ran through the heart of it formed a near-cut between the Manor and the village.

Her ladyship was late, and as soon as she was out of sight of the house she increased her pace. She was very simply dressed in black, with a long gray dust-cloak for her outer garment. She had reached the shrubbery, when, on turning a bend in the path, she beheld Mildred Grey advancing with downcast eyes from the opposite direction. She had reasons for not wishing to meet the girl just then; and on the impulse of the moment, and with the certainty that she had not been seen, she stepped quickly off the path, and three seconds later was hidden from the view of any one passing behind a thick clump of undergrowth. Then she set herself to reconnoitre.

Parting the nut-bushes carefully with one hand, she was in a position to watch Mildred as, in an abstracted mood, the girl advanced along the path. But scarcely had she time to observe this before she was aware of Captain Luard, looking especially jaunty in a fashionable light suit, coming along the same path, and only a little way behind Miss Grey. It was evident that she was unaware of his approach, for when he gave a loud 'Hem!' as if purposely to attract her attention, she turned quickly with a start and confronted him.

'I crave your pardon, young lady,' he said suavely as he raised his soft hat, 'but can you inform me—I am a stranger in these parts—whether I am in the grounds of Scrope Manor, and whether this footpath will conduct me to the house?'

So close was the speaker to her hiding-place that every word reached her ladyship's ears.

'Yes, sir,' replied Mildred, 'this path leads direct to the Manor; but'— Her voice faltered and broke down, and she stood staring at the Captain with eyes which expressed as much terror as amazement. Every vestige of colour had faded from her face, leaving it white and drawn, and looking as if in the space of a few seconds it had aged a dozen years. Then her lips breathed the one word, 'Father!' and as she uttered it she seemed to shrink farther away from him.

Captain Luard reeled back as if some one had aimed a stab at him. 'What!' he cried; and in the cry there was a shrill, almost feminine, note. 'What is that you say? Why do you apply that word to me?'

'Because, although you are much changed, I recognise you for my father. It is nine years since I saw you last, but I have not forgotten you. I never could forget you.'

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Captain Luard drew a long breath, and, going a step or two nearer Mildred, peered into her face and seemed to scan her lineaments one by one. 'And you assert that you are my daughter—mine?' he said at length. 'Tell me, then, what name you were known by years ago.'

'My name was Mildred Raby.'

'And you lived where?'

'At Bellhaven. We had a house on the hill that overlooked the harbour.'

'So. And your mother, now—what has become of her?'

'I lost her eight years ago.'

'Ah! Is that indeed so? "Whom the gods love"—— He turned aside his face for a moment and bit his lip. Then in silence he took a couple of turns on the short turf of the glade, a dozen yards or so back, and again confronted his daughter.

'Your mother, taking you with her, left Bellhaven by stealth one night when I was from home, and was lost to me from that time forward. Tell me, where did you go, and what became of you?'

'It was because mamma had found out something about you (what it was she never told me) that she left home, saying that she would never live with you again. We went to a number of places, but never stayed long in any of them. Mamma seemed as if she could not rest anywhere. At length we found ourselves at Perryfield, the village a little way from here, and there mamma, who had been ailing for months, was taken very ill. By that time her money was all gone, and had it not been for Lady Chetwode, who by some means had heard of her'——

'Lady Chetwode!' ejaculated Luard under his breath.

'She would have had to be removed to the workhouse, would have died there, would have been buried as a pauper, and would have left her daughter to the tender mercies of the parish. But Lady Chetwode came to our rescue. Her own doctor attended mamma during what proved to be her last illness. She was allowed to wait for nothing, and when all was over—— But I can tell you no more.' A sob choked her voice. Presently, controlling herself, she added, 'Surely, if you were to search the world over you would nowhere find a more generous or a nobler-hearted woman than Lady Chetwode!'

Again the Captain took a turn or two in silence.

'And what happened to you after that?' he asked. 'Why do I find you here?'

'Her ladyship was pleased to take a liking to me. She caused me to be sent to a good school, where, at the age of sixteen, I became a pupil-teacher. But when I was eighteen Lady Chetwode took me away, and since then I have filled the post of companion to her.'

Captain Luard elevated his eyebrows to their

utmost extent. 'As a rule it takes a good deal to surprise me,' he said; 'but you, my dear, have unmistakably succeeded in doing it. But tell me now—by the way, you have grown up into an uncommonly pretty young woman—are you comfortable here at Scrope Manor and tolerably happy?'

'I am both comfortable and happy.'

'That is well—that is very well. And you still think as highly of Lady Chetwode as you did nine years ago?'

'Oh! there is nowhere a woman like her. I owe everything to her, and it is hardly too much to say that, if called upon to do it, I would lay down my life for her.'

'How touching is the enthusiasm of youth!' murmured the Captain, as if to an invisible auditor. 'Hem! One more question: Are you engaged?'

The girl's cheeks flushed suddenly, and then a little laugh broke from her lips. 'I am not quite sure whether I am or not,' she said.

'Rather an unsatisfactory state of affairs, I should imagine. But who is the young man that cannot induce you to make up your mind?'

'He is Lady Chetwode's brother.'

The Captain gave vent to a low whistle. 'Another surprise for poor papa. Is the young man here at Scrope Manor?'

'No. About three years ago he went out to the Cape.'

'So! I am interested. Tell me all about it.'

'There's very little to tell. It was here at the Manor, and just before he went away, that he wanted me to engage myself to him.'

'And you refused. Why?'

'Because I felt sure that her ladyship and Sir James would both be opposed to anything of the sort. Besides, he was going abroad for an indefinite time, and I was unwilling that he should consider himself as bound by what might prove to be no more than a passing fancy.'

'But you liked him? I refrain from using a word with a tenderer meaning.'

'Yes, I liked him,' came the reply after a momentary hesitation.

'And you have not heard from him since he left England?'

Mildred's face lighted up, and again her cheeks became dashed with colour. 'I received a long letter from him only a few days ago. He has been very lucky at the diamond-mines, and says that he is on the high-road to make his fortune.'

'But surely his letter said more than that?'

Again there was a momentary hesitation. 'He says that he cares for me as much as ever he did, and that he is coming home in about three months to claim me and make me his wife.'

'It's evident to me that this young What-hisname is a trump. You won't say "No" to him this time, of course?'

'How can I say anything else? Both Sir James and her ladyship will expect him to marry some one in a social position very different from mine; and I would not for the world that they should be forced to fail in what they thought their duty merely to humour me.'

'Will they indeed? But it is just possible there may be ways and means, such as you know nothing of, of overcoming any possible opposition on their part.' Going up to her and taking one of her hands, 'See here, girl,' he went on with a certain fierceness in his tone, 'if you really care for this young fellow you shall marry him. I pledge you my word for that. To-morrow I will send you an address from which any letter sent there for me will always reach me. Now, what I want you to promise is that if Lady Chetwode and her husband, or either of them, object to your marriage, you will at once let me know. It is not much to ask you to do, but I want your promise to do it.'

She was looking at him with a great wonder in her eyes. There was a moment's silence, and then she said, 'I promise.'

'It is well. I rely upon you,' said the Captain as he released her hand. He consulted his watch, and then he saw that his daughter was regarding him with a changed expression—one of unmistakable apprehension.

'When you overtook me you asked me the way to Scrope Manor,' she said. 'Perhaps you were going there in order to see'—— She paused, as if afraid to say more.

'Let me finish the sentence for you—in order to see Lady Chetwode. Yes, that, I admit, was my intention. But now—— Pooh! Why do you look at me with those frightened eyes?' he abruptly demanded. 'I am not a wolf and her ladyship is not Red Riding-Hood.'

His face was clouded with a frown and his lips moved as though he were arguing some point with himself. Once more he took three or four turns on the sward. Mildred watched him in anxious silence. It was evident that his words had not wholly reassured her.

Suddenly he stopped in his walk. 'Is her ladyship quite well? Have you noticed any change in her of late?' he asked.

'Her general health has seemed much as usual, except that she is troubled with insomnia, and has to resort to sleeping-draughts. But that some secret trouble has been weighing upon her mind for the last few weeks I am quite sure, although she tries to hide it from every one. It is a trouble that seems to be corroding away her life. I cannot tell you how unhappy it makes me to know of its existence, and yet to feel how helpless I am to do anything for her.'

'Hum! Then it would afford you much pleasure to see this dear lady, to whom you seem so devotedly attached, cured of the secret malady

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which—to quote your own words—is corroding away her life? Is not that so?’

‘Nothing you could mention would afford me half so much pleasure.’

‘And you would be grateful to the physician who could work such a miracle?’

‘More grateful than I could express.’

‘Well, I am that physician. Yes, you may stare; but I am speaking no more than the truth when I affirm that from to-morrow Lady Chetwode’s cure shall begin. I was on my way to seek an interview with her when I overtook you; but I have decided on a different course. Instead of seeing her I will write to her. Yes; in less than twenty-four hours from now I will send her a prescription warranted to give her back that health of mind which of late she seems to have so mysteriously lost. It is for your sake, Milly, I do this thing, and for that alone.’

Mildred had listened to him as if she could scarce believe the evidence of her ears; but at his last words her overwrought feelings gave way, and she turned aside to hide the tears she could no longer restrain. Not for two or three minutes was she able to control her emotion; and when at length she looked round it was to find herself alone. Her father had vanished. For a few seconds she stood in utter bewilderment; then she ran for a short distance along the path, this way and that, but in vain. He was gone utterly. Evidently there was nothing left her to do save to make the best of her way to the Manor.

When, a few minutes later, Lady Chetwode emerged from her hiding-place and set her face for home, she walked like a woman in a dream. Now and then she came to a stand for a few seconds without being aware that she had done so; now and then she swayed slightly as she walked. She followed the path by a sort of blind instinct, seeing nothing consciously of her surroundings. She had no sense of wonder, even, for the singular meeting of which she had just been an unseen witness. That would come later. All she was just now conscious of was that she was to be saved by some miraculous means which she did not stop to consider. ‘Saved! saved!’ was the one word that rang in her ears all the way as she walked home.

In the course of next afternoon a registered packet reached Lady Chetwode through the post, the contents of which proved to be the stolen necklace in its morocco and satin-lined case, together with the following note:

‘Lady Chetwode’s acceptance of the enclosed as an act of reparation is requested by one who, if that which he knows to-day had been known to him at the time, would most assuredly have spared her all she must have gone through in the interim. But perhaps it may be conceded
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that an act of reparation, however tardy, is preferable to none at all.’

Two days later her ladyship found that she had some business in town; but of the nature of the most important errand that took her there she said nothing to her husband.

Next morning’s post brought Sir James a registered packet containing the missing heirloom (the genuine article this time), but without a word to explain why or by whom it had been returned. The worthy Baronet’s unbounded astonishment may be more easily conceived than described. The mystery has never been solved by him, nor is it likely that it ever will be.

To Mildred Grey’s great surprise, Mr Jack Jellicoe’s declared intention of making her his wife, instead of being opposed by Sir James and Lady Chetwode, was warmly welcomed by them, and the latter made it her especial care that the bride should not go short of a handsome trousseau.

Mildred never either saw or heard from that strange being her father again, and it is hardly likely that their paths in life will ever cross each other in time to come. Neither did she ever become aware that her interview with the *soi-disant* Captain had had an unseen auditor in the person of Lady Chetwode, while her ladyship was careful to keep to herself the knowledge of the girl’s parentage which had come so strangely to her.

FATHER CHRISTMAS.

WHAT though fair Summer’s left us now,
And with her, too, have gone the flowers,
The braveries of lawn and bough,
The golden glow, the sunny hours.
Here’s Father Christmas come again!
His hair and beard are flecked with snow,
But with him comes a loaded wain
Bedecked with fairy mistletoe.

Brave ivy, too, and holly bright—
In place of Flora’s raree-show—
He brings to deck our homes to-night.
The happy children laugh and shout
As Christmas gifts are handed in,
And joyous Christmas bells ring out
Their music through the merry din.
But listen! Father Christmas speaks.

What guerdon will the old man take?
The good of all is what he seeks,
And begs that we for Christ, His sake,
Will help him drive his loaded wain
Through frost and snow and miry street
To homes where want and sorrow reign;
And by relieving others’ pain
Make Christmas happiness complete.
M. LOWSLEY STEVENSON.

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